



BALDUR VON SCHIRACH

WHEN Baldur von Schirach entered Vienna in 1940 as *Gauleiter* and *Reichsstadthalter*, succeeding savage Joseph Buerckel, Austrians may have had some expectation that he would end the beatings, murders and pillage that made life in the enslaved country a thing of fear and horror. The new ruler was a poet of sorts and, as head of the German Youth Movement, had sung lyrically of love, happiness and beauty. More than that, he was the son of an American mother whose forebears had fought for freedom at Bunker Hill and Valley Forge. Even his name carried a certain assurance, for Baldur, son of Odin and Frigg, was the god of summer sunlight.

The disillusionment of the Austrians came quickly, for Schirach proceeded to match Buerckel in cruelty and blood lust. In his initial proclamation, he announced that his soul would not give him rest until he had driven every Jew from the land and put a swastika in the place of every Cross of Christ. This pledge has been kept to the letter, for 185,000 Jews have been liquidated, and such priests and pastors as still remain at large walk in dread. An ardent disciple of Alfred Rosenberg, Schirach means to force the worship of the old Norse gods on his unhappy subjects.

Many of the 185,000 Jews were beaten to death, but the larger part went to Poland in locked cars without food or water. In winter they froze, in summer they suffocated and, as a result, few were left alive at the end of the nightmare journey. After the ghettos had been cleaned out, Schirach devised an ingenious method for picking up all those who had escaped the first dragnet.

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In the cities, streets were blocked off without warning, and Storm Troopers personally examined each man and woman. Aryans were released, but Jews were thrown into trucks and hustled off to the station without being given opportunity to collect personal belongings or to notify their families. As relatives came out of hiding to hunt for missing loved ones, these, too, were arrested and deported.

Every Catholic school and convent in Austria was closed, and, at last count, eighteen priests had been assassinated, and 479 were known to be in jails or concentration camps. The liquidation of the College of the Holy Virgin, in particular, stirred all Vienna to a madness of rage that had to be put down by gunfire. After the nuns had been whipped out into the street, thirty girl students were taken to Gestapo headquarters on the charge of underground activities. Four have never been heard of from that day to this, and the other twenty-six, finally released—sobbing, hysterical, ravished—had no dearer hope than death.

Atrocity piled upon atrocity. Not only was Josef Fitzhum, Buerckel's infamous chief of police, continued in office, but under Schirach's approving eye the beast devised new bestialities. As an example, Josef Beyer, an Austrian official in Oberwarth, Burgenland, was slowly cut to pieces while still alive. Fitzhum's barbarities shocked even hardened Nazis, but Baldur the Beautiful found them good.

A peculiarly nasty piece of work, this *Reichsstadthalter* of Austria. Born in 1907 in Weimar, he was an early convert to the Nazi faith and at seventeen he headed a Hitler movement in the city schools. Lehman was his father's name, but doubtless disliking the sound of it, Baldur calmly changed to von Schirach. The rightful owners of the latter name, properly outraged, brought suit and won a judgment, but little good it did them. By that time the Nazis were strong enough to have it set aside, and later the judge himself was sent to a concentration camp.

In 1928, Baldur rose to be director of Hitler Youth in all the public schools,

and in 1933, when Hitler became Chancellor, he was made Youth Leader for the whole of Germany. Rosenberg, Goebbels and Ley cannot escape responsibility for the systematic debauchment of German boys and girls, but Schirach was the spearhead of the drive against chastity, continence and every Christian teaching. Day in and day out he bawled the divinity of the sex impulse, demanding the release of every inhibition.

Like other prominent Nazis, Schirach's sex urges are more than a little errant, and in 1940 his adventures in pederasty became an open scandal.

As he was too valuable to the Party to be jailed or shot, Hitler wiggled out of the dilemma by transferring Buerckel to Lorraine and giving the vacated place to Baldur the Beautiful. An intensely Catholic people the Austrians but, in the hour of liberation, nothing is more certain than that they can be counted on to "go pagan," until von Schirach's case has been attended to. . . .

- George Creel

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