

Nazis, Shocked World

Name: Herschel Grynszpan. *Age:* 17. *Height:* five feet. *Race:* Jewish. *Birthplace:* Hannover, Germany. *Nationality:* Polish. *Crime:* shooting and fatally wounding the third secretary to the German Embassy, Herr Ernst vom Rath. *Remarks:* Grynszpan has been an illegal resident of France since Aug. 15. His parents, recently expelled from Germany, are living in an abandoned freight car near the Polish-German frontier; exact whereabouts unknown. Upon arrest, Grynszpan made this statement:

I did it because I loved my parents and the Jewish people. Being a Jew is not a crime. I am not a dog. I have a right to live and the Jewish people have a right to exist on this earth. Wherever I have been I have been chased like an animal.

In the excellent filing system of La Petite Roquette, Paris juvenile prison, a card with this information upon it reposed last week. In a room of the prison, a sobbing boy answered the questions of a psychiatrist. If Herschel Grynszpan were found sane, the French government would slice off his head and France and Germany would be able to go ahead with their plans for a non-aggression pact. If he were pronounced an irresponsible adolescent and his life spared, not only peace in Europe but 700,000 German Jews would be endangered anew. These were the grave issues which hung upon the unimportant life of Herschel Grynszpan, 17 years old and five feet tall, born a Jew.

REVENGE: It was Nov. 7 when Grynszpan walked into the German Embassy and shot the Third Secretary. It was late Nov. 9 when word reached Germany that Vom Rath had died.

About dawn next morning, Jews in the west German city of Kassel awoke to the clump of Nazi boots on their stairs. Brawny young men, their storm trooper uniforms partly hidden by raincoats, ordered the Jews out of bed. When all were huddled in the town square, a fire hose was turned on them. Then, drenched and shivering, they were herded into an icy brewery basement while the young men in raincoats systematically wrecked every Jewish shop in Kassel and set fire to the synagogue.



Herschel Grynszpan

Kassel was first. Soon, in every German city and town, shop windows shattered and fires blazed. In Vienna, storm troopers fired 18 synagogues, shot a Polish Jew in his bed, invaded homes and threw the furniture out the windows. Ten thousand Jews were arrested, at least 60 attempted suicide. Restaurants and foodshops refused to sell to Jews.

In Munich, a director of the only remaining Jewish bank, and his wife, jumped to their death from a window. In Berlin, wrecking squads equipped with crowbars, worked the Jewish shops of fashionable Kurfuerstendamm, smashing plate glass windows. They were followed—a true German touch—by street cleaners who swept the glass into neat piles. A Jew was hauled from his shop, beaten, and pitched back through the jagged window. In a side street, six bicyclists caught sight of two elderly Jews and began a merry chase until the Jews fell, exhausted.

Most correspondents thought the huge, silent watching crowds seemed disturbed and ashamed. Here and there a German was beaten or arrested for suggesting that “the poor creatures have suffered enough.” On the other hand, many Germans obviously approved of the riots. Parents brought their children to see the show. On Unter den Linden, a woman and her

KRISTALLNIGHT



Vom Rath Died,



Goering Issued Decrees...

little girl stood watching a group of boys knock down a middle-aged Jew while a circle of small children chanted: "*Jude! Jude!*" (Jew! Jew!). "Come, dear," said the woman, "now we will see what is happening over on the Friedrichstrasse."

Though some early editions of Nazi papers leaped to conclusions and called the riots the work of "Jewish provocateurs who set fire to their own shops to claim insurance," by noon the whole press had learned that this was a "spontaneous outburst" of the German people's "justified and under-

KRISTALLNIGHT



Wilson Was Called Back to America

standable indignation at the cowardly Jew murder in Paris." Germans sipping coffee on the Kurfuerstendamm were able to read in the afternoon *Tageblatt* that "contents of shop windows have not been touched"—interesting reading in view of the fact that, along the curb, people were trying on shoes and coats stolen from the Israel department store.

By sunset Germany's "spontaneous outburst"—a one-day orgy of looting and arson which correspondents called unmeasurable by standards of western civilization—had been turned off like a gas jet. Dr. Joseph Goebbels, Nazi Propaganda Minister, announced that the nation had "followed its healthy instincts" but "earnestly warned" the populace to demonstrate no more. "The final and correct answer to the Jewish outrage in Paris will come through laws and decrees," promised Dr. Goebbels.

MORNING AFTER: Germans awoke next morning in a country that looked as if it had been hit by a bombing plane. Main streets yawned with empty shop-fronts. Smoke drifted up from gutted buildings. In a land whose people had been urged for three years to save every garbage scrap and every empty toothpaste tube, one day had wrought a nationwide havoc reckoned at not less than one billion marks (\$400,000,000). Scarcely a Jewish shop, cafe, synagogue, or home had escaped damage.

But the Reich's revenge was not



Goebbels Saw "Healthy Instincts" Expressed

complete. Jewry must be warned that any act of violence against a German by a Jew anywhere in the world would reap terrible reprisals against the Jews of Germany. In his capacity as commissioner of the Four Year Plan, Field Marshal Hermann Goering issued four decrees:

(1) "For the dastardly murder in Paris," German Jews were fined 1,000,000,000 Reichsmarks. (2) Jews were to repair at once at their own expense the damage to their stores. (3) These stores were then to be turned over to "Aryans." (4) Insurance claims were confiscated by the Reich. To add to these decrees, inventive Dr. Goebbels thought up a fifth: Jews were henceforth barred from movies, concerts, lectures, and theaters.

A few days later Economics Minister Walther Funk announced that two billion marks out of a registered Jewish wealth of seven billion had already been transferred to German hands. Admitting that this was twice as much as the levied fine, Funk explained that Jews would receive German bonds as "indemnity."

Just as medieval lords in need of ready cash used to toast their rich Jews over a slow fire, the financially hard-pressed Nazi government was using modern equivalents of the Dark Age torture chamber to exact revenue. But the anti-Jewish program was more than a money-raising device. Its anti-property, anti-capitalist flavor was strong indication that the clique of extreme Nazi radicals headed

KRISTALLNIGHT

by Dr. Goebbels had shaken off moderate influences and was running the Third Reich.

There was plenty of evidence that the Roman Catholic Church might be the next victim. In Munich the palace of Michael Cardinal Faulhaber was stoned. *Das Schwarze Korps*, Storm Trooper mouthpiece which accurately forecast the Jewish confiscations weeks before they happened, suggested that the "morally corrupt" German Catholic clergy was not fit to administer its wealth.

PROTESTS: To British Prime Minister Chamberlain, the news from Germany was exquisitely embarrassing. Twenty-four hours after he had publicly appealed to Britain to "find some understanding of the ways of thought" of the dictatorships, Britons from the Archbishop of Canterbury down were calling the Nazi ways of thought "barbaric," "hideous," "fiendish."

In the United States columnist Dorothy Thompson started a defense fund for Herschel Grynszpan. Distinguished Americans, including former President Herbert Hoover, Alf Landon of Kansas and Secretary of Interior Ickes, let loose a nation-wide radio blast against the Nazi leadership. The Most Rev. Michael J. Curley, Archbishop of Baltimore, called Hitler a madman and Goebbels "cripple-minded," and dared them to take up his words with the U. S. State Department.

It remained for that State Department to make the most meaningful protest. It was couched in a brief announcement to the press; Hugh Wilson, U. S. Ambassador to Germany, had been called home "for report and consultation."

Not since the World war had a U. S. Ambassador been called home under circumstances that suggested a recall, or possible breach in diplomatic relations. The move was followed by a statement from President Roosevelt (see page 4) in which he declared that the news from Germany had "deeply shocked" American public opinion and that he himself "could scarcely believe that such things could occur in a 20th century civilization."

Protests, therefore, were not lacking. The fact remained that there were nearly 700,000 Jews in Germany, their future the ghetto or the forced-labor camp, their country a closed trap. The only practical Good Samaritan in the world last week was tiny

OldMagazineArticles.com

KRISTALLNIGHT

Holland, who set up two Jewish refugee camps. In London, however, U. S. Ambassador Joseph Kennedy was reported consulting with Chamberlain on a bold plan to transport German Jews to temporary refuge in Africa and North and South America until, somewhere in the wide world, a home could be found for the orphans of Europe's 20th century Dark Age.

PATHFINDER