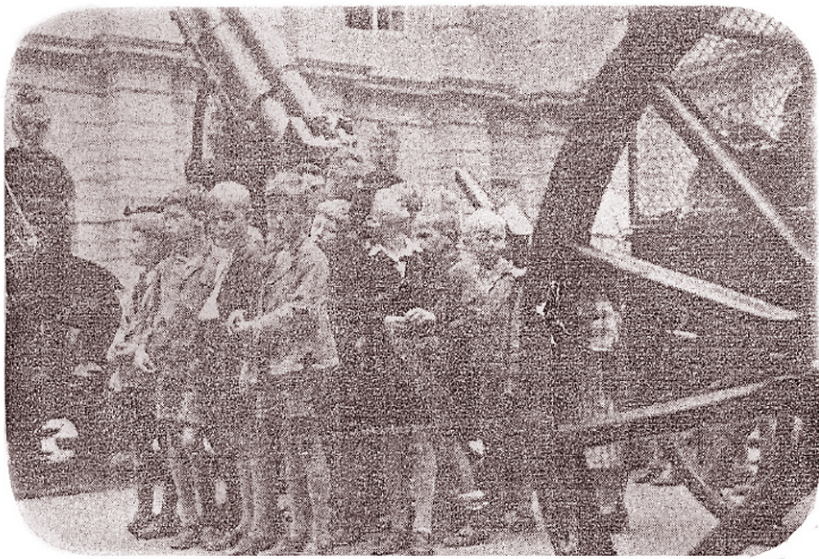


German kindergarten



Nazis believe in getting 'em young, telling 'em everything

Any uncertainty as to exact aim and extent of Nazi foreign policy may be dispelled by attending a "history" class in any German grammar school, where the "why" and "how" of every move—past and future—is made crystal clear: Part of the policy of anything-but-subtle Adolf.

•••• Sitting in Germany's schoolrooms are 20 million boys and girls. It is the custom, in democratic countries, to think that Hitler is engaged in pulling wool—or at least some cheap non-import substitute for it—over their eyes every schoolday.

In many respects he is. But the Fuehrer makes these schoolchildren see more clearly regarding one thing—the Third Reich's foreign policy—than he permits anyone else in the world. Regarding Hitler's Next Move in Europe . . . and the Next and the Next . . . and the Next—20 million children are wiser than many a Foreign Minister.

For two years, for instance, all German boys and girls have been exposed to the following clear-cut lesson:

*Where e'er I gaze, as German,
My soul with pain o'erflows,
I see the German nation
Girt round and round with foes.*

Twelve boys and girls, hanging their heads in exaggerated sadness, recite this lyric prologue from the rostrum of the Third Reich's classrooms.

A 14-year-old youth, the tallest in his class, steps solemnly forward, with a piece of sod in his outstretched hand. "In this handful of earth," he earnestly declaims, "there dwells a deep meaning. . . . I know of wars waged from need of earth, and these wars—methinks—are ennobled."

So begins "German Destiny," officially approved "Pageant for children in the eighth grade." Its first edition, printed two years ago, was officially distributed to every school teacher in the nation. Republished

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since the Hitler triumphs in Austria and Czecho-Slovakia, it still bills itself as "making clear and simple the foreign policy of the Third Reich." According to its introduction, "German Destiny" embodies "two great and inseparable principles: Need for winning enough land for German life, and Perils of Germany's middle-position in Europe."

The striking educational pageant requires only one stage-property, a huge map of Germany, which serves as backdrop for the players. But this is a specially prepared map, made of cardboard pieces, like a jigsaw puzzle, each of which can be easily removed or added as the action of the play requires.

The "all-German" map has some peculiarities. It includes the cities of Verdun and Toul and—"now again part of the Eternal German Reich, though still outside our borders at our first edition—the German city of Vienna."

The tall youth, or Chorus-Leader, with the sod in his hand, points to this map while the various children in his chorus call in turn:

Here is the German soil.

On which battles raged, and had to rage.

It is our home, our Fatherland.

It must be more—sufficient room to live.

The first act of the pageant continues as a catalogue of the "builders" of Germany.

"Who gave the German people the East?" inquires the leader-child in a stentorian voice.

"Henry the Lion, first among heroes!" rings back the chorused answer. Here a large cardboard, representing the domains conquered by Henry the Lion—once part of Poland—is ceremoniously attached to the huge wall-map behind the children.

Simultaneously a new troop of youngsters, all boys, with their close-cropped heads encased in casques of cardboard, stamp onto the rostrum. They represent the famous "Teutonic Knights" who conquered Poland in the 14th century. In as deep tones as they are capable, the children of this spirited group cry:

"Hail, Grand-Master Salza, who gave us Kuln, and Thorn, Elbing and Werder." (All territories now belonging once more to Poland as part of the famous Polish Corridor).

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As a second large cardboard sector is triumphantly added to the map, the Knights sing merrily:

Eastward, eastward, we're bound to ride. . . .

A new group of children takes the platform, marching stiffly and carefully abreast. In individually spoken lines they pay honor to:

*Frederick, called the Great!
Who seven years defied the half of Europe.*

While military marches are played, each child calls in ringing tones the name of one of the Prussian king's victories—against Russia, the Hapsburgs, and France. The last boy climaxes the proud record of bloody triumphs with a highly modernized summary of their purpose:

*Without his greatness, that great land
Silesia (with fitting scorn) to Czechs would now
belong!*

His fellow-actors affix to the map the largest expanse of cardboard yet to appear, marking the booty of Frederick's devastating Seven Years War. They chant during the action, in chorus:

Our thanks to him, the greatest Prussian king!

Act Two of "German Destiny" opens with the same prologue as Act One, tousled heads drooping mournfully as their owners lugubriously again recite the "German's Lament" at being, "girt round with foes."

One child mounts a chair to the right of the rostrum, melodramatically shades his brow with his hand, and gazes steadfastly off into the distance. The chorus inquires of him:

*O Watchman in the East, what do you see?
Wide yawns the boundary into Russia,
answers the child promptly,
Without hill, nor mountain, nor stay of any
kind.*

A huge black arrow, denoting the "danger-point" on the Russian border (crossing through Poland) is affixed to the wall-map, while the Lookout continues:

*Ready to pounce, the Russian hordes stand upon
the boundary of East-German land.*

All the children's voices unite:

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All the children's voices unite:

*On this side a neighbor from Asia,
ho, miserable and poor, leers greedily at our
possessions.*

We shall stay him with blood.

The Third Act opens with a refinement
of the Prologue's lamentation:

*Where e'er I gaze, as German,
My soul with pain o'erflows,
I see the German nation
Girt round and round with foes.*

*The world so rich and great grows bare,
On fitful tides is tossed;
The world no more can boast a soul,
Her Germany she's lost.*

The child-leader then announces solemnly:

*Scarce any other nation has had baseness
So stationed at its side, as Germany
With France for neighbor.*

Heralds step disconsolately forward and
chronicle in ringing and tragic tones the
loss of Strasbourg, Toul and Verdun, torn
away by basest treason." An unhappy child
eluctantly tears from the map on the wall
the slice of cardboard which represents Al-
sace-Lorraine.

The child-leader carefully measures the
resulting cavity.

*Verdun to Strasbourg, he recites, 'Tis twice two
hundred thousand meters which
France has raped
From us within one hundred fifty years.
So hungrily do Frenchmen gnaw their way
Through German soil!*

Thereupon he flings back his head and
stoutly cries:

"Love thy native land! 'Twas only our
foes squeezing at all its sides which gave
the Fatherland its form."

All children shout triumphantly in uni-
son:

"A ring of enemies!" A thick black
ring is laid upon the wall, surrounding the
entire map of Germany.

From the crowd of children now assem-
bled on the rostrum, a "Chorus of Fight-
ers" goose-step to the front of the stage,
reciting valiantly a "heroic description" of
Germany's exploits in the Great War:

*Four years we held this ring at bay,
And burst it wide to reach the Balkans—*

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(Two boys step to the map and tear the freshly attached circle across at its south-east arc.)

*To our foes a secret terror, an amazement to the world
Such as was never seen before, nor will be seen again!*

Leading into the grand finale, a child hopefully inquires:

And can we end our evil fortune?

The entire schoolroom rises and joins in the stout answer:

*Think German!
Before all else must come our country's life,
All else beside the Fatherland is pettiness.
If Germany dies, thou too must die with it,
For every man must perish for and with his nation.*

"German Destiny" closes with the singing of *Deutschland, Deutschland Ueber Alles*, and the children go back to ordinary schoolwork.

"German Destiny" is only one of Hitler's official "History Lessons" for Third Reich children. They are all equally frank and all part of the compulsory curriculum of modern German education.

Foreign statesmen—and all other observers who seek a simple guiding-string through the apparent chaos and lyric promises of Hitler foreign policy—could do worse than attend the Little Brown Schoolhouse for a few days, and get everything explained in simple, honest language by the Fuehrer himself. •

—Charles E. Hewitt, Jr.