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## Germany speaks

[Heft 3,  
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### Vorbemerkung

The enclosed reports of events, of the attitude and feeling of the German people and the German press are intended to help in the struggle against the Hitler Regime. The "Sozialistische Warte", from which they are taken, has carried on this struggle for many years and with increasing success. For the broadening of this successful action, the Editors have decided to publish an English edition of these reports from Germany under the title "Germany Speaks". It appears twice monthly. We hope that the reports will be reprinted. In this case will you please mention the source "Germany Speaks" and send a copy to

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### Passive Resistance in the Workshops

"The morale in the workshops" has been giving the German Labour Front a lot to think about. The German labour slaves are in a poor condition both psychologically and physically. Slave conditions, long working hours, the terribly fast tempo and inadequate nourishment have produced an atmosphere of tension in many of the factories. Clashes between the workers and their superiors are frequent. This state of affairs is described in the following manner by the "Ruhrarbeiter" **[1]** (periodical of the German Labour Front):

"It happens very frequently that one single ill-considered word will lower the psychological temperature in the workshop down to freezing-point. There are many examples to prove that when that happens, really efficient co-operation becomes almost impossible. All the rules and regulations posted up in a prominent place in the best official manner, all the stop-watches, all the snooping are of no use whatever in a case of this kind; the rules may be observed, but grimly; the men may work, even toil - and yet the devil of passive resistance can be seen peering round every corner; try to lay hold of him - in a trice he is gone! He grins mockingly behind the backs of the foremen: Yes, if you but knew how I could work if I wanted to, but why should I? I do as much as I'm obliged to, but no more!"

Some examples of this passive resistance are then given:

"Men are wanted for some heavy work. Six are brought along to do the job. It's got to be done quickly! Placed according to height, we lift the load a little from the ground, testing it: `Curse it, this is a heavy brute. It'll need more than six men on this job - but if we set our teeth, we'll manage it, it's urgent!' Then somebody comes rushing round the corner - `the old man'.

In an excited voice he yells, `Get a move on!' - and then something less polite. - In

silence six men bend down; at the word of command they make a desperate attempt - but the load moves not one single inch. (What a man can lift varies very much from individual to individual and is very difficult to judge.) Faces red with exertion they stand up straight: 'Too heavy!' "

Or: "A meeting is organised. One or two comrades take the opportunity to discuss the position of the poorest of them who will have a hard struggle in the near future. ...

They are joined by a man who listens to them for a moment or two and then, apparently a propos of nothing, tells them about the boss throwing his money about like water last Sunday. -"

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The writer of the article makes the following comment:

"The[se] are some examples taken at random from the many that are constantly occurring. It is things like this that enormously influence the morale of the factory, and it is often difficult to discover the real disturbers of the peace."

As we read such information as this giving us an important insight into the mood prevailing in the factories, we must not neglect to draw from it lessons for our propaganda against the Third Reich. It is necessary to hammer in again and again to the German worker what a powerful weapon he has in passive resistance, a weapon against which all the terror of the Gestapo is helpless!

## **Fixed Prices?**

In spite of all the measures taken to regulate prices, new methods are continually being found to raise them directly or indirectly. The Reichs Commissioner of Prices sent out on April to the appropriate authorities "a comprehensive survey of the methods of dealing with the most common ways of overstepping and of getting round the regulations" ("Deutscher Volkswirt" **[2]**). It is a veritable catalogue of attempts, within an economic system in which there are not enough goods to meet the demand, to sabotage the attempts of the bureaucracy to fix prices. The delivery of a purchase to the customer's home is only undertaken if he buys something else and takes it away with him; the quality of the goods is poorer while the price remains the same; a charge is made for delivery to the customer's home; discount is no longer given; the shop imposes rules about wrapping-up material; the blame for increased prices is always laid at somebody else's door; new wholesalers have appeared on the scene who are authorised "to charge higher prices"; and so on and so on.

There are few, if any, customers who protest at these contraventions of the rules fixing prices, because they are only too glad to get the goods at all. This can be clearly seen from the eloquent complaint made by the head of the Price Control Office in Berlin and published in the "Berliner Boersen-Zeitung". This official complains bitterly of the public's failure to co-operate and declares that it is impossible

"to deal with all cases of contravention of the price regulations if the public do not support the police in this matter. But the Price Control Office is bound to point out that this co-operation has been given by the public only to a very small extent. ...

After all, the maximum prices have been laid down in the interests of the consumers, and one would think that when they are cheated they would take steps to protect themselves and appeal to the police. But this has been by no means the case. A few

complaints only have been lodged and it has been possible to take steps only in those cases in which officials of the Price Control Office have, as it were, caught the culprits red-handed."

Official protection is promised to those who report cases of over-charging "against any retaliatory measures that may be taken against them by the accused". Because the beautiful edifice of controlled prices is showing signs of cracking, it seems that police pressure must be applied to hold it together.

Quite a number of food shops in Berlin have been closed and their proprietors punished.

## **Juvenile Delinquency in the Third Reich**

### **Police Regulations for the Protection of Youth**

We still remember the propaganda articles published in the German Press which were lavish in their praise of the success alleged to have been achieved by the Third Reich in its campaign against juvenile delinquency. The Nazi system was said to have eradicated

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the evil by the abolition of unemployment, by the re-introduction of conscription and by education in the Hitler Youth organisation. That the claim has little relation to the truth can be seen from the numerous prosecutions that have taken place, especially since the beginning of the war; and if further proof were needed, it is supplied by the numerous meetings that have been held and the articles which have been published in order to re-assure those who feel concern about the morale of the youth; and even more significant is the fact that Himmler has been obliged to send out, on March 9th, 1940, a decree containing police regulations for the protection of youth.

Young people under the age of eighteen, and their teachers as well, are threatened with punishment if the following regulations are not complied with: "They are not to appear in the public streets and squares during the black-out; they are not to enter public cafes, restaurants etc.: they must not go to public cinemas and variety and cabaret performances; they must not attend public dances; they must not go near public shooting and amusement galleries; and they are forbidden to drink alcohol and to smoke in public."

Leaving on one side the question of what educational value or otherwise such restrictions may have, we may still ask whether all this is not mere tilting at windmills, since the Nazis in other directions do everything possible that is contrary to a proper treatment of youth.

### **Untrained Youths as Teachers**

A document published recently by the National Socialist Teacher's Association showed quite clearly that in the Third Reich the schools have ceased to be centres of education and have become the instruments of totalitarian warfare. But even before the war the schools were deprived of many teachers, because the lack of officers in the army made it necessary to make use of officer reservists, many of whom were teachers. The Nazification of Poland has still further depleted the teaching staffs: many teachers were sent there, encouraged in many cases by an increase in salary. And now school helpers must fill the breach: young people who possess the leaving certificate of a middle school

or something similar, are let loose on the children after a course of about three months' training. Five hundred are being trained at Hirschberg in the Giant Mountains and another five hundred at Lauenburg in Pomerania. In order to re-assure the anxious parents, the announcement in the Press of this emergency measure is accompanied by lengthy explanations to the effect that these trainees are of course only helpers and not teachers; the regulations for the training of teachers are the same as they have always been. Then follow long statements about the nature and the length of a course of training for a real teacher; whilst reading them one wonders whether the Nazi editors, counting on the inattention of their readers, are seeking to persuade them that these school helpers are really well-trained teachers.

## **Nervous Mothers at Home**

Many will be of the opinion, when they contemplate this inadequate staffing of the schools, that in these circumstances the only thing to be done is for the parents to take especial care with the upbringing of the children in the home, in order to stem the tide of delinquency.

They forget, however, that since the outbreak of war, the mother is the head of the family and that therefore she alone can take in hand the education of the children. They forget also that a very large number of women now go out to work. The results are seen in a prize essay competition organised by the "Ruhr-Arbeiter", in its issue of April 2nd. Frau Fanny Rothenstein [3] contributed her views on the question:

"Shall I beat my child?"

She herself is one of a family of five children, who were all very different and whose parents, remembering their own unhappy child-

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hood, took special pains with the upbringing of their children. They succeeded in bringing them up to be good men and women, without resorting to physical punishment. One can see from the views expressed by this lady that she too thinks about these things and that she has some understanding of psychology:

"It is true that our temperament, or rather our nerves give way, and that is always fatal. The feeling that we have committed an injustice always makes us lose our temper, we are unwilling to admit this fault even to ourselves and we do not want to reveal our weakness even to the culprit. But the feeling that he has suffered an injustice arouses in the child who has been punished a stubborn mood and if this reef cannot be safely circumnavigated, then the whole sorry business generally ends in a renewed thrashing. This, instead of strengthening our authority, only serves to undermine it."

But in spite of this belief she comes to the conclusion:

"Today I am honestly of the belief that the satisfaction of my parents in having brought up their children by the sole method of reasoning with them, does not compensate for the strain it must have imposed on their nerves. With my own children I simply do not possess such reserves of patience."

How many over-taxed mothers and weary teachers must have lost their reserves of patience today! What an amount of harm may be done because of this to the youngsters, who so often find from their youngest days onwards that the grown-ups abuse their strength!

## Are children tender plants?

Naturally, the German Press contains no such reflections. It is quite evident that as a good Nazi the editor of the "Ruhr-Arbeiter" is rather embarrassed by the answers he received to his query:

"We must confess that we had not reckoned on the majority of mothers and even fathers answering this question ('Shall I beat my child?') so emphatically in the negative. There was not one single contribution which did not in some form or another speak of the dangers of corporal punishment and point out the sensitiveness of the child. And that, we say sincerely, gave us a great surprise. We felt bound to ask ourselves whether children are really such tender plants as all that?"

It is extremely important to bear in mind this complete lack of understanding on the part of the Nazis of the real problems of education, when we are investigating the causes of juvenile delinquency.

May 16th, 1940

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### *Editorische Anmerkungen*

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- 1 - „Ruhrarbeiter“, Nationalsozialistische Kampfzeitung „für Ehre und Recht der nationalen Arbeit“, amtliches Blatt der NSBO (Nationalsozialistische Betriebszellenorganisation) und der Deutschen Arbeitsfront.
- 2 - „Deutscher Volkswirt“, 1926 gegründete, Schacht nahe stehende deutsche Wirtschaftszeitung, nach „Renaissance“ (Heft 2, S. 26) „das ernsthafteste deutsche Wirtschaftsblatt“, das allerdings nicht weit abseits der offiziellen Meinung NS-Deutschlands in Wirtschaftsfragen stand, heute „Wirtschaftswoche“..
- 3 - Rothenstein, Fanny. Biographische Angaben konnten nicht ermittelt werden.