

How They Put a Nazi on the Spot

MURDER AS A FINE ART is the latest of Hitlerite achievements.

This is the charge of some German anti-Hitlerite organs in connection with the disappearance of a "devoted Hitlerite," a young member of the Storm Division of Hitler's shock troops.

Outside Germany the Socialist Vienna *Arbeiter Zeitung* calls the case the most sensational political murder mystery disclosed since Germany became "a land of political murders."

Another Viennese daily, the world-famous independent *Neue / Freie Presse*, finds proof in the assassination that the Hitlerite movement "has a government within the Government."

The Hitlerites, it alleges, have their own Army, police, and courts functioning independently of the constituted authorities, even defying those authorities, and passing death sentences by secret tribunals. A summary of this newspaper's report of the tragedy reads as follows:

THE LITERARY
DIGEST

FEBRUARY 4,
1933

"In Dresden dwelt a 'shock-troop-division' man named Hentsch, whose body was found not so long ago. This twenty-six-year-old Hitlerite had been murdered in an atrocious manner.

"He belonged to the most fanatical of the Nazis, and he wore the Brown Shirt with pride and full conviction. He was no extremist in his methods and he was certainly no trouble-maker.

"Those young friends of his who preferred to go the way of Communism remained on terms of at least sufficient friendliness with him to exchange greetings. Nothing suggests that the murder was committed for or by the Communists.

"Various circumstances suggest that comrades of the dead young man within the Nazi ranks put him out of the way. Hentsch is seemingly the victim of a secret tribunal within his organization.

"This 'shock-trooper' who had gone so far as to be the head of a band was filled with a fiery zeal to 'arrive.' He was much chagrined to learn one day that he had been put back in the ranks of the ordinary shock-troopers of Hitlerism. He was unable to account for this great change in the favorable attitude toward him.

"In a communication to his party friend Schenk he said that he would resist his demotion to the ranks. This seems to have sealed the doom of the unfortunate young National Socialist.

"He had been active in various posts of a most confidential sort, especially in the service of the information section of the leader of the Dresden branch of the movement. He had been able to gain many intimate views of the workings of the Hitlerite machinery, to witness the working out of methods that simply must be covered with a veil of secrecy.

"Hentsch, the shock-trooper, got the idea through his friend Schenk that he was being considered for a special political mission. In November last he was called by Schenk on the telephone, apparently to a meeting by appointment.

"A few hours later this hopeful fellow was a corpse. His body was found in a sack weighted with heavy stones in a dam near the place of meeting. He had been shot several times."

"Where does supreme authority reside within the German State?" sarcastically asks the Berlin *Vossische Zeitung*.

By way of answer it points out that the National Socialists for weeks disputed the report that the shock-trooper Hentsch had been murdered. They claimed that he was away on a special mission for the party.

But, this newspaper tells us, after the finding of the body and

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the discovery of murder, the Nazis take refuge in the expedient of pronouncing the case "a tragedy," and we read:

"No one will even yet affirm that the question of guilt has been so far answered that the guilty are overtaken. But it is an impertinent thing to allege that the question of guilt has as yet been 'in no way cleared up.' Evidence of the guilt of a trio of Nazis who have fled is most convincing. The 'hushing-up' tactics of the Nazi party leadership and the devious ways they have gone in their efforts at secrecy explain why any further elucidation of the mystery has been forestalled.

"The Dresden organ of the Nazis complains that the arrest of two men under suspicion was 'an over-hasty, brainless step,' calculated to give the public an impression that vigorous measures were in process of adoption.

"The Nazis have in truth good reason for hinting this, for they have often enough been content by means of sham procedures to convey to the public an idea that they were themselves going vigorously to work against those who, tho ostensibly under party discipline, had been secretly restored to membership in the party."



A German Home Thrust

"The murderous Hitler Movement"

—"Der Wahre Jakob" (Berlin).

BUT German newspapers closest to Hitler, and especially the daily said to be his personal organ, the Munich *Voelkische Beobachter*, contemptuously dismisses the whole affair as a tempest in a teapot, and it argues:

"What has happened? The shock-trooper Hentsch did not return from an appointment. All investigations into the affair proved fruitless. Certain clues led the police to have the Malter dam—once with divers—thoroughly searched. At first nothing was discovered. Then as a result of frost and the consequent lowering of the water level, the body—tied in a sack and weighted with stones—became visible. Hentsch had been shot in the breast.

"Further revelations were not to be had from the police, who did not wish the investigation to be impeded. After the disappearance of shock-trooper Hentsch various of our comrades were taken in hand by the police, including three who soon disappeared.

"This last circumstance provoked the Marxian press to write about a 'Nazi secret-tribunal murder.' The Social-Democratic group in the Saxon Landtag took advantage of the case to raise a loud hubbub.

"We have only to add that we ourselves are very much concerned to throw light upon this affair as soon as possible. Thus a crime—which can not be disputed after the finding of the body—will be cleared up in due order and our foes will be deprived of an opportunity to get up a fresh persecution of our cause—for by means of just such a persecution the collapse of the Marxians, growing daily more imminent, will be deferred."

SUCH cynical comment as the above rouses the democratic *Frankfurter Zeitung* to wrath, as it charges that the Nazi press were quite ready to blame the Hentsch murder on the Socialists and that some Hitlerite newspapers, such as the Berlin *Angriff*, sought to involve the Jews in the case. But people will not be fooled by Nazi methods of trickery, according to this Frankfort journal, which continues:

"They will leave it to the official inquiry to establish precisely who was well informed of the fact that Hentsch had been murdered.

"When those under suspicion of having perpetrated the deed disappeared and were found established in Italy, they met with indulgent treatment or, at least, obstacles were placed in the path of the police for the purpose of hiding the fact that Hentsch had disappeared."