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Herbert Morrison

**Mr. Smith and Mrs.  
Schmidt**





**MR. SMITH**

*by* **HERBERT MORRISON**



*and* **MR. SCHMIDT**



**"THE NEW HIGH ARISTOCRACY . . ."**

### **THESE ARE HITLER'S WORDS:**

"There will be a Herren-class, an historical class tempered by battle, and welded from the most varied elements. There will be a great hierarchy of party members. They will be the new middle-class. *And there will be the great mass of the anonymous, the serving collective, the eternally disfranchised*, no matter whether they were once members of the old bourgeoisie, the big land-owning class, the working-class, or the artisans. . . . But beneath them there will still be the class of subject alien races; we need not hesitate to call them the modern slave class. And over all of these will stand the new high aristocracy, the most deserving and the most responsible Führer-personalities. . . .

"As surely as everything we have discussed here to-day must be kept from burdening the mind of the ordinary party member, equally surely must we put an end to what is known as universal education. *Universal education is the most corroding and disintegrating poison that liberalism has ever invented for its own destruction.*"

—From "Hitler Speaks," by Hermann Rauschning.

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# Mr. Smith and Mr. Schmidt

by

THE RT. HON. HERBERT MORRISON, M.P.

COLLINS

LONDON . GLASGOW . TORONTO . SYDNEY . AUCKLAND



“THE GREAT MASS OF THE ANONYMOUS . . .”

## Mr. Smith and Mr. Schmidt

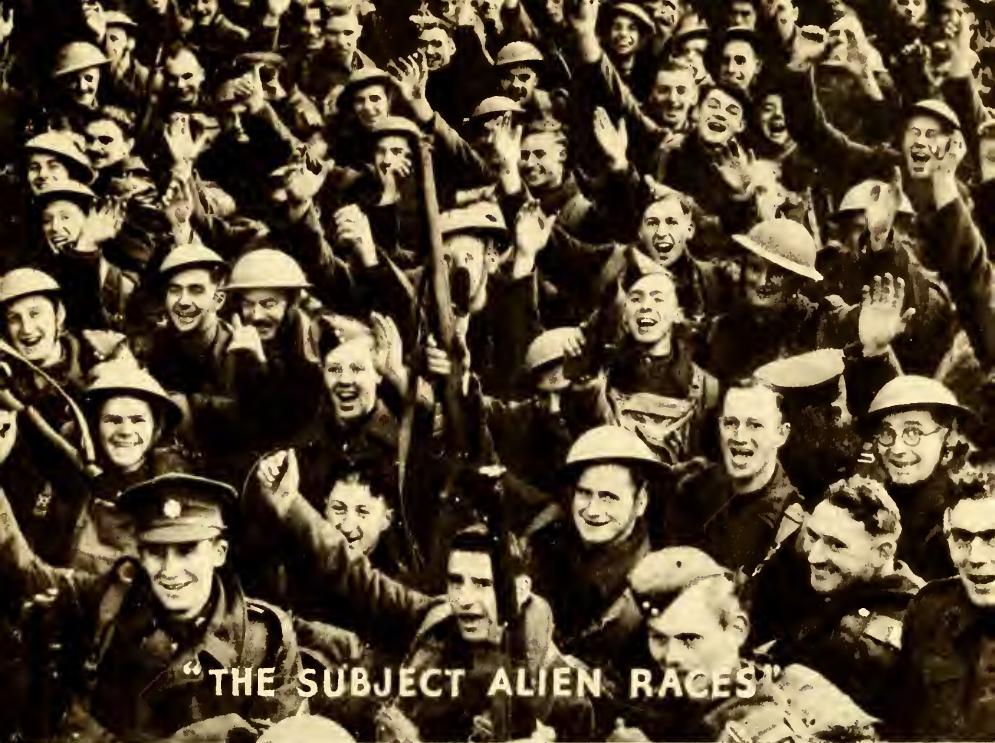
WHEN at the beginning of September, 1939, Britain and France declared themselves to be in a state of war with the Nazi Government of Germany, the fundamental issue, as I saw it, was this: were the conditions of life and the possibilities of peaceful change and improvement in Great Britain to be preferred to the conditions obtaining in Nazi Germany? Were those British constitutional liberties, which are the precious product of centuries of struggle and evolution, worth a war to defend them? Nothing that has happened since, no temporary successes of Nazi arms, has altered the issue. The downfall of Poland, Norway, Belgium, Holland, France, only emphasises the lesson: that under Nazi domination you and I would no longer be individuals; we would become the mere creatures of an appointed government. The individual would become afraid to think, afraid to express himself.

What does all this mean in terms of the daily life of the ordinary man and the ordinary woman?

This question is best answered by comparing the conditions of life of the average British worker with the conditions of life of the average German worker. So let us compare the lot of Mr. and Mrs. John Smith of Great Britain with that of Herr and Frau Johann Schmidt of Germany.

Mr. and Mrs. John Smith of Great Britain have their troubles. I am a child of the working class; I am a Socialist; and I know.

It is not part of the purpose of this booklet to try to persuade the reader that the working people of Great Britain enjoy an ideal life. They don't. Their resources are limited; they do not enjoy all the reasonable comforts of life, and certainly not the luxuries. A considerable proportion of them know poverty at first hand; they risk the worries of



## "THE SUBJECT ALIEN RACES"

unemployment; they do not enjoy that complete social security which I believe should be the reward of honest toil and which I believe to be possible, given the wise organisation of the nation's economic resources.

That is the black part of the picture, and I will be no party to under-estimating its shame and its reality. The problems which I have summarised affect the workman's wife no less than the workman—indeed, the workman's wife has, in some ways, to face the most worrying end of these problems. But when all that is taken into account and fully estimated, it is the fact that Mr. and Mrs. John Smith of Great Britain enjoy certain priceless possessions which are denied to the working people of Nazi Germany.

They are better off. Their standard of life is higher—decidedly higher.



MR. & MRS. SMITH ARE FREE TO MARCH



Mr. and Mrs. John Smith are inheritors of certain rights and freedoms. They enjoy many of the advantages of a long period of social progress.

If Mrs. John Smith experiences difficulty in getting coal; if, in her judgment, there is legitimate complaint about food supplies or prices; if she has a complaint about health or educational services, or about housing conditions—well, she can “start a row” through her local Co-operative organisation, political Women’s Section, or other organisation; or she can write direct to her Member of Parliament and demand attention to her grievances.

These things she can do without fear; in some way or another her complaints will receive attention.

She need not be afraid of being reported to the Government as a dangerous agitator and of being arrested and subjected to physical restraint; she need not fear that her neighbour or her children will report her to a secret police. She, acting as a good citizen, possesses an acknowledged right to complain with a view to the rectification of grievances—and if she goes about her business sensibly she knows she has a fair chance of securing attention in Whitehall, in Parliament, or the local Town Hall.

True, wartime has inevitably brought its special powers to our Government, but, even so, they bear no resemblance to the tyrannical powers exercised by the German Government in peacetime. And when our public opinion has felt that the Government has gone too far in the exercise of its powers, Parliament has promptly intervened with effect. There is no real Parliament in Germany. The Government there is absolute and accountable to nobody.

Mr. John Smith has similar rights.

He can ventilate his industrial grievances through his Trades Union organisation. And his Trades Union organisation is not a creature of the Government; it is in the end controlled by

him and his fellows to whom the elected Trades Union officers are responsible.

The employer is not a dictator automatically protected by the State. Whatever views we may hold as to the attitude of Governments of various colours towards employers' interests, British Trades Unions are autonomous bodies; they settle their own policy; they are not the creatures of dictatorial politicians.

So it is with the Co-operative Societies from which so many of the working classes purchase their necessities of life and through which they organise a wide range of social and educational activities. For the Co-operative Societies also are autonomous bodies responsible to their memberships; they are not creatures of the State, and subject to dictation by self-appointed politicians.

So if the British workman has a grievance he can make a noise about it through his Trades Union, his Co-operative Society, or his political organisation. He can demand attention and redress. He has no fear that because he complains the secret police will be on his track and that he will be consigned to a concentration camp for torture, for imprisonment, and possibly death, because he has dared to complain.

Moreover, Mr. and Mrs. John Smith are the inheritors of political liberties and social services which are the result of their own efforts, of their forefathers', and that of men and women of goodwill who have been instrumental in promoting the social and political progress of the masses.

They have the right, with their fellows, to vote at Parliamentary and Municipal elections, the right to choose the national or local government which corresponds to the general outlook; they have the knowledge that the national and the local governments are conscious of being answerable in the end to the people for their actions; the knowledge that by the spoken word and by the printed word the people have a right



**MR. SMITH CAN TELL THE WORLD**

to express themselves, irrespective of the convenience of the Government of the day.

Moreover, they enjoy a wide range of social services—education, health, housing and sanitation, old age pensions, unemployment, health insurance, and so on. There is a wide range of legislation for the protection of industrial labour.

It is possible to criticise these services; there is still much to improve; but the present century has seen a vast advance in British social provision—the result not so much of benevolent ordering from above as of struggle and effort by the people themselves. The people's own institutions—the Trades Unions and the Co-operative Societies—are playing their part in social provision.

Taken together, these achievements constitute something like a revolution as compared with the days when society as a whole was fundamentally indifferent to the social and economic well-being of the masses.



WE TOO HAVE SEEN A REVOLUTION .

We have not achieved the perfect society, but the standard of life and degree of security, the progress in health and education of the masses of our people have effected an enormous change as compared with the dark days of the nineteenth century.

Moreover, the road is open to our people peacefully and constructively to effect further changes and improvements through the institutions of representative government which we enjoy.

Do not, I beg of you, underestimate these things. They are precious. Do not take them for granted. For they are not only of high value in themselves; they are the meritorious result of self-sacrifice, struggle, and effort by our forefathers and by all sorts of men and women of public spirit and social conscience.

These advantages are things we are liable to take for granted. But if the Nazi tyranny ruled this country; if an iron and heartless dictatorship dominated our lives—well, we should sorely miss the liberties and the social advantages we



enjoy. And once they were gone, the clock of progress would move backwards. There would be a long, terrible, and bitter struggle before us once more to re-establish the freedom and the individual rights we had lost.

Now let us consider the lot of Herr and Frau Johann Schmidt of Nazi Germany.

The people of Germany have lost their freedom. The tyranny to which they are subjected is, as I shall show, harsh and extreme. A substantial proportion of the German people were deceived by the Nazis, but it is well to remember that the Nazi regime has never had the approval of the majority of a free German electorate.

It is true that before the seizure of dictatorial power in 1933 the Nazis won millions of votes from people who thought that any change must make things better. These people were deceived by Nazi propaganda and by their own thoughtlessness. The victims of this deceptive propaganda, both in Germany and here, have in a large proportion of cases since learned their lesson.

Unfortunately for the German dupes, however, they cannot easily get back the liberty they helped to lose; and that is a lesson for us. Most people are not conscious of the virtues of freedom and liberty whilst they possess freedom and liberty; they tend to be careless in safeguarding it; when they have lost it they begin to realise its value—but then it is too late.

So let us be actively conscious of the high value of the liberties we possess. Let us safeguard the essentials of the freedom we enjoy.

At the end of the Great War the Kaiser abdicated. A democratic German Republic was established. The Governments of that Republic and the political leaders of parties which were outside the Government made mistakes, just as mistakes have been made in other countries. I think, for example, that Republican Germany was not sufficiently vigorous



## **THE PEOPLE OF GERMANY HAVE LOST THEIR FREEDOM**

in crushing conspiracies against freedom and democracy.

But we must not ourselves become the victims of untruthful Nazi propaganda against the Republican regime. Under that regime great constructive work was done by and for the German people. The republic was better than the order of things under the Kaiser—and infinitely better than the state of affairs obtaining under the Nazis.

Let me tell you of the progress witnessed by Herr and Frau Johann Schmidt under the Republic.

Clever Nazi propaganda has concentrated attention on the state of Germany in the very worst year of the world slump, 1932—the last year of the Republic—a year in which the people of other countries also suffered severely from trade depression. Nazi propaganda has sought to wipe out the memory of the big things achieved by the German Republic and the German workers during the fourteen years of the Republic.

Trades Unionism went ahead in membership and authority. In 1914, German Trades Union membership was about two millions; under the Republic, Trades Union membership grew, the peak being reached in 1929 when half the manual and black-coated workers were organised. At that time there were over seven million Trades Unionists. The slump brought a decline, but even then German Trades Unionism was over double its membership of 1914.

Under the Republic, Herr and Frau Johann Schmidt enjoyed what was probably the best social insurance scheme in the world. It covered unemployment, sickness, accident and old age. The Trades Unions had a considerable direct voice in social insurance administration. There was no great opportunity for insurance companies to cheat the worker out of his accident compensation.

“ Absolutism ” on the part of the employer was prevented by law. The workers in any place of employment had a legal right to elect shop stewards. Subject to general Trades Union policy, the shop stewards had the right of access to the employer and of negotiation as to shop conditions.

For example, if ventilation were bad, the lighting poor, or piece-rate earnings dropped because of bad organisation, complaint could be ventilated through the shop steward. Complaints were often settled on the spot to the advantage of the workers and the efficient running of the factory or workshop. The workers were protected against summary dismissal; alleged cases of wrongful dismissal could go to the Labour Court, the three members of which were an independent chairman, one representative of the employers, and one Trades Union representative.

German Trades Unions took great care about the education and training of the shop stewards. The consequence was that a valuable body of factory Trades Union officers was built up with special knowledge of factory law and the labour code.



They were a link of high value between the masses of the industrial workers and the permanent officers of the Trades Unions. They afforded much protection to workers of all kinds.

Collective bargaining became the general practice. When large-scale wage agreements had been fixed between unions and employers, the Minister of Labour could, and often did, make the agreement binding on the whole trade or industry concerned. The best firms and the more responsible-minded employers appreciated the advantages of this system.

But there was always the type of employer—we have them here—who wanted to be free to exploit the workers to the full. Their cry was that the employer should be “master in his own house.” These were the men—some of them among the biggest industrialists in Germany (like Thyssen)—who gave huge sums of money to the Nazis, in return for which the Nazis privately promised to break up the unions if and when they came to power. (Even Herr Thyssen, by the way, has now seen his error.)

Besides the social insurance and collective bargaining, the Labour Movement built up a whole social life for the worker round the big Trades Union clubs or folk houses. Workers could meet here for games, cheap (and very good) meals, classes, meetings, sports. There were 10,000 separate labour sports clubs, 85 great swimming baths, and 115 sports grounds. The unions ran Labour Banks, and invested funds in fine workers' flats. The Nazis now exhibit these blocks of flats as show places of *their* work!

The Socialists and Trades Unions built up a big Press service of 147 dailies, with weekly and monthly magazines. Also several cheap book clubs.

The combined income of the Trades Unions, even in the crisis year of 1931, including not only contributions, but the results of all these enterprises, was over ten million pounds sterling.

In legislation and administration the Socialist and Labour



UNDER THE REPUBLIC, 10,000 SPORTS

Movement of Germany achieved much. Education, health, housing and labour protection legislation was passed.

Through the local authority, socially progressive administration went forward. Some of the finest municipal hospitals, schools, housing estates, swimming baths and sports stadiums to be found in the world were constructed by German local authorities during the life of the Weimar Republic.

I remember conducting a Workers' Travel Association party on a tour of the Rhineland towns before Hitler seized power. Among my party were a



... UNDER



number of experienced British municipal councillors. All of us were enormously impressed with the efficiency and constructive character of German democratic municipal administration. The fraudulent Nazis have, of course, exhibited these achievements as their own!

Then came the Hitler Revolution—a revolution not of advance, but of militarist, ignorant, and intolerant reaction, a revolution that was aided to an extraordinary extent by that “world economic blizzard” which afflicted all countries, including America and our own. The tender



THE NAZIS, 80,000,000 SERFS

plant of the new German democracy could not stand up to it.

One of the first things witnessed by Herr and Frau Johann Schmidt after the Nazis seized dictatorial power was the deliberate smashing of the Trades Union organisations of the German workers.

Let there be no nonsense about the Nazis at the beginning conducting an honourable experiment, or of its leaders starting out with fine ideals. Both in domestic and external affairs the Nazis were blackguards, are blackguards and, as far as I can see, always will be blackguards until they themselves are "liquidated."

It was never part of their purpose to build up for the German masses a high standard of life and a free existence. The fundamental aim of these gangsters was to create a vast war machine by the ruthless use of which they hoped to become masters of Europe and, if possible, of the world.

The Nazis regarded their own masses as serfs, destined to be poorly paid cogs in a vast war machine. They looked upon the peoples of other countries which they hoped to conquer as serfs of an even lower order who were to become the hewers of wood and drawers of water for a new all-powerful Imperial Germany.

The Nazis knew that if a very high proportion of German production was to be devoted to armaments (in themselves unproductive), then the standard of life and the labour conditions of the German masses had to be forcibly pushed down to a low level.

Apart from their general doctrine, therefore, that no organisation other than Nazi organisation can be permitted to exist in totalitarian Germany, it was essential to destroy root and branch the Trades Union organisations which were controlled by the workers themselves. Not only the Free or Socialist Trades Unions, but the smaller Catholic and Liberal Unions.

It was not merely a matter of diverting production from



**MAY 1, 1933 · HITLER PLANS :**  
*Labour's Day : the schemer stages his trick*

meeting the needs of the people into armaments work : it was also a question of accumulating capital resources and reserves by still further lowering the proportion of production that went to the workers as a reward for their labour.

Not only the Unions as organisations, but all trace of the Trades Union spirit had to be eliminated from the working people. So the Nazis occupied Trades Union offices ; drove out the Trades Union officers ; arrested, killed, or tortured thousands of them, particularly those who resisted.

Nazi thieves confiscated Trades Union property and funds, including even the £7,000,000 to the credit of the German Labour sports organisations.

Herr and Frau Johann Schmidt saw the same devilish work of destruction carried out against the large German Co-operative Movement. Buildings, stocks, finances and publications were confiscated. Some of this wealth—the result of German workers' thrift—went into rearmament ; some of

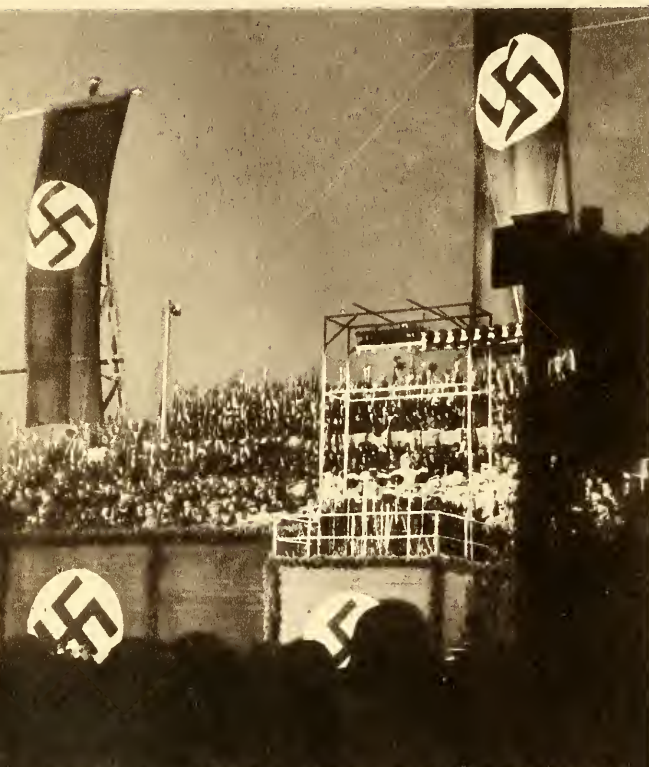
it went into the pockets of individual corrupt Nazis, of whom there are many; most of it was stolen and transferred to the Nazi party itself.

During this process a campaign of brutal destruction against the unions was conducted. Nazi mobs were set to work smashing up the Trades Union headquarters and folk houses. A specially fine building at Leipzig was attacked and some fine wood panelling smashed by axes. In many places the files and the splendid libraries were tossed into the street and burned. The files contained records of workers' contributions and their right to benefit, extending over many years; all these savings were confiscated.

Finally, on May 2, 1933—a brutal and ironic contrast to

the May Day celebrations at the Tempelhof the day before — all Trades Union offices not yet wrecked were taken over by order of Hitler. Nazi Commissars were installed. Many of these were so corrupt that the Nazi Government often had to intervene to save what it wanted of the loot for itself.

Having destroyed the Trades



MAY 1, 1933 · HITLER SPEAKS  
*"Honour work", he cries, "and respect the worker"*



**MAY 2, 1933 · HITLER ACTS**

*Next day every Trades Union office throughout the Reich is occupied by Brown Shirts*

Union organisations run by the workers themselves, the Nazis created the Nazi German Labour Front (led by the notorious Dr. Ley, pronounced, appropriately enough, lie) which was and is nothing in the nature of a Trades Union organisation as we understand the term.

It is a mere creature of the Nazi Government. It includes employers as well as workers. The employers are appointed its leaders in the factories. Of the fourteen Labour Front trustees originally appointed, nearly all had formerly been associated with employers' associations! These people were given dictatorial powers over the workers' conditions. The old rights of the unions and the shop stewards recorded above were ruthlessly swept away.

The Trades Unionists did not take all this lying down. They often fought the wreckers when they could. There was a fight when the storm troopers attacked the miners' headquarters at Bochum. The officials were all killed or arrested. Everywhere

workers who tried to resist were either killed at once, or even worse, arrested and then tortured. When some of them were released later they were permanent invalids and cripples owing to the terrible beatings . . . frequently done with special steel instruments which were used deliberately to smash certain organs. Kidneys, easily smashed, were in this way often damaged beyond cure.

The German Labour Front, to which workers, salaried employees, and the employers all belong, was left under no illusion as to its position. Field-Marshal Blomberg, who was then Commander-in-Chief of the German Army, said in a speech to the Labour Front in 1937: " I demand, first unconditional obedience to the factory leader and to all superiors. . . . What I do not promise now, or in the future, is higher wages."

This statement was made when wages were already at a low level because of the slump years, 1930-32. Wages in other countries began to rise when the world trade cycle turned upwards again. But by the Wage Stop Decree of 1937, no increases in wages were allowed except such as might be granted by the Minister of Labour. The Nazis claim that this was balanced by the Price Stop Decree of 1936. In practice, however, it proved much easier to stop wage increases than to prevent rises in prices.

When they started their big rearmament drive, the Nazis abolished all legal limitation of hours. As a result, hours, which under the Weimar Republic had been restricted, tended to become intolerably long, not for a few weeks in war, followed by a relaxation, but for years on end in peacetime. At first, some compensation was offered by three reforms of which much has been made by pro-Nazi propagandists in this country. These were the " Strength through Joy " and " Beauty in Work " movements, and holidays with pay.

The Strength through Joy activities were conducted in a blaze of publicity, partly to cover up the resentment of the





## RIGHTLY PRONOUNCED "LIE"

German workers at the intense overwork, and partly as an elaborate and costly advertisement of the Nazi Party at home and abroad. The fine ships which called at foreign harbours, with their decks crowded with German workers, were meant to impress workers in the countries they visited, who could not see the condition of the exhausted workers in the Nazi-run factories.

The Beauty in Work movement became in practice the compulsory cleaning of factory windows, the whitewashing or painting of workplaces, the planting of flowers in the factory yards. These are excellent things in themselves. But the Nazi propagandists carefully did not explain that all this had to be done by the German workers in their own time, and without any extra pay. Sunday was the time most usually devoted to this general clean-up.

During the three years preceding the war, work had been conducted at steadily increasing pressure. A Munich medical journal stated that, in the years 1936-38, out of every four German workers reporting sick, one was found to be suffering

from nervous exhaustion. Since the war, the German insurance doctors have been forbidden to report workers as sick except in serious cases. The workers are told that they are regarded as soldiers in the field and must be treated accordingly.

Accidents in this period increased by over one-third. Output began to fall. An intensive investigation was made into the coal-mining industry, where the fall in production was most marked. The result of the questionnaires gave as reasons for the decrease in output, illness, malnutrition, and in some cases passive resistance due to the undue lengthening of the hours of work.

When war was declared the Nazi rulers, not daring to risk any further reduction in output, enforced a strict code of working hours upon their helpless working population. Contrast this with events in this country, when the need became acute. In spontaneous response to the Government's call in the hour of danger, the arms workers of Britain threw themselves wholeheartedly into the task of making up arrears. Not only did they work the long hours asked of them, but in some instances where they felt that the demands made upon them were not great enough to do justice to the situation, they themselves insisted on working longer. Unmistakable signs showed how completely free and unforced was their effort; whereas in Germany, sickness and absenteeism has at times been a problem calling for special measures of compulsion, in Britain the arms speed-up was marked by a reduction in absentee rates. In due course the Government itself stepped in and insisted on some reduction in working hours.

Comparison between wages paid to British and German workers cannot be made because the figures from Germany are not now available. But as it is clear from the German newspapers that the Wages Stop still operates for all increases except those granted by the Labour Ministry, whatever increases are thus given operate on a wages level far below the British pre-war level.

For years German employment has been high. Since the

Nazis started the rearmament drive, the intensity of production has been that of a boom period. The Nazis like to compare the wages of their boom production with those of the world slump period of 1932, an obviously wrong standard of comparison.

If we compare 1939 with the previous German boom period in 1929, the average wages in 1939 were 24 marks a week, as compared with 30 marks ten years previously. Yet the Nazis admit to a rise in the cost of living of 16 per cent. at their own official prices. The actual increase is stated by neutral observers to be considerably higher. Moreover, the Nazis take much greater deductions from workers' wages, for far less social services, than was contributed from wages to the social insurance schemes of the Republic.

Home life has been more than ever broken up since the war; indeed, the process had started a year before the war when a million workers were forcibly deported for road and fortification work on the Siegfried Line. Many who are nearer home are housed in barracks to save journeys. The result is that a large number of German workers are away from home for weeks and weeks on end. German girls of the working class are forced to serve one year as domestic helps; the richer girls merely undertake "training." These working girls are

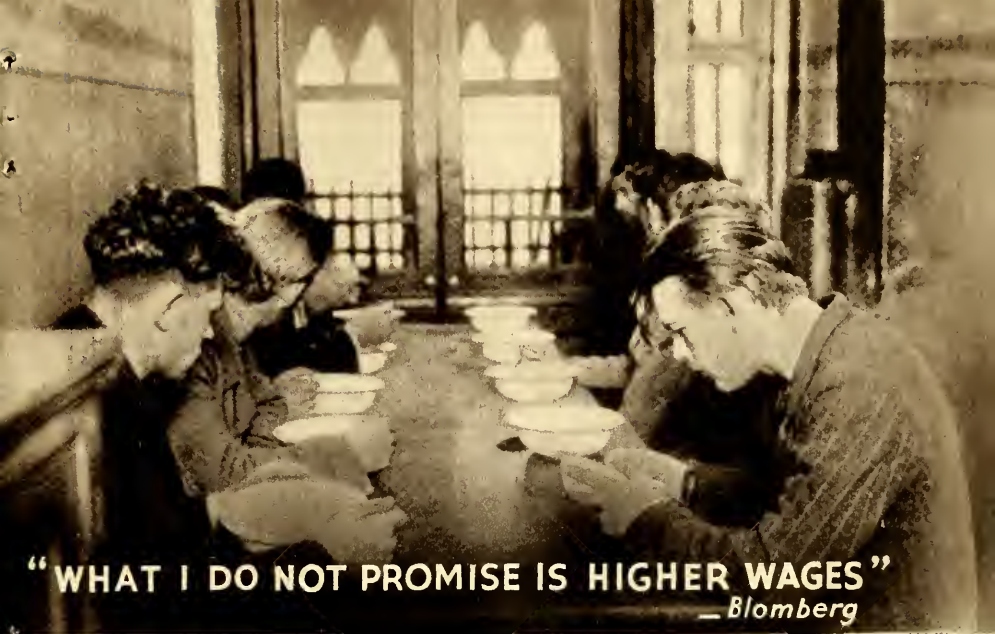


often sent to domestic work on farms far away from home; grave resentment is caused by the fact that so many of these girls return pregnant. Such complaints have been ventilated even in the official journals of the German women's organisations. Schoolboys are expected to attend training after school hours and after working time; the effect on their health is frequently bad.

The workers are told incessantly in all the papers that by the rationing scheme they are getting their share of whatever food there is. This is true, except for the favoured ranks of the Nazis, who get the first share, and can still give parties. The bulky form of Field-Marshal Göring still shows no sign of rationing! The German worker has had to tighten his belt for years. As early as 1936, the decrease in consumption per head compared with 1929 was as follows in kilograms: flour, 59.3 as against 62.2; meat, 17 as against 21.7; fats, 0.9 as against 1.3; tea, 77 as against 105; eggs, 132 as against 160.

Since the outbreak of war there have been bitter complaints about soap. No oil now goes into soap. Miners' wives complain that they cannot get the pit clothes clean. Doctors report dermatitis due to skin diseases caused by bad soap. So much for the economic condition of the German worker under the Nazis. But perhaps worse than this is the mental and spiritual oppression which afflicts all. All newspapers are, in peace and war, Government controlled. So is broadcasting; and listening to foreign broadcasts is now prohibited. One political party only—the Nazi party—is allowed. Religion is persecuted.

The worker in particular is subjected to spying and watching; even during the dinner hour the industrial workers are not allowed to form in groups for the purpose of conducting general talk, particularly about the war, but the poor souls have to listen to "heartening" speeches from the employers and Nazi propaganda. Every family, every house, is watched.



**“WHAT I DO NOT PROMISE IS HIGHER WAGES”**  
—Blomberg

Caretakers at flats are required to send in reports as to everything that happens. Visits to and from other people, publications read, the clubs belonged to, even statements as to books or papers critical to the Nazis read long before they came into power—all must come into the record.

The residents have official forms on which to report anything against their neighbours. Children are taught to spy upon their own parents and to report them to the authorities. The whole purpose of this system is to divide up the masses into millions of powerless individual units, whilst at the same time to mobilise the vast army of serfs in the unthinking service of a military dictatorial state.

The concentration camps are largely filled with men and even women (for they, too, are subjected to this spying by the Nazi police and by their neighbours) who have let fall a dangerous word or have been known to complain or criticise; and the concentration camps are not nice places. Conditions are hard, sanitation is bad, food is poor, floggings and tortures

are frequent. Even if three workers collectively approach their employers to ask for higher wages or improvements in conditions they are regarded as "mutineers," for all requests have to go through the Labour Front which the employer largely controls. Consider what all this means to the human spirit and the human soul. Consider what it would mean to *you* if you were Herr Johann Schmidt, . . . You are in a café or restaurant, by yourself or with a friend. Others are at the table, or nearby.

Conversation proceeds. It must be about nothing in particular. Constantly you are conscious of the need for care. If conversation drifts towards any grievance, you put a sharp check on your tongue, for grumbling is forbidden.

If you are tempted to criticise the national or local government, you swallow your words. That way lies the concentration camp. Perhaps those at your table are "safe." But perhaps not. After all, there are spies and informers everywhere. . . . And you, Mrs. John Smith of Britain—supposing you were Frau Johann Schmidt of Germany?

You are in the food or the cinema queue. At the school waiting with other mothers for your little girl or boy. You would like to talk with your neighbours and friends—to let the conversation flow freely; for, as our William Morris said, "Fellowship is life : lack of Fellowship is death."

You can't ! Be careful, Frau Schmidt !

The Gestapo is everywhere. Spies are everywhere. Nazi sycophants are everywhere. You are lucky if you are not reported even when there is really nothing to report.

And you—both of you—Mr. and Mrs. John Smith of Britain *and* your family. Supposing you were the Schmidt family in Nazi Germany? You can talk freely in your family circle at home. You can say that the Prime Minister should go or that the Prime Minister should stay. You can criticise this or that phase of Government or municipal policy or administration. You are free to do so.

But if you were the German Schmidts you couldn't! You couldn't say that Hitler should go—not unless you were ready for the concentration camp or death. Nor could you grumble about the local Nazi municipal boss. Nor about food or fuel shortages or imperfections. No. You would fear your neighbours, or the Gestapo spies. "Walls have ears."

More terrible still: you would fear your own children. For the Nazis teach the children to report their own parents for what the Nazis regard as dangerous thoughts and ideas.

In time you would fear to think on "dangerous" subjects, even within the province of your own mind. For you might unconsciously blurt something out. The expression on your face might give you away. . . .

Such are the consequences of Nazi dictatorship. It is a crime against the soul of man. In the end it is nationally disastrous. For the nation which destroys individual initiative, the nation that destroys individual char-



acter, ultimately destroys itself. Well, I have come to the end of this account of the Nazis and Labour.

I say again that the fundamental choice before the British people is whether we should or should not become the victims of Nazi conquest and dictatorship, or something very like it.

My answer is no. I hope yours is the same.

If the Germans like this sort of thing within their own borders (and I doubt it of most of them), that's their business. But when their Government seeks to impose it on the rest of Europe it becomes everybody's business.

Hitler and his gang are a curse, not only to Germany, but to Europe and the world. They must go. They have been a nuisance for quite a long time. The nuisance must end.

\* \* \* \*

Such are the dramatic issues involved in the result of this great struggle, but whatever the result of that struggle may be, let us not think that post-war Britain and the post-war world can be the same as the pre-war Britain and the pre-war world. Big problems will arise—many of them difficult. They will best be solved, not in conditions of Nazi serfdom and slavery, but in conditions of liberty and constructive effort.

All of us must be thinking about those problems without prejudice to the vital necessity for concentrating on the achievement of victory. We must give constructive thought to the democratic building of a wiser society in which the disgrace of poverty and social insecurity shall have been ended; in which all the people, in return for useful labour, shall enjoy to the full the opportunity of social service and a proper standard of comfort and economic security; and in which the children of all shall have still greater equality of educational opportunity and cultural advancement. Before the war, Britain was going forward in this direction; after the war, we must continue that march to better times with greater speed and determination.





**BE CAREFUL, FRAU SCHMIDT!**

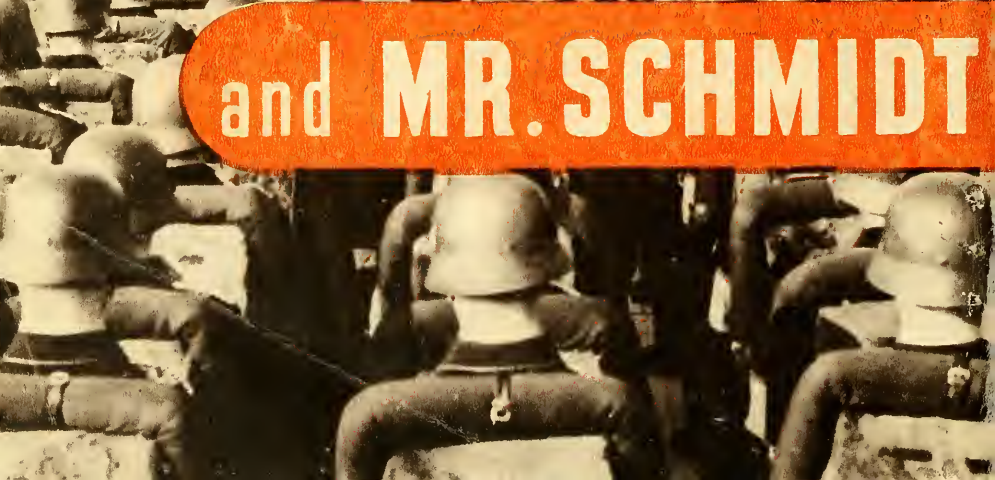


**MR. SMITH**

*by* **HERBERT MORRISON**



*and* **MR. SCHMIDT**





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