5

BUILDING THE PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY

BLOOD AND SOIL

I

For Friedrich Reck-Malleczewen, the Third Reich represented the coming to power of the mob and the overthrow of all social authority. Although Reck lived in aristocratic style in Upper Bavaria, where he had an old country house with eleven hectares of land, he was in fact North German; he owed his origins and his allegiance, he explained to a Munich newspaper in 1929, not to the Bavarian but to the ancient Prussian aristocracy. Deeply conservative, snobbish, steeped in nostalgia for the days before the Junkers were dragged screaming into the modern world by Bismarck, Reck loathed Nazi Germany with a rare intensity. From the comparative safety of his rural retreat, he poured into his diary all the distaste he felt at the new order of things. 'I am the prisoner of a horde of vicious apes,' he wrote. Hitler was a 'piece of filth' whom he should have shot when he had had the opportunity when, carrying a revolver to protect himself against the raging mob violence of the times, he had encountered him in the Osteria restaurant in Munich in 1932. Listening to Hitler speak, Reck's overwhelming impression was one of the Leader's 'basic stupidity'. He looked 'like a tram-conductor'; his face 'waggled with unhealthy cushions of fat; it all hung, it was slack and without structure – slaggy, gelatinous, sick'. And yet people worshipped this 'unclean . . . monstrosity', this 'power-drunk schizophrenic'. Reck could not bear to witness the 'bovine and finally moronic roar of "*Hail!*" . . . hysterical females, adolescents in a trance, an entire people in the spiritual state of howling dervishes'. 'Oh truly,' he wrote in 1937, 'men can sink no lower. This mob, to which I am connected by a common nationality, is not only unaware of its own degradation but is ready at

any moment to demand of every one of its fellow human beings the same mob roar . . . the same degree of degradation.'[1]

The Nazi leaders, Reck thought, were 'dirty little bourgeois who . . . have seated themselves at the table of their evicted lords'.[2] As for German society in general, he wrote bitterly in September 1938:

> Mass-man moves, robotlike, from digestion to sleeping with his peroxide-blonde females, and produces children to keep the termite heap in continued operation. He repeats word for word the incantations of the Great Manitou, denounces or is denounced, dies or is made to die, and so goes on vegetating . . . But even this, the overrunning of the world with Neanderthals, is not what is unbearable. What is unbearable is that this horde of Neanderthals demands of the few full human beings who are left that they also shall kindly turn into cavemen; and then threatens them with physical extinction if they refuse.[3]

Wisely, perhaps, Reck hid his diary every night deep in the woods and fields on his land, constantly changing the hiding place so that it could not be discovered by the Gestapo.[4]

Reck was particularly distressed at what had happened to the younger generation of the aristocracy. Visiting a fashionable Berlin nightclub early in 1939, he found it filled with 'young men of the rural nobility, all of them in SS uniforms':

> They were having a fine time dropping pieces of ice from the champagne coolers down the décolletages of their ladies and retrieving the pieces of ice from the horrible depths amidst general jubilation. They . . . communicated with each other in loud voices that must certainly have been understandable on Mars, their speech the pimps' jargon of the First World War and the Free Corps period – the jargon which is what the language has become during the last twenty years . . . To observe these men meant looking at the unbridgeable abyss that separates all of us from the life of yesterday . . . The first thing is the frightening emptiness of their faces. Then one observes, in the eyes, a kind of flicker from time to time, a sudden lighting up. This has nothing to do with youth. It is the typical look of this generation, the immediate reflection of a basic and completely hysterical savagery.[5]

These men, he wrote prophetically, 'would turn the paintings of Leonardo into an ash heap if their Leader stamped them degenerate'. They 'will perpetrate still worse things, and worst, most dreadful of all,

they will be totally incapable of even *sensing* the deep degradation of their existence'. Aristocrats of ancient and honourable lineage, he raged, accepted meaningless titles and honours from a regime that had degraded them and so brought disgrace on their famous names. 'This people are insane. They will pay dearly for their insanity.' The traditional moral and social order had been turned upside-down, and the man he blamed more than any other was Hitler himself. 'I have hated you in every hour that has gone by,' he told the Nazi leader in the privacy of his own diary in August 1939, 'I hate you so that I would happily give my life for your death, and happily go to my own doom if only I could witness yours, take you with me into the depths.'[6]

Reck was unusual in the vehemence of his disdain for what he saw as the Nazified masses. The sharpness and percipience of some of his observations perhaps owed something to his extreme marginality. For the claims to noble lineage made in his 1929 article in the Munich newspaper were as false as the details of his supposed origins in the Baltic aristocracy that he provided in his elaborately constructed family tree. He was, in truth, just plain Fritz Reck. His grandfather had been an innkeeper, and though his father had acquired enough wealth and standing to get himself elected to the Prussian Chamber of Deputies in 1900, it was in the lower house that he sat, as befitted a commoner, not in the upper house, where the hereditary nobility belonged. Reck himself was a qualified physician who devoted most of his time to writing – novels, plays, journalism, film scripts and much more. He constructed a whole fantastic past for himself, involving military service in many different theatres of war, and even service in the British colonial army. All of it was invented. Yet Reck's claim to be an aristocrat seems to have aroused no suspicion or animosity in the circles in which he moved. It was underpinned by his notoriously superior and arrogant bearing in public. Reck took on in his social and personal life all the attributes of the Prussian Junker. His belief in his own aristocratic character and in the virtues of the social elite of the titled and the cultured seems to have been absolutely genuine.[7] And however many of the details in his diary were invented, Reck's hatred for Hitler and the Nazis was unquestionably authentic.[8]

Reck's conservatism was far more extreme than that of most of the genuinely old Prussian aristocracy. As he astutely recognized, it was

scarcely shared by the younger generation at all. The German aristocracy had undergone an unusually sharp generational divide during the Weimar years. The older generation, deprived of the financial and social backing they had enjoyed from the state under the Bismarckian Reich, longed for a return to the old days. They regarded the Nazis' pseudo-egalitarian rhetoric with suspicion and alarm. But the younger generation despised the old monarchies for giving up without a fight in 1918. They saw in the Nazi Party in the early 1930s the potential vehicle for the creation of a new leadership elite. They regarded the aristocracy to which they belonged not as a status group based on a shared sense of honour, but as a racial entity, the product of centuries of breeding. It was this view that had prevailed in the 17,000-strong German Nobles' Union (*Deutsche Adelsgenossenschaft*) in the early 1920s as it had banned Jewish nobles (about 1.5 per cent of the total) from becoming members. But it was not universally held. Catholic nobles, overwhelmingly concentrated in the south of Germany, stayed aloof from this process of racialization, and many took the side of their Church when it began to come under pressure in the Third Reich. Relatively few even of the younger Bavarian aristocracy followed their North German Protestant counterparts into the SS, although many had opposed the Weimar Republic. They felt instead more comfortable in other right-wing organizations such as the Steel Helmets. Older nobles in all German regions were usually monarchists, and indeed an open commitment to the restoration of the German monarchies was a precondition of belonging to the Nobles' Union until it was dropped under the Third Reich. Yet many of them were attracted by the Nazis' hostility to socialism and Communism, their emphasis on leadership, and their rhetorical attacks on bourgeois culture. For the younger generation, the rapid expansion of the armed forces offered new opportunities for employment in a traditional function in the officer corps. The Nazi prioritizing of the conquest of living-space in Eastern Europe appealed to many in the Pomeranian and Prussian nobility who saw it as reviving the glorious days in which their ancestors had colonized the East. Conscious of the need to win votes from the conservative sectors of the population, the Nazis frequently brought scions of the nobility along to stand with them on electoral platforms in the early 1930s. The younger members of the Hohenzollern family took the lead in supporting the Nazis: Prince August Wilhelm of

Prussia was an officer in the stormtroopers well before 1933, and Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm urged people to vote for Hitler against Hindenburg in the Presidential elections of 1932.[9]

Although the brownshirts and a good number of 'old fighters' continued to pour scorn on what they saw as the effete degeneracy of the German nobility, Hitler himself recognized that its younger generation would be indispensable in staffing his new, vastly expanded officer corps and in giving a continued veneer of respectability to the foreign service. He even allowed the German Nobles' Union to continue in existence, duly co-ordinated under Nazi leadership. However, as soon as he felt it was no longer necessary to treat the conservatives with kid gloves, Hitler made it clear he was not going to contemplate the restoration of the monarchy. Aristocratic celebrations of the ex-Kaiser's birthday in Berlin early in 1934 were broken up by gangs of brownshirts and a number of monarchist associations were banned. Any remaining hopes amongst the older generation of German nobles were finally dashed with Hitler's assumption of the headship of state on the death of Hindenburg, when many had hoped for a restoration of the monarchy. But if Hitler's treatment of the aristocracy became cooler, this was more than compensated for by the growing enthusiasm shown towards them by Heinrich Himmler, Reich Leader of the SS. Bit by bit, the older generation of SS men, with histories of violence often going back to the Free Corps of the early years of the Weimar Republic, were pensioned off, to be replaced by the highly educated and the nobly born. Nazi populists might have castigated the German aristocracy as effete and degenerate, but Himmler was convinced he knew better; centuries of planned breeding, he thought, must have produced a steady improvement in its racial quality. Soon he was conveying this message to receptive audiences of German aristocrats. Figures such as the Hereditary Grand Duke of Mecklenburg and Prince Wilhelm of Hesse had already joined the SS before 30 January 1933; now young aristocrats fell over themselves to enrol, including many from the Prussian military nobility such as the Barons von der Goltz, von Podbielski and many more.[10]

By 1938 nearly a fifth of the senior ranks of SS men were filled by titled members of the nobility, and roughly one in ten among the lower officer grades. To cement his relations with the aristocracy, Himmler persuaded all the most important German horse-riding associations,

preserves of upper-class sportsmanship and snobbish socializing, to enrol in the SS, irrespective of their political views, much to the disgust of some of the older generation of SS veterans, so that SS riders regularly won the German equestrianism championships, hitherto the preserve of privately run riding clubs. But some, especially those who had come down in the world under the Weimar Republic, took a more active and committed role. Typical here was Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, who had volunteered for service in the war at the age of fifteen, joined a Free Corps, then been cashiered from the army in 1924 because of his proselytizing for the Nazis. He had made a living running a taxi firm, then a farm, before joining the Nazi Party and the SS in 1930; by the end of 1933 he was already moving rapidly up the hierarchy. Other young noblemen with similar careers included Ludolf von Alvensleben, who had also served in a Free Corps, lost his Polish estate at the end of the war and his compensation for the loss during the inflation, and made an unsuccessful attempt to run a car firm, which eventually went bankrupt; or Baron Karl von Eberstein, who had tried to eke out his existence in the 1920s as a travel agent. Reck-Malleczewen's observation in the Berlin nightclub had been shrewd and percipient: many of the younger members of the Junker aristocracy had indeed joined Himmler's new German elite. Others, especially those who had enrolled in the army or the foreign service, enthusiastic though they may have been to begin with, were in time to become bitterly disillusioned with the regime.[11]

II

Germany's aristocracy had traditionally made its living from the land. Although over the years nobles had come to play a significant and in some areas more than significant role in the officer corps, the civil service, and even industry, it was the land that still provided many of them with the main source of their income, social power and political influence in the 1920s and 1930s. Reich President Paul von Hindenburg had been particularly susceptible to the influence of the Prussian landed aristocrats with whom he socialized when he was down on his estate in East Prussian Neudeck, and a great deal of public comment had been aroused by the special concessions the government had made to landowners like him,

in the form of aid for agricultural producers in the rural East. As far as the Nazis were concerned, however, it was not the large landowner but the small peasant farmer who constituted the bedrock of German society in the countryside. Point 17 of the Nazi Party programme of 1920 indeed demanded 'a land reform suited to our national needs' and the 'creation of a law for the confiscation of land without compensation and for communally beneficial purposes'. Following on point 16, which demanded the abolition of the department stores, this clause seemed on the face of it to be directed against the great estates. But Nazism's critics made it look as if the Party was threatening peasant farms with expropriation as well, so on 13 April 1928, Hitler issued a 'clarification' of this clause in what had in the meantime been repeatedly trumpeted as a fixed, unalterable and non-discussable list of demands. Point 17 of the Party programme simply referred, he said, to Jewish land speculators who did not control land in the public interest but used it for profiteering. Farmers need not worry: the Nazi Party was committed in principle to the sanctity of private property.[12]

Reassured by this statement, and driven to despair by the deep economic crisis into which agriculture had fallen even before the onset of the Depression, the North German peasantry duly voted for the Nazi Party in large numbers from 1930 onwards. The landowning aristocracy stayed aloof, preferring to support the Nationalists. On the face of it, Nazism seemed to have little to offer them. Nevertheless, their interests were well represented in the coalition that came to power on 30 January 1933. Alfred Hugenberg, the Nationalist leader, was not only Minister of Economics but Minister of Agriculture too, and in this capacity he swiftly introduced a series of measures designed to pull his supporters, and German farmers more generally, out of the economic morass into which they had sunk. He banned creditors from foreclosing on indebted farms until 31 October 1933, he increased import duties on key agricultural products, and on 1 June he introduced measures providing for the cancellation of some debts. To protect dairy farmers, Hugenberg also cut the manufacture of margarine by 40 per cent and ordered that it should include some butter amongst its constituents. This last measure led in a very short space of time to an increase of up to 50 per cent in the price of fats, including butter and margarine, and caused widespread popular criticism. This was yet another nail in Hugenberg's political coffin. By

late June the process of co-ordination had long since overwhelmed the key agricultural pressure-groups and was reaching Hugenberg's own Nationalist Party. By the end of the month, Hugenberg had resigned all his posts and disappeared into political oblivion.[13]

The man who replaced him was Richard Walther Darré, the Party's agricultural expert and inventor of the Nazi slogan 'blood and soil'. For Darré, what mattered was not improving the economic position of agriculture but shoring up the peasant farmer as the source of German racial strength. In his books *The Peasantry as the Life-Source of the Nordic Race*, published in 1928, and *New Aristocracy from Blood and Soil*, which appeared the following year, Darré argued that the essential qualities of the German race had been instilled into it by the peasantry of the early Middle Ages, which had not been downtrodden or oppressed by the landowning aristocracy but on the contrary had essentially formed part of a single racial community with it. The existence of landed estates was purely functional and did not express any superiority of intellect or character on the part of their owners.[14] These ideas had a powerful influence on Heinrich Himmler, who made Darré the Director of his Head Office for Race and Settlement. Himmler's idea of a new racial aristocracy to rule Germany had many aspects in common with Darré's, at least to begin with. And Darré's ideas appealed to Hitler, who invited him to join the Party and become head of a new section devoted to agriculture and the peasantry in 1930. By 1933 Darré had built up a large and well-organized propaganda machine that spread the good news amongst the peasantry about their pivotal role in the coming Third Reich. And he had successfully infiltrated so many Nazi Party members into agricultural pressure-groups like the Reich Land League that it was relatively easy for him to organize their co-ordination in the early months of the new regime.[15]

By the time of Hugenberg's resignation, Darré already effectively controlled the Nazified national farmers' organization, and his appointment as Minister of Agriculture cemented his existing position as leader of some nine million farmers and agricultural workers, who with their dependants made up something like 30 per cent of the population of Germany as a whole.[16] Within a couple of months of his appointment he was ready to introduce measures which aimed to put his ambitions into effect. Apart from the Reich Food Estate, these focused on new

inheritance laws through which Darré sought to preserve the peasantry and build it into the foundation of a new social order. In some parts of Germany, notably the South-west, partible inheritance customs and laws meant that when a farmer died, his property and assets were divided up equally between his sons, thus leading to morcellization (the creation of farms so small as to be unviable) and thus to the proletarianization of the small peasant farmer. Darré's ideal was a Germany covered by farms that were big enough to be self-sufficient. Instead of being inherited by all the heirs equally, or, as in most of North Germany, the eldest son, farms should pass, he thought, to the strongest and most effective of the heirs alone. Keeping them in the family in this way would also isolate them from the market. Over the years, encouraged by this new rule, natural selection would strengthen the peasantry until it fulfilled its destiny of providing a new leadership caste for the nation as a whole. On 29 September 1933, in pursuit of this ambitious goal, Darré's Reich Entailed Farm Law was passed. It claimed to revive the old German custom of entailment, or inalienable inheritance. All farms of between 7.5 and 125 hectares were to fall under the provisions of the Law. They could not be bought or sold or split up, and they could not be foreclosed because of debt. Nor could they be used as security on loans. These were extremely draconian restrictions on the free market in land. But they were not very realistic. In practice, they owed most to Darré's abstract and ideal image of the solid and self-sufficient peasant farmer. Yet Germany was a country where centuries of partible inheritance had already created thousands of very small farms at one end of the scale, while the accumulation of property by landowners had led to the development of large numbers of estates far bigger than 125 hectares at the other. Only 700,000 farms, or 22 per cent of the total, were affected by the Law, making up about 37 per cent of the area covered by agricultural land and forests in Germany. Of these, some 85 per cent were at the lower end of the scale, between 20 and 50 hectares in size. In some areas, notably in Mecklenburg and estate-dominated parts of the East Elbian plain on the one hand, and in the heavily morcellized South-west on the other, the Law applied to relatively few properties and had little effect. But in parts of central Germany its impact was potentially considerable.[17]

Darré hoped to get round the problem of what to do with the heirs who were disinherited by the Law by encouraging them to start new

farms in the East. This revived the tradition, much hallowed by German conservatives, of the 'colonization' of the East, but with one crucial difference: the area that was now to be colonized to create a new society of small and self-sufficient peasant farms was already occupied by large and middling Junker estates. On 11 May 1934, Darré spoke out bluntly against the estates' current owners who, he said, had destroyed the peasantry of East Elbia over the centuries and reduced many small farmers to the status of landless labourers. It was time, he declared, to return to the peasants the land that the Junkers had stolen from them. Of course, since the abandonment of the idea, originally mooted in point 17 of the Nazi Party programme, of expropriating the large estate-owners and dividing up their land between small peasant farmers, it was not possible even for Darré to urge compulsory measures in order to carry out his proposals. Instead, therefore, he urged that the state should do nothing to help estate owners who got into financial difficulties, a position not far from that of Hitler himself, who had declared on 27 April 1933 that large estates that failed should be 'colonized' by landless German peasants.[18]

Darré's ambitious plans were only partially fulfilled. They made him deeply unpopular in many sections of the population, including large parts of the peasantry. Moreover, for all his willingness to let failing estates be divided up, Hitler basically saw the conquest of living-space in the East as the main solution to Germany's agrarian problems. Colonization in his view thus had to wait until Germany had extended its dominion across Poland, Belarus and the Ukraine. In any case, for all his verbal egalitarianism, Hitler did not want to destroy the economic basis of the Prussian landed aristocracy. Many economic experts realized that the Junker estates, many of which had successfully rationalized and modernized their production and management since the late nineteenth century, were far more efficient as food producers than small peasant farmers, and the maintenance of food supplies in the present could not be mortgaged to the creation of a racial utopia in the future. In practice, therefore, the number of new small farms created east of the river Elbe did not significantly increase over what it had been in the last years of the Weimar Republic. Reich Entailed Farmers' sons disinherited by the Law did not, by and large, manage to find new properties under the scheme, and in any case, many Catholic peasants from the South German

Map 12. Reich Entailed Farms

hills were less than enthusiastic about being uprooted to the distant shores of Pomerania or East Prussia, far from their families, surrounded by alien Protestants speaking strange dialects in an unfamiliar, flat and featureless landscape.[19]

Under the debt clearance scheme initiated by Darré's predecessor Alfred Hugenberg, 650 million Reichsmarks were paid out by the government to make peasant farmers and estate owners solvent. This compared well with the 454 million paid out under Weimar between 1926 and 1933. Indebted farmers who fell under the aegis of the Reich Entailed Farm Law suddenly found that the threat of foreclosure had disappeared. However, the owners of entailed farms were frequently refused credit on the grounds that they could no longer use their farm as collateral. The fact that some used their new status to refuse to pay their existing debts only reinforced the determination of suppliers and merchants to make them pay cash for everything they bought. The Law thus made it more difficult than before for farmers to invest in expensive machinery, or to buy up small pieces of agricultural land adjoining their own farms. 'What use to us is a hereditary farm that's going to be debt-free in about 30 years' time,' one said, 'when we can't raise any money now, because nobody's giving us anything?'[20] There was bitterness and resentment amongst the sons and daughters of farmers who now saw themselves suddenly disinherited: many of them had worked hard all their lives as unpaid family assistants in the expectation of inheriting a portion of their father's land, only to have this prospect brusquely removed by the provisions of the new law. Farmers sympathetic to their children's plight could no longer follow the custom, common in areas of primogeniture, of remortgaging the farm to raise money for dowries or cash sums to be made over to their disinherited offspring in their last will and testament. In the practice of one notary alone, it was reported in the spring of 1934, twenty engagements had been called off since the Law's introduction since the brides' fathers could no longer raise the money for the dowries.[21] Moreover, it was now more difficult for the disinherited to buy their own farms even if they did possess some cash, since by taking 700,000 farms out of the property market the Law increased prices for non-entailed farmland. Ironically, therefore, the Reich Entailed Farm Law left the unsuccessful sons and daughters of farmowners no option but to leave the land and migrate to the cities,

the very opposite of what Darré had intended. So onerous were the restrictions it imposed that many entailed farmers no longer felt they really owned their property at all; they were merely trustees or administrators for it.[22]

The removal of automatic inheritance rules created serious tensions in the family. Farmers thought the Law would be 'the occasion for an embittered sibling war', it was reported, 'and see as the consequence the introduction of a system of one-child families' – another respect in which the effects of the Law promised to be the reverse of what Darré had expected. In Bavaria towards the end of 1934 one such farmer, the longest-serving Party member in his district, was sent to prison for three months for saying in public that Hitler was not a farmer and did not have any children himself, or he would not have passed the Law. In court he repeated these sentiments, though without the earthy obscenities that had accompanied them in his original statement. Peasant farmers even brought court cases challenging the decision to designate them as Reich entailed farmers.[23] By the summer of 1934 peasant farmers had turned against the Nazis' agrarian policies everywhere; in Bavaria the atmosphere on market-days was said to be so hostile to the Party that local gendarmes did not dare intervene, and well-known Nazis avoided the farmers for fear they would be subjected to a barrage of aggressive questions. Even in areas like Schleswig-Holstein, where the rural population had voted in overwhelming numbers for the Nazi Party in 1930–33, the peasants were said by July 1934 to be depressed, particularly about the prices they were getting for their pigs. In addition, a Social Democratic agent reported at this time from North-west Germany:

> Formerly the middling and large landowners of Oldenburg and East Friesia were very enthusiastic for the Nazis. But nowadays they are almost unanimously rejecting them and returning to their old conservative tradition. A particular contribution to this change had been made amongst East Friesian cattle-breeders and rich polder-farmers by the Entailed Farm Law, and amongst the middling farmers and land-users above all by the compulsory regulation of milk and egg production.[24]

The problem here was that instead of selling their milk and eggs direct to consumers, as they had done previously, the farmers were now having to go through the elaborate structure of the Reich Food Estate, which

meant that they were only getting 10 pfennigs a litre of milk instead of the previous 16, since the wholesalers raked off 10 pfennigs and the price maximum was fixed at 20. Not surprisingly, a black market in eggs and milk soon emerged, to the irritation of the authorities, who responded with police raids, the mass seizure of contraband eggs and arrests of those people involved.[25]

Older peasants remembered the grand promises made by Darré in 1933 and continued to grumble more openly and unrestrainedly than almost any other sector of the population, because the regime felt unable to crack down on them hard in view of their indispensability. Nazi speakers continued to encounter heckling at farmers' meetings; at one such assembly, in Silesia in 1937, when the speaker lost his temper and told his audience that the Gestapo would soon teach them how to be National Socialists, most of the listeners simply got up and walked out. Farmers complained not only about low prices, the flight of their labourers from the land, the cost of machinery, fertilizer and the rest, but also about the high salaries of Reich Food Estate officials who did nothing but interfere. Many, like other Germans, resented the continual demands of the Party and affiliated organizations for donations and contributions.[26] Particularly vociferous were the owners of Reich Entailed Farms, who felt so secure in their tenure that they could afford to speak with a sometimes astonishing openness. Asked by a young Nazi whether the peasants in a particular Bavarian village could really be supporters of the Party when they were so ready to curse it, one such farmer replied, 'Nah, we're no Hitlerites, they only have those in Berlin.' When the young man then said he thought he should enlighten them and bring them to their senses, the farmer, applauded by the others present, told him: 'We don't need any enlightening, you scamp! You ought to be still at school!' Peasant farmers felt they had lost their freedom to buy and sell their goods, and in the cases of the Reich Entailed Farms their property too, on the open market, and had gained nothing in return. Yet many observers remembered 'that farmers have always cursed every government through the ages'. Grumbling at the Nazi regime was no different. Moreover, younger farmers and farmers' sons saw opportunities in the regime as well, in many cases in terms of jobs in the administration of the Reich Food Estate itself. The Nazi ideology of 'blood and soil' had more appeal to them than to cynical old peasant farmers who

thought they had seen it all before and who paid more attention in the end to material factors. But even the older farmers were aware that their situation by 1939 was not so bad as it had been six or seven years earlier.[27]

III

Despite the many and often contradictory pressures to which they were subjected under the Third Reich, village communities did not change fundamentally between 1933 and 1939. In rural areas of Protestant North Germany, the Nazi Party had been able to unite local opinion, often backed by leading figures in the community such as the village pastor and schoolteacher, the more prosperous farmers and even sometimes the local estate owner, behind the promise to keep the class struggle that was raging in the towns and cities from disturbing the relative peace of the countryside. Here as elsewhere, the promise of a united national community was a potent slogan that won Nazism many supporters before 1933.[28] Leading peasant families in many villages slipped effortlessly into leading roles in the new Reich. In rural Bavaria, the Nazi Party was wary of upsetting local opinion by parachuting 'old fighters' into village councils or mayors' offices if they did not already have the respect of the villagers by virtue of their family or their place within the traditional hierarchy of the farming community. Particularly where Catholicism was strong, and villagers had continued to vote for the Centre Party or its Bavarian equivalent, the Bavarian People's Party, up to 1933, the Nazis trod warily. Generating consensus and neutralizing potential opposition were the priorities. For their part, villagers were mostly quite happy to adapt to the new regime if this preserved existing social and political structures.[29]

In the Bavarian village of Mietraching, for example, village treasurer Hinterstocker, who had held office since 1919, was persuaded by other members of the Bavarian People's Party to join the Nazi Party in 1933 so that he could keep his post and prevent a rabid 'old fighter' from getting his hands on the community purse-strings. When a particularly disliked Nazi threatened to take over the mayoralty in 1935, the village elders once more persuaded the popular and ever-obliging Hinterstocker

to do the decent thing and become mayor himself. In this position, Hinterstocker was said to have done everything he could in subsequent years to keep the most unpopular measures of the regime from impacting on the village, and he made a point of taking part every year without fail in the village's religious processions, much to the satisfaction of the other villagers. On 12 December 1945, as the regional administrator told the American occupation authorities, 90 per cent of the villagers were reported to be in favour of his reappointment.[30] In another Bavarian village, when the local Party tried to put an 'old fighter' into a key post, the local administrator's office registered its alarm:

> The district office is not in a position to agree to the suggestion that the master tailor S. should be appointed mayor of the commune of Langenpreising. In discussion with the councillors, the latter have unanimously expressed a wish to leave the existing mayor Nyrt in office, since as a farmer he is better suited to this post than the master tailor S . . . The district office is also of the opinion that the appointment of a respected farmer is a better guarantee for the smooth running of communal business.[31]

Village council members even had to be reminded from time to time that mayors were appointed and not elected under the Third Reich, when the minutes of their meetings reached higher authority.[32] In parts of rural Lippe, things could be even more disconcerting for the Party, as in the case of Mayor Wöhrmeier in the village of Donop, who refused to take part in Nazi Party functions or to use the 'Hail, Hitler!' greeting when signing off his letters, never possessed a swastika flag and organized successful economic boycotts against village artisans and tradespeople who backed the efforts of the local Party Leader to oust him. Despite repeated denunciations, Wöhrmeier successfully held on to his post all the way up to 1945.[33]

The solidarity of village communities in many parts of Germany had been created over centuries through a dense network of customs and institutions, which governed common rights such as gleaning, wood-collecting and the like. Villages often consisted of intertwined groups of family and kin, and the role of unpaid family assistants, who might include at times of particularly heavy demand for labour cousins, uncles and aunts from nearby farms as well as the family itself, was similarly governed by long-hallowed tradition. The precariousness of everyday

life on the land had generated an economy based on a system of mutual obligations that could not easily be disturbed – hence the resentment in many parts of the countryside against the Reich Entailed Farm Law, even among those it ostensibly benefited. At the same time, there were also considerable inequalities of class and status within village communities, not only between farmers on the one hand and millers, cattle dealers, blacksmiths and the like on the other, but also amongst the farmers themselves. In the Hessian village of Körle, for instance, with roughly a thousand souls around 1930, the community was split into three main groups. At the top were the 'horse-farmers', fourteen substantial peasant farmers with between 10 and 30 hectares each, producing enough of a surplus for the market to be able to keep horses and employ labourers and maids on a permanent basis and more temporarily at harvest-time. In the middle were the 'cow-farmers', sixty-six of them in 1928, who were more or less self-sufficient with 2 to 10 hectares of land apiece but depended for labour on their own relatives and occasionally employed extra labourers at time of need, though they generally paid them in kind rather than in money. Finally, at the bottom of the social heap, there were the 'goat-farmers', eighty households with less than 2 hectares each, dependent on the loan of draught animals and ploughs from the horse-farmers, and paying for their services by working for them at times in return.[34]

By the 1920s, the economic situation of this last group had become precarious enough for a number of the menfolk to have to earn a living during the week by working as industrial labourers in nearby towns, to which the village was linked by a good railway connection. This brought them into contact with Communism and Social Democracy, which soon became the political preference of many of the poorer families in Körle. Nevertheless, the network of mutual dependencies and obligations helped unite the community and cement the role of the horse-farmers as its natural and generally accepted leaders; political differences worried the village elite, but they were still expressed largely outside the traditional structures of the village. The horse-farmers and cow-farmers were mostly Nationalist by political conviction, and cannot have been very pleased when the existing mayor was ousted in 1933 to make way for a leading local Nazi. Yet the rhetoric of Nazism had a powerful social appeal to the community at all social levels. Villagers, suitably

encouraged by the outpourings of the Propaganda Ministry and its numerous organs, could readily identify with the image of Hitler as head of a national household based on a network of mutual obligations in the organic national community. If propaganda had its limitations in the countryside, with only one radio set for every twenty-five inhabitants compared with one in eight in the towns even in 1939, and no direct access to cinemas, then the Ministry did its best to get its message across through encouraging the purchase of 'People's Receivers' and sending mobile cinemas round the villages. The message they conveyed, of the new People's Community in which the peasantry would occupy a central place, was not unwelcome and helped reassure the older farmers that not a lot would change; perhaps the new regime would even restore the hierarchical community structures that had been undermined by the drift of young men from poor families into the towns and the spread of Marxist ideology amongst the goat-farmers.[35]

Given such cohesive social structures, it is not surprising that village communities remained largely intact during and after the Nazi seizure of power. There was little resistance to the takeover; the local Communists were subject to house-searches and threatened with arrest, and in social terms the suppression of the labour movement in Körle, such as it was, clearly represented the reassertion of the dominance of the horse-farmers and cow-farmers over the village lower class, the goat-farmers. However, using the rhetoric of community to crush opposition to the new regime also had implications in the village as to how far the process of co-ordination could go. The goat-farmers and their sons were too valuable to the village elites to be crushed altogether. Thus the monarchist father of the local Nazi who led the police and brownshirt raids on the homes of the local Communists in 1933 threatened to disinherit him if any of those affected were taken out of the village, and thus he limited the effects of the action. When stormtroopers were brought in to the village from outside to confiscate the bicycles of the local cycling club, which was close to the Communist Party, the local innkeeper, a long-established Nazi Party member, presented them with a fictitious deed purporting to show that the club owed him so much money that he was entitled to seize the bicycles in lieu of payment. The stormtroopers withdrew, and the innkeeper stowed the bicycles away in his loft, where they remained until they were retrieved by their former owners after

the war. Village solidarities were often more important than politics, particularly when they were threatened from outside.[36]

Nevertheless, the Third Reich did not leave them wholly untouched. In Körle, for example, as in other parts of rural Germany, the Nazi regime opened up generational tensions as most fathers of all social groups remained opposed to Nazism while many sons saw membership and activity in the Party as a means of asserting themselves against an authoritarian older generation. By joining a variety of Nazi Party organizations they found a new role that was not dependent on their elders. Interviewed after the war, villagers said the early years of the Third Reich brought 'war' into every household.[37] As the demand for industrial labour grew, more young men, and, increasingly, young women from the goat-farmer households spent more time working for wages in the towns, bringing new prosperity into the home but also getting exposed to new ideas and new forms of social organization. The Hitler Youth, the Labour Service, the army and a whole variety of women's organizations took boys and girls, young men and women out of the village and showed them the wider world. The escalating Nazi attack on the Churches also began to undermine another central village institution, both as an instrument of socialization and as a centre of social cohesion. At the same time, however, these changes had their limits. The older generation's belief in the community and the farmers' dependence on the labour and other obligations of the young meant that the arrogance of the younger generation was tolerated, the tensions it generated dispelled by humour, and the household and community preserved intact. And the younger generation's involvement in Nazi Party organizations did not bring them much new independence as individuals; it mainly meant they extended their community allegiance to a new set of institutions.[38]

The fact that village social structures were not fundamentally affected by the regime perhaps helps explain why in the end, for all their grumbling, the peasants were not driven into outright opposition. The major bones of contention – labour shortages, the unwelcome side-effects of the Reich Entailed Farm Law, the low prices for their produce set by the Reich Food Estate – presented the peasantry with obstacles they did their best to circumvent with their traditional cunning, adulterating flour to make it go further, selling produce directly on the black market and so

on. They could also have recourse to the law, and many did so. The effects of the Reich Entailed Farm Law, for example, were mitigated by the inclusion of provisions for legally removing entailed farmers who refused to pay their debts, or failed to run their farms in an orderly manner. Special local courts, on which the local farming community was well represented, were not afraid to disbar such miscreants, since it was clearly in the interests of efficient food production as well as of peace and stability in the countryside that they do so.[39] On the whole, indeed, these courts took their decisions on a practical rather than an ideological basis, and they went some way towards assuaging the anger of the farming community at the deleterious consequences of the Entailed Farm Law.[40]

In the rural Protestant district of Stade, on the North German coast, where the Nazis had already won far more votes than average in the elections of the early 1930s, peasant farmers were basically in favour of a system of fixed prices and quotas, since that made life less uncertain, and the whole ethos of peasant society there, as in other parts of Germany, had never been wholly attuned to free market capitalism in any case. What they did not like were prices that were fixed too low. The lower the prices, the more they grumbled. As might be expected from people whose whole lives, like those of their forebears, had been constructed around the need to eke a precarious living from the land, their dissatisfaction with the regime was limited to the instances in which it had an adverse effect on their livelihood. Moreover, evasion of the production quotas laid down by the Reich Food Estate or the Four-Year Plan often sprang more from the contradictory and irrational ways in which the agrarian economy was managed than from any objection to the quotas in principle. Thus, for example, when small farmers refused to meet their grain quotas, as they often did, this was in many cases so that they could use the withheld grain to feed their livestock and so meet their milk and cattle quotas. The solidarity of rural communities also meant that farmers felt relatively safe in evading the quotas or indeed in voicing their dissatisfaction over the regime's agrarian politics: in contrast to the situation in urban Germany, it was rare for anyone in the countryside to be denounced to the Gestapo or the Party for uttering criticism of the regime, except where really severe conflicts emerged between the old village elites and the aspiring but politically frustrated

younger generation. Despite the exhortations of the Reich Food Estate and the Four-Year Plan administration, peasant farmers often remained suspicious of agricultural modernization, new techniques and unfamiliar machinery, quite apart from the practical difficulties of obtaining these things, and the Third Reich did little in consequence to push on the modernization of small-farm agriculture. Instead, grandiose nationwide pageants like the annual Harvest Thanksgiving Festival, which drew more participants than any other ceremony or ritual occasion in the Third Reich, confirmed the peasants in their stubbornness through the uncritical celebration of their contribution to the national community. In the end, therefore, Darré's promise of a new rural utopia was no more realized by 1939 than was the contrary ambition of the regime to achieve national self-sufficiency in food supplies; but few peasants were really interested in these things, however flattered they might have been by the accompanying propaganda. What really mattered to them was that they were making a decent living, better than they had done in the Depression years, and they could live with that.[41]

THE FATE OF THE MIDDLE CLASSES

I

The peasantry were generally assigned in German political discourse in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to that peculiar and amorphous social group known by the untranslatable German appellation of the *Mittelstand*. This term expressed in the first place the aspirations of right-wing propagandists that the people who were neither bourgeois nor proletarian should have a recognized place in society. Roughly equivalent to the French *petite bourgeoisie* or the English lower middle class, they had come by the early 1930s to embody much more than a mere social group: in German politics they stood for a set of values. Located between the two great antagonistic classes into which society had become divided, they represented people who stood on their own two feet, independent, hard-working, the healthy core of the German people, unjustly pushed to the side by the class war that was raging all about them. It was to people like these – small shopkeepers, skilled artisans running their own workshops, self-sufficient peasant farmers – that the Nazis had initially directed their appeal. The Nazi Party programme of 1920 was indeed among other things a typical product of the far-right politics of the German *Mittelstand*; the support of such people was among the factors that had got the Party off the ground in the first place.[42]

The resentments of such groups were many, their perceived enemies legion. Small shopkeepers resented the big department stores, artisans hated the mass production of the big factories, peasants grumbled about unfair competition from the big estates. All of them were susceptible to the appeal of political rhetoric that blamed scapegoats such as the Jews

for their problems. Representatives of all these groups saw an opportunity in the coming of the Third Reich to realize their long-held aspirations. And initially, indeed, they met with some success. The locally based attacks on the department stores, the boycotts and discriminations driven in many cases by artisans and small shopkeepers themselves, acting through the Nazi Party and the SA, were quickly backed by a Law for the Protection of Individual Trade passed on 12 May 1933. From now on, chain stores were forbidden to expand or open new branches, to add new lines, or to house within their walls self-contained departments such as barbers' shops or shoemaking and shoe-repair sections. Restaurants in department stores, widely believed to be undercutting independent innkeepers and restaurateurs, were ordered to be closed. In August 1933 a new decree imposed further bans on baking, sausage-making, watch-repairing, photo-developing, and car-servicing by department stores. Three months later, department and chain stores were prohibited from offering a discount of more than 3 per cent on prices, a measure also extended to consumer co-operatives. Mail-order firms were reined in; Party organizations did their best to ensure that contracts for uniforms and equipment went to small businesses. From September 1933 the government's housing repair and reconstruction subsidies provided a boost for many carpenters, plumbers, masons and other craftsmen.[43] Artisans' pressure-groups, frustrated by their failure to get what they wanted during the Weimar years, pressed for better qualifications and recognition of their corporate status through compulsory membership in trade guilds, and got them: from June 1934 artisans had to belong to a guild (*Innung*), which was required to regulate their particular branch of trade, from January 1935 under the supervision of the Economic Ministry. After 1935 it was compulsory for artisans to pass a master's examination in order to be officially registered and thus to receive permission to open a workshop. These were long-held ambitions which went some way towards restoring the status many artisans felt they had lost in the course of industrialization and the rise of factory-based mass production. They were strongly backed by Schacht, who felt that small workshops and their owners made a useful contribution to the economy and deserved defending against the attempts of the Labour Front to degrade their status to that of workers by incorporating them into its organization.[44]

But for all the rhetoric and for all the pressure applied on the ground by local Party and brownshirt activists whose own background in many cases lay in the world of the small shopkeeper, trader or artisan, the initial flurry of practical action and legislative intervention in favour of small businesses soon died away as the economy began to be driven by the overwhelming imperatives of rearmament. Headlong rearmament necessarily favoured big business. Despite all the Nazis' promises to rescue the lower middle class and the small businessman, the number of artisan enterprises, which had increased during the economic recovery by around 18 per cent between 1931 and 1936, declined by 14 per cent between 1936 and 1939.[45] Between 1933 and 1939 the number of cobblers' workshops decreased by 12 per cent, of carpenters' by 14 per cent. The total turnover of artisanal trade had not recovered to its 1926 levels by 1939. Many artisans indeed were actually poorer than industrial workers. The shortage of raw materials, the competition of larger enterprises, the prohibitive expense of purchasing the machinery needed to process, for example, artificial leather, were some of the factors involved in bringing about these problems. Some traditional handicrafts like violin-making in Mittenwald or clock-making in the Black Forest were progressively undercut by factory production and went into a steep decline. Moreover, small business, like its bigger rivals, was increasingly beset by government regulations. Compulsory guild membership and the requirement to take an examination before receiving a formal certificate of competence that would allow them to go into business proved to be decidedly mixed blessings; many master artisans had to take the examinations all over again, and the paperwork involved in this was too much for many of them, particularly when in 1937 they were required to keep records of their income and expenditure. Instead of self-governing corporations, artisans found themselves drafted into guilds organized on the leadership principle and directed from above. The promise of enhanced status in a new corporate state had proved to be illusory. The Four-Year Plan, in addition, demanded rapid training rather than the thorough preparation and high standards which had been the idea behind compulsory examinations, so the Artisanal Chambers lost the exclusive right to award mastership qualifications.[46]

Small business was squeezed in another way, too, by the loss of labour through conscription and the better wages offered to employees in

directly war-related industries. The concentration of business was suggested strongly by a 7 per cent decline in the number of owners and managers in trade, communications and transport in the official statistics between 1933 and 1939. True, some of this was accounted for by the closure of Jewish-owned workshops; between 1933 and 1938 the number of Jewish-owned artisanal businesses fell from 10,000 to 5,000, and by the end of 1938 all the rest had disappeared as well. Almost all of them were too small to be worth taking over, and indeed the grand total Aryanized rather than driven to closure was no more than 345. But there was more to the decline than this. Over the same period, the number of unpaid family employees grew by 11 per cent in commercial establishments as it became more difficult to find paid employees. Increasingly, as young men drifted away from this sector of the economy to other, more attractive ones, or were drafted into the armed forces, businesses were run by older men and their womenfolk. A survey of soap and brush shops at the beginning of 1939, for instance, showed that 44 per cent were run by women, and over 50 per cent of the male owners were over the age of fifty; nearly 40 per cent of the male owners also had to supplement their earnings from other sources of income.[47]

A further financial burden was imposed from December 1938, when artisans were required to insure themselves without government assistance. By 1939 the Four-Year Plan, with its fixed quotas and prices, had drastically circumscribed the independence of small businessmen, from butchers, greengrocers, sweet-shop owners, bakers and corner-shops to cobblers, tobacco-stall proprietors and stallholders on Germany's markets. Regulations and auditing took up time, while new taxes and compulsory donations cut into profits. The drastic shortage of labour in armaments and arms-related industries had led to growing official pressure on small businesses and workshops to swell the nation's industrial workforce; by 1939 even independent artisans had to carry a work-book with dates of their training, qualifications and experience; thus registered, they could be drafted into a compulsory labour scheme at any moment; master shoemakers, for example, were drafted into the Volkswagen factory to retrain and work as upholsterers. In order to facilitate this redeployment of artisanal labour into war-relevant production (as the Volkswagen factory indeed was), the Artisanal Chambers were required in 1939 to 'comb through' their trades and pick out unviable enterprises

in the consumer industries; perhaps 3 per cent of artisanal businesses were wound up as a consequence, almost all of them one-man workshops in which the owner was so poor that he had to rely on welfare payments for part of his income.[48]

Characteristic of the disappointment of many such groups in the Third Reich was the experience of the pharmacists, a branch of retailing based overwhelmingly on small independent drug stores. Many pharmacists saw in the coming of the Third Reich the chance to realize their long-term ambition of having their profession formally put on a par with medicine, to push back the growing might of the big drug companies, and to restore the integrity of the apothecary as a skilled, trained expert – a professional, indeed – who produced most medicinal remedies and treatments himself and was guaranteed against competition from herbalists and other unqualified rivals by the establishment of a legal monopoly. But this vision quickly turned out to be a mirage. Although the training of pharmacists was reformed in 1934 and Aryanized, with few objections, in 1935, the apothecaries themselves could not agree on how best to assert their monopolistic claims, and their organizations were absorbed into the Labour Front in 1934. The regime's priorities soon took over, and pharmacists found themselves involved in the search for home-grown drugs to render Germany independent of pharmaceutical imports, and helping to prepare the medicaments that would be needed when war came. In this game, the big drug companies were the major players, and military priorities soon rendered the pseudo-medieval idea of the independent, small-town apothecary producing his own drugs and approved remedies almost entirely obsolescent.[49] The same tale could be told in many other parts of the independent business sector. In the veterinary profession, for example, the same processes of co-ordination took place, with existing organizations dissolving themselves, and 4,000 out of Germany's 7,500 vets already members of the new Reich Association of German Veterinary Surgeons by January 1934. Here as elsewhere, the voluntary professional associations largely co-ordinated themselves, and their reward was their formal incorporation into a Reich Chamber of Veterinary Surgeons in 1936. But early attempts by one wing of the profession to impose a backward-looking corporate form on their national organization gave way very quickly to the standard institutional structures of the Third Reich, centralized, hierarchical, and

easily subject to central government control, as in other areas of small business as well.[50]

Social Democratic observers in Germany reported the dissatisfaction of artisans and small shopkeepers with their situation in the Third Reich. Already in May 1934, small businessmen and retailers were complaining that the economic situation had not improved enough for people to be spending more on the consumer goods and services they mainly produced and sold, while the Party was constantly badgering them for contributions of one kind and another which they had no choice but to pay. Among their many grievances was the fact that promises to curb consumer co-operatives, in many cases institutions formerly close to the Social Democratic labour movement, had not been kept. Co-ordinated into the Labour Front and used as a convenient means of rewarding 'old fighters' by putting them in executive positions, the co-ops lost little more than the subsidies and tax privileges they had been granted under the Weimar Republic. A law of May 1935 arranged for the winding-up of financially weak co-ops, but attempts to ban civil servants from membership were quashed by Hess in 1934; and while around a third of the country's 12,500 co-op stores did close down by 1936, often under pressure from local Party groups, there were still some two million co-op members at the latter date, and small shopkeepers still felt cheated because they had not disappeared altogether.[51] In Silesia, according to the report of a Social Democratic agent, there was great 'bitterness' in these circles:

> The ceaseless collections are leading people to grasp the beggar's staff. Turnover has fallen rapidly. Because of poor wages, workers can only buy the cheapest articles, and of course they flock to the department stores and one-price shops. People are cursing like fishwives, and their disappointment has already made itself publicly apparent in meetings . . . At a recent meeting in Görlitz a shopkeeper spoke up in the discussion and said: 'What didn't they promise us before?! – The department stores were going to be closed, the co-operative societies were going to be destroyed, the one-price shops were going to disappear. Nothing has happened! We've been lied to and betrayed!' The next day the man was arrested. This caused a great deal of bitterness.[52]

Not only was consumer demand slow to recover, but the regime had, in this sense, not been National Socialist enough.[53]

In 1935, even some shopkeepers and artisans who had been zealous Nazis in previous times were reported to be voicing their disappointment that their situation had not improved. One master artisan from Aachen was heard to say that all his colleagues were opponents of Hitler, but only three out of fifty he knew would actually dare to open their mouths; the rest remained silent.[54] One could not say that the Nazis had done nothing for them, a Social Democratic report noted later, but almost all the measures they had taken had been double-edged. Credit had become difficult to obtain, demand was slow to recover, price controls had a damaging effect on profits, guild contributions were burdensome, the guilds were badly run, and taxes were being ratcheted upwards and collected with far greater zeal than before.[55] Yet in the end, even the Social Democrats were forced to conclude in 1939 that: 'For the moment, the artisans' discontent against their increasingly oppressive situation scarcely has a political point.' They grumbled about shortages of raw materials, complained about the loss of their workers to the armed forces or the munitions industry, and cursed the requirement placed on them to keep elaborate business records, but none of this came together into any generalized criticism of the regime itself. The Social Democrats concluded that these were 'social strata for whom political thinking has always been alien'. This was dubious. Disappointment created disillusion, even dissent; but as in other areas of society, there were good reasons why this did not spill over into outright opposition to the regime. Those artisans and small businessmen who did keep their heads above water – the great majority – found for all their troubles and travails that their economic situation was at least better than it had been in the Depression. The small-business sector remained deeply divided, between producers and retailers, services and manufactures, and in many other ways. Finally, of all the sectors of German society this had been the most favourable to right-wing nationalism, antisemitism, and anti-democratic sentiment since the late nineteenth century. It would take more than economic discontent to turn it against the regime altogether.[56]

II

Artisans and shopkeepers were not the only social group who hoped for an improvement in status with the coming of the Third Reich. White-collar workers and salaried employees of private businesses had long looked enviously at the superior pay, status and privileges of civil servants. Known popularly as the 'new *Mittelstand*', they were, however, deeply divided politically, with liberal and Social Democratic organizations rivalling those of the far right, and their votes for the Nazi Party in the Weimar years had not been above the average for the country as a whole. Many hoped that the Third Reich would once more set up the barriers of status between white-collar workers and manual labourers that the previous years had torn down. Fear of 'proletarianization' had been a major driving force in the white-collar unions, whether on the left, the centre or the right. But they were bitterly disappointed when Hitler came to power. The leaders of all three political wings of the white-collar unions were arrested and put into concentration camps, and the unions themselves, along with all other white-collar organizations, were amalgamated into the German Labour Front.[57] Moreover, the fact that the workers and their organizations were formally integrated into the national community dismantled a further barrier. White-collar workers did not possess the close-knit traditions or distinctive culture that organized labour had enjoyed in the Social Democratic and to a lesser extent Communist movement, so they were more vulnerable to atomization and terrorization and less capable even of passive resistance.[58] It was not surprising, therefore, that a Social Democratic agent in a life insurance business in central Germany reported in 1936 that most were politically apathetic, apart from a few former supporters of the Steel Helmets and the Nationalists, who might not have been fanatical adherents of Hitler but were none the less pleased with the way in which he had crushed 'Marxism' in 1933. 'The majority of the male employees are dully accepting of the political compulsion and all the various regulations,' he admitted. Most of them came from the lower middle class. They blamed problems on the 'little Hitlers' of the regime and continued to admire the Leader himself. The chances of any kind of critical thinking about the regime were fairly remote here.[59]

More complicated was the position of university-trained professionals, of lawyers, doctors, teachers, engineers, university professors and the like. As we have seen, the Third Reich had a variable impact on the status of these groups, downgrading lawyers, civil servants, schoolteachers and professors on the one hand, and upgrading doctors in particular on the other. The Nazis' anti-intellectualism and populism had an obviously damaging effect on the social prestige of such groups overall, and the changes that came about in university training reflected this, with the drastic fall in student numbers, the requirement to spend long periods of time in labour camps and the abolition of autonomous student institutions like the corporations. The rapidly growing power and prestige of the armed forces opened up new careers for bright and ambitious young men from the upper and middle classes in the officer corps, and made the professions seem dull and unrewarding in comparison. The oft-repeated and openly expressed Nazi contempt for the law made a career in it unappealing, and it is not surprising that by 1939 there were widespread complaints about the lack of suitable recruits for the judiciary and the legal profession. Even where a profession did relatively well out of the Third Reich, like the engineers, their situation did not improve that much. Rearmament, with its requirement for technical expertise in the design of tanks, ships, planes and weaponry; fortifications like the West Wall and public projects like the motorways; prestigious building projects in Berlin, Munich and elsewhere: these and other factors even led the Ministry of Labour to exempt engineers from labour mobility restrictions in 1937, especially if they changed jobs to further their professional training and development. None of this made much difference to their pay, however: in a company like Siemens, for example, the starting salary of a qualified engineer was still less than that of a first-year schoolteacher in 1936, while the engineers' organization, led by Fritz Todt, was still complaining in 1939 that humanities graduates enjoyed greater social prestige than engineers. The award at the 1938 Nuremberg Party Rally of the second German Prize for Art and Science (the substitute for the now-banned Nobel Prizes) to Fritz Todt, the car designer Ferdinand Porsche and the aircraft engineers Wilhelm Messerschmidt and Ernst Heinkel in explicit and much-trumpeted recognition of the achievements of German technology did not seem to compensate much in the eyes of most engineers.[60]

All professional groups, however, had lost substantially in autonomy through the process of co-ordination in the early months of the Third Reich, when their various professional associations were closed down, merged and brought under Nazi leadership. All had acquiesced in the process, as they had also in the purging of Social Democrats and Communists and the removal of Jewish members from the professional associations and in the end from the professions themselves. The dumbing-down of university education and professional training, with its emphasis on ideological indoctrination and military preparedness rather than on the traditional acquisition of knowledge and skills, added to this regimentation of professional activities to produce a palpable demoralization amongst many professionals. Even the doctors, probably the most favoured of the traditional professions under the Third Reich, lost some of their old privileges without gaining new ones. When in 1935 the government introduced a Reich Physicians' Ordinance, for example, supplemented by a Professional Statute in November 1937, the doctors found themselves tightly bound by a set of rules imposed from above with penal sanctions threatened to anyone who infringed them. Disciplinary courts quickly became active in issuing warnings, meting out fines and even suspending doctors who transgressed. Not only did the doctors themselves now have to keep the Reich Physicians' Chamber, founded in 1936, informed of any changes in their own circumstances, and submit to it any new contractual arrangements they entered into for approval; they also had to breach patient confidentiality by reporting serious cases of alcoholism, hereditary or congenital disabilities and sexually transmitted diseases to the authorities. Indeed the 1935 Ordinance, while affirming the principle of confidentiality in theory, explicitly said it could be overridden in practice if required by the 'common sense of the people', which of course, as ever, was defined by the regime and its servants. Doctors, no matter how senior they might be, were also required to undergo new training courses in racial hygiene and hereditarian biology. Five thousand physicians had to attend such courses in 1936 alone: many of them resented having to listen to interminable lectures by Nazi ideologues whose qualifications they frequently regarded as inferior to their own and whose ideas many of them treated with justified scepticism and suspicion.[61]

An even worse blow to their collective pride was the regime's failure

to concede the medical profession's long-held demand for the suppression of 'quacks', or non-university-trained healers, of whom there were at least 14,000 in Germany in 1935, or three for every ten qualified doctors. The National Socialist Physicians' League, to which about a third of doctors belonged, lacked influence and prestige and was generally thought to be rather ineffective. The position of the Reich Physicians' Chamber, to which all doctors had to belong, was stronger, but the basic problem was that leading Nazis, from Hitler downwards, were quite sympathetic to alternative medicine. The head of the Reich Physicians' Chamber, Gerhard Wagner, as we have already seen, supported what he called the 'New German Healing' and tried to foist courses in it on university medical faculties.[62] In the face of contradictory pressures from the doctors' organization on the one hand and its own leaders on the other, the regime dithered for years until in February 1939 it finally announced that all lay healers had to be registered with the German Natural Healers' Union, and that henceforth there were to be no new recruits into the occupation. Not only did this give the lay healers professional status, but from now on, those who could show the required degree of competence could get the title 'physician of natural healing', thus counting as doctors, while university-trained physicians could now be required to assist registered nature healers if the latter asked for their help. Particularly talented lay healers could even gain admittance to medical faculties in the universities without the usual qualifications. Finally, the whole set of rules and regulations was not backed up by any kind of sanctions against unregistered lay healers, who could continue to practise so long as they did not charge fees. Thus the German medical profession had to endure loss of professional status, increased government interference, and the erosion of traditional ethical positions.[63]

Yet all this was more than balanced out by the enormous increase in the power doctors wielded over the individual in the Third Reich, bolstered by state policies such as sterilization and health screening for a whole variety of purposes, from military service to marriage. Health was central to a regime whose main priority was racial fitness, and the vast majority of doctors were more than willing to go along with the state's new requirements in this respect; indeed, the idea of racial hygiene had been widely popular in the medical profession well before 1933. Doctors' pay increased sharply after 1937, with average gross earnings rising from

just over 9,000 Reichsmarks in 1933 to nearly 14,000 four years later; by 1939 it was said to be in the region of 20,000. The removal of so many Jewish physicians from the profession had led to a growth in the practices of those who remained, the economic recovery had increased people's willingness to contribute to health insurance funds, and the funds themselves had been reformed so as to make it less expensive for patients to visit the surgery and less complicated for doctors to get the fees. This put doctors comfortably ahead of lawyers in the earning stakes, and, incidentally, amounted to around twice the income of dentists, whose role in racial hygiene and its associated health policies was more or less minimal. Outside the surgery, the rapid growth in the armed forces opened up new opportunities to doctors to serve in the medical corps. Doctors were recruited to provide medical services for many branches of the Nazi Party and its affiliated organizations, from the brownshirts to the Hitler Youth. The most ambitious could join the SS, where they could obtain prestige and promotion more easily than in civilian life. Himmler set up an SS medical academy in Berlin to provide them with ideological training, and the doctors within the SS were headed by the grandly titled SS Reich Doctor, parallel to Himmler's own title of SS Reich Leader. Altogether, it has been estimated that over two-thirds of physicians in Germany had a connection with the Nazi Party and its affiliates. The doctors' key role in the imagined Nazi future was marked out by institutions such as the Leadership School of German Physicians, a training camp located in a picturesque part of rural Mecklenburg, where members of the Nazi Physicians' League underwent a two-week training programme in Nazi ideology to prepare them for a political role in the Third Reich in years to come. Younger doctors thus found scope for their ambition in the highly ideologized area of racial hygiene, while older, established members of the profession were able to carry on their traditional work, and even be paid better than before for it, at the price of an unprecedentedly high level of interference in it from the state. It was an implicit bargain that most medical men were willing to accept.[64]

III

Other professional groups were somewhat less satisfied, in particular Germany's vast and ramified state civil service. Despite Hitler's attempt in 1934 to try and sort out a division of labour between the traditional state service and the Party, tensions and struggles between the normative and prerogative arms of the 'dual state' continued and if anything got worse as time went on. While institutions like the Interior Ministry felt obliged to warn civil servants not to accept instructions from Nazi Party agencies or individuals without any formal capacity in the state, Hitler himself, notably in a proclamation read to the Nuremberg Party Rally on 11 September 1935, insisted repeatedly that if state institutions proved ineffective in implementing the Party's policies, then 'the movement' would have to implement them instead. 'The battle against the inner enemy will never be frustrated by formal bureaucracy or its incompetence.'[65] The result was that the civil service soon began to seem very unattractive to ambitious young graduates eager to make their way in the world. As the SS Security Service noted in a report in 1939:

> The development of the sphere of the civil service has in general again been in a negative direction. Well-known, threatening phenomena have in the period under review once more increased in dimension, such as the shortage of personnel, negative selection and absence of younger recruits because of the poor pay and public defamation of the civil service, failures in personnel policy because of the lack of any unity of approach, and so on.[66]

There were serious problems of recruitment already by 1937. The law faculties of Germany's universities, upon which the civil service largely depended for recruits, had shrunk dramatically in size since 1933, as students went into more fashionable subjects like medicine. On the other hand, the bureaucratization of Nazi Germany – a term actually used in 1936 by the Reich Statistical Office – had led to a 20 per cent growth in public employment in federal, state and local administration between 1933 and 1939. But better-paid administrative posts were still to be had in the Party and its affiliated organizations. By 1938 there were serious staff shortages in state offices at all levels. Yet it was not until the summer of 1939 that the salary cuts imposed by Brüning's austerity programme

during the Depression were at least partially reversed. Interior Minister Wilhelm Frick painted a drastic picture of civil servants' chronic indebtedness and predicted that the civil service would soon be unable to carry out its tasks any more. For the sharp decline in the prestige and position of civil servants, however, the Party and its leaders, who constantly poured scorn upon the state apparatus and those who staffed it, only had themselves to blame.[67]

In view of these developments, it was not surprising that a thoughtful civil servant, Count Fritz-Dietlof von der Schulenburg, himself a member of the Nazi Party since 1932, voiced his despair at the way things were going in September 1937. He drew Ministers' attention to the new Reich Civil Service Law, which described the civil service as the main pillar of the state. Without it, he pointed out, the Four-Year Plan could not be properly implemented. Yet its efficient functioning was being blocked by a sharp decline in strength as a result of repeated political and racial purges, while the proliferation of Party and state institutions had led to a chaos of competing competences that made proper administration virtually impossible. He went on:

> Although it has considerable achievements to its credit since the take-over of power, it is publicly *ridiculed* as a 'bureaucracy' either by the Leader or by the community and decried as alien to the people, disloyal, without anyone being prepared to reject officially this disparagement of a class on which the state depends. Civil servants, especially leading ones, are *exposed to attacks* on their work, *which in fact are directed against the state as such* . . . The consequences of this treatment of the civil service are that the civil service feels increasingly *defamed, without honour, and in some degree of despair. Recruitment is beginning to dry up* . . . The civil service is largely reduced to the economic status of the proletariat . . . By comparison, business offers many times the salary . . .[68]

Among senior civil servants such as Schulenburg, disappointment at the dashing of the high hopes they had held in 1933 was palpable. Things, he declared, were even worse than they had been under Weimar. The long and honourable tradition of the civil service was being destroyed.[69]

Schulenburg's disillusion was to lead him rapidly into a position strongly hostile to the regime. As far as the great majority of civil servants were concerned, however, the forces of tradition and inertia proved superior. The civil service had held a special place in German society

and politics since its formation in eighteenth-century Prussia. Some of the ideals of duty to the nation, contempt for politics, and belief in efficient administration, survived into the twentieth century and informed civil servants' reaction to the Nazis. Rigid bureaucratic procedures, formal rules, a plethora of grades and titles, and much more besides, marked out the civil service as a special institution with a special consciousness. It was not easily displaced. Some decided to soldier on in the interests of the nation they thought the civil service had always represented. Others were attracted by the authoritarian style of the Third Reich, its emphasis on national unity, on the removal of overt political conflict, and particularly, perhaps, its effective removal of a whole range of constraints on bureaucratic action. Efficiency replaced accountability, and that too was attractive to many civil servants. In every Ministry in Berlin, every regional and local government office, civil servants obeyed the laws and decrees handed down to them by Hitler, Göring and other Ministers to implement because, above all, they considered it their duty to do so. Dissenters, of course, had been weeded out in 1933; but the vast majority of German bureaucrats were in any case arch-conservatives who believed in an authoritarian state, considered Communists and even Social Democrats traitors, and favoured renewed national expansion and rearmament.[70]

One such bureaucrat, typical in many ways, whose voluminous family correspondence has by chance survived to give us a detailed view of a middle-class perspective on the Third Reich, was Friedrich Karl Gebensleben, City Planning Officer in Braunschweig. Born in 1871, the year of German unification, Karl Gebensleben had trained as an engineer and worked for the German railway system in Berlin before taking up his post in 1915. He was obviously a man of integrity who was trusted by his colleagues, and by the early 1930s he was combining his administrative post with the office of deputy mayor of the city. His wife Elisabeth, born in 1883, came from a prosperous farming background, as did her husband. The couple were pillars of Braunschweig society, frequented concerts and patronized the theatre, and were to be seen together at all major public celebrations, receptions and similar events. Their daughter Irmgard, born in 1906, had married a Dutchman, and her presence in Holland was the occasion for most of the family's letter-writing; their son Eberhard, born in 1910, studied law at a series of universities, as

was normal at the time, including Berlin and Heidelberg, and aimed to take up work in the Reich civil service as a career. This was a solid, conventional, bourgeois family, therefore. But in the early 1930s it was clearly in a deep state of anxiety, plagued above all by fears of a Communist or socialist revolution. Elisabeth Gebensleben expressed a widely held view when she wrote to her daughter on 20 July 1932 that Germany was in mortal peril from the Communists, aided and abetted by the Social Democrats. The country was swarming with Russian agents, she thought, and the violence on the streets was the beginning of a planned destabilization of the country. Thus any measures to ward off the threat were justified.[71]

Well before the Nazi seizure of power, Elisabeth Gebensleben had become an admirer of Hitler and his movement: 'This readiness to make sacrifices, this burning patriotism and this idealism!' she exclaimed in 1932 on witnessing a Nazi Party demonstration: 'And at the same time such tight discipline and control!'[72] Not surprisingly, she was full of enthusiasm for the coalition government headed by Hitler and appointed on 30 January 1933 – in the nick of time, she thought, as she witnessed a Communist demonstration against the appointment ('Has Hitler grasped the tiller too late? Bolshevism has taken far, far deeper anchor in the people than one suspected').[73] The mass, brutal violence meted out by the Nazis to their opponents in the following months did not, therefore, cause her many sleepless nights: 'This ruthless, decisive action by the national government', she wrote on 10 March 1933, 'may put some people off, but first there surely has to be a root-and-branch purge and clear-out, otherwise it won't be possible to start reconstruction.'[74] The 'purge' included the Social Democratic Mayor of Braunschweig, Ernst Böhme, who had been elected in 1929 at the age of thirty-seven. On 13 March 1933 Nazi stormtroopers burst into a council session and hauled him roughly out onto the street. Within a few days he had been forced under duress to sign a paper resigning all his offices in the town. A band of SS men took him to the offices of the local Social Democratic newspaper, stripped him naked, threw him onto a table and beat him unconscious, after which they threw a bucket of water over him, dressed him again as he was, paraded him through the streets and put him in the town gaol, from which he was eventually released some time later, to return to private life. As his deputy, Karl Gebensleben took over

temporarily and without demur as the city's new mayor. Although he was upset by the dramatic and unexpected scene he had witnessed in the council chamber, Karl nevertheless took strong exception to newspaper reports that he had wept as the mayor was carried off to his fate. He had indeed worked closely with Böhme over the past few years, but his probity as a civil servant would not have allowed him such an unrestrained show of emotion. His wife Elisabeth, though disapproving ('I would have wanted Böhme to have a somewhat less ignominious send-off'), consoled herself with the thought that in the Revolution of 1918 the conservative mayor of the time had himself been humiliated by the 'Reds'.[75]

Like other conservatives, the Gebenslebens were reassured by the obeisance to tradition paid in the opening ceremony of the Reichstag at Postdam on 21 March. They dusted off their black-white-red imperial flag and hung it out in triumph, while Karl took part in a celebratory march through the streets of Braunschweig.[76] Anything the Gebenslebens disliked, especially acts of violence committed by the stormtroopers and SS, they dismissed as the work of Communist infiltrators.[77] They believed implicitly the trumped-up charges of peculation brought by the Nazis against trade union officials and others.[78] As Elisabeth reported to her daughter Hitler's speeches over the radio, what shone through in her words was a strongly reawakened national pride: Germany now had a Chancellor to whom the whole world paid attention.[79] A staunch Protestant, she joined the German Christians ('So, reform in the Church. I'm pleased') and listened excitedly as her pastor compared Hitler to Martin Luther.[80] The family's illusions were as significant as their enthusiasms. Karl Gebensleben applauded the 'strict discipline' introduced into public life and the economy by 'the leadership principle, which alone has validity' and the 'co-ordination down to the tiniest institutions', but thought that in time a moderate opposition along English lines would be permitted to exist. Towards the end of May, he and his wife finally joined the Nazi Party, not out of self-preservation, but out of a positive sense of commitment to the new Germany. As he wrote proudly if somewhat self-consciously to his daughter:

> So your 'old' dad has also had to procure for himself a brownshirt, peaked cap, belt, tie and party badge as fast as possible. Mum thinks the uniform fits me

fantastically and makes me look decades (?) younger!!! Oh!!! Well, well, my dear, if only someone had told me before! But it's a grand feeling to see how everyone is trying through discipline to do the best for the Fatherland – strictly according to the motto: *The public interest comes first.*[81]

As an administrator, Karl welcomed the decision to exclude the city council from most future issues and to decide them instead in a small committee. 'By this means, time and energy are made available for useful work.'[82] Before him, he saw a new time of efficiency and coherence in administration. Things, of course, did not quite turn out that way.

This was not the only point on which the Gebenslebens deceived themselves. There were illusions too in the family's attitude to the regime's posture towards the Jews. Antisemitism initially played little part in the family's support for Nazism. When Elisabeth Gebensleben saw the shattered display windows of Jewish-owned shops in the town in mid-March 1933, she ascribed this to '*provocateurs* . . . who, as has been ascertained, have smuggled themselves into the NSDAP in order to discredit the nationalist movement at home and abroad . . . Communists and fellow travellers'. If any Nazis were involved, it was clear that Hitler disapproved, she thought.[83] She found antisemitic speeches by Goebbels and Göring 'terrible' and was alarmed by the Nazis' disruption of Fritz Busch's work as a conductor in Leipzig (she thought this was because he was Jewish, although in fact he was not). Such attacks on Jewish artists were 'catastrophic', she wrote, and added: 'There are rogues amongst the Jews too, but one mustn't forget all the great men amongst the Jews, who have achieved such an enormous amount in the fields of art and science.'[84]

Yet she was soon taking a different view, following the boycott of Jewish shops on 1 April 1933 and the accompanying massive propaganda. 'The era in which we are now living', she wrote to her daughter with unintentionally prophetic force on 6 April 1933, 'will only be judged fairly by posterity.' She went on:

It's world history that we're experiencing. But world history rolls over the fate of the individual, and that makes this epoch, which is so pure and elevated in its *aim*, so difficult, because side-by-side with the joy we are experiencing, there is also sympathy with the fate of the individual. That applies to the fate of the individual Jew too, but does not alter one's judgement of the Jewish question as

such. The Jewish question is a worldwide question just like Communism, and if Hitler intends to deal with it, just as he does with Communism, and his aim is achieved, then perhaps Germany will one day be envied.[85]

She considered the boycott justified in view of the 'smear campaign against Germany' that the regime claimed was being mounted by Marxists and Jews abroad. All stories of antisemitic atrocities in Germany were '*pure invention*', she roundly declared to her daughter in Holland, following Goebbels's injunction to anyone who had contacts with foreigners to take this line; either she had forgotten the incidents she had found so shocking only three weeks before, or she had decided deliberately to suppress them. Germany had been robbed of the 'possibility of life' by the Treaty of Versailles, she reminded her daughter: 'Germany is protecting itself with the weapons it has. That the Jews are partly being shown the door of their offices in the legal system, in medicine, is *also* correct in economic terms, as hard as it hits the individual, innocent person.' She believed, wrongly of course, that their number was merely being reduced to the same proportion as that of Jews in the population as a whole (though this principle, she failed to reflect, did not apply to other groups in Germany society, for example Protestants, whose share of top jobs was proportionately far higher than that of Catholics). In any case, she said, demonstrating how far she had taken Nazi propaganda on board in the space of a mere few weeks, perhaps because it built on prejudices already latent in her mind, the Jews were 'cunning': 'The Jews want to rule, not to serve.' Her husband Karl told her stories of Jewish ambition and corruption that seemed to justify the purge.[86] By October 1933 she had slipped effortlessly into the use of Nazi language in her letters, describing the Communist-front *Brown Book* of Nazi atrocities as a work of 'lying Jewish smears'.[87]

As far as Karl was concerned, the achievement of the Third Reich was to have replaced disorder with order. 'When the National Socialist government took power,' he said in a speech welcoming the new Nazi mayor of Braunschweig as he took up his office on 18 October 1933, 'it found chaos.' The removal of the endlessly quarrelling political parties of the Weimar years had paved the way for orderly municipal improvements. Beyond this, Germany's pride had been restored.[88] When disorder seemed to raise its head once more at the end of June 1934, in the shape

of Ernst Röhm and the brownshirts, Elisabeth breathed a sigh of relief as Hitler acted. Unlike her daughter, she expressed no doubts about the rightness of the murders committed at Hitler's behest. 'One feels absolutely insignificant in the face of the greatness, the truthfulness and the openness of such a man,' she wrote.[89] After these events, the family had little more to say to each other about politics. Their concerns turned inwards, to the birth of grandchildren, and to Karl and Elisabeth's son Eberhard, who was planning to study for a doctorate with the conservative, pro-Nazi jurist Walter Jellinek in Heidelberg; after much discussion, Jellinek suddenly disappeared from their correspondence: it turned out that he was Jewish and he therefore lost his job.[90]

Eberhard signed on for paramilitary training with the brownshirts, did his military service, then entered the Reich Economics Ministry as a junior civil servant, joining the Nazi Party on 29 November 1937. The family's interest in politics did not revive. Nazi Germany for the Gebenslebens provided the stability they had longed for, a kind of return to normality after the upheavals of the Weimar years. In comparison with this, small doubts and niggles about the way in which it had been done seemed insignificant, hardly worth bothering about. The defeat of Communism, the overcoming of political crisis, the restoration of national pride were what the Gebenslebens wanted. Everything else they ignored, explained away, or, more insidiously, gradually took on board as the propaganda apparatus of the Third Reich incessantly hammered its messages home to the population. The conformity of middle-class families like the Gebenslebens was bought at the price of illusions that were to be rudely shattered after 1939. Karl and Elisabeth did not live to see this happen. Karl died on the day he retired, 1 February 1936, of a heart attack; his widow Elisabeth followed him on 23 December 1937. Eberhard's career in the civil service did not last long: by 1939 he had been drafted into the army.[91]

THE TAMING OF THE PROLETARIAT

I

By far the largest social class in Germany in 1933 was the proletariat, comprising roughly 46 per cent of the economically active population. The occupational census of 16 June 1933, long planned and carried out largely free of Nazi interference, showed that a further 17 per cent could be classed as civil servants, white-collar workers or soldiers, 16.4 per cent as self-employed, the same proportion, 16.4 per cent, as unpaid family assistants (mostly on small farms), and 3.8 per cent as domestic servants. Looking at the adult population by economic sector, the census-takers reckoned that 13.1 million were active in industry and artisanal trades in 1933, 9.3 million in agriculture and forestry, 5.9 million in trade and transport, 2.7 million in public and private service, and 1.3 million in domestic service. German society, in other words, was a society in which the industrial working class was large and growing, agriculture was still significant but in decline, and the service sector, which dominates the advanced economies of the twenty-first century, was only relatively small in scale, though expanding rapidly. Modern industries, like chemicals, printing and copying, and electrical products, pointed to the future with between a quarter and a fifth of their workers being women, and women were prominent in some areas of the service sector too. In the traditional and still immensely powerful industries such as mining, metalworking, construction and the like, however, it was still a man's world. Roughly a quarter of all economically active people in industry were concentrated in metallurgy and engineering in their broadest sense. More than three million people were active in these industries in 1933,

and over two million in building and construction; to these, in the core of the traditional industrial working class, could be added 867,000 in the timber and woodworking industries, just over 700,000 in mining, saltworking and turf-digging and 605,000 in quarrying and stone-working. Only a tiny proportion of those active in these fields were women – less than 2 per cent in mining and construction, for example. And it was these classic areas of male employment – or, in the early 1930s, unemployment – that gave the tone to the working class and the labour movement as a whole.[92]

Mass unemployment had undermined the cohesion and morale of the working class in the early 1930s. It had destabilized Germany's large and well-organized trade union movement. In the search for a solution, the major working-class parties had either lost the capacity for independent action, like the Social Democrats, or deceived themselves with futile and self-destructive revolutionary fantasies, like the Communists. In 1933 they paid the price. Between March and July 1933 the Nazis destroyed the long-established German labour movement, closed down the trade unions and banned the two main parties of the working class. Organized resistance by remnants of the old labour movement continued for a while but it too was eventually suppressed.[93] In the meantime, the Nazis moved to create a new labour organization that would co-ordinate the workers under the control of the state. The existing Nazi trade union, the National Socialist Factory Cell Organization, was viewed with suspicion by employers, who saw its potential for militancy as a threat. Business did not want to get rid of the old trade unions only to see another, more powerful form of unionism taking their place. Industrialists and bankers were dismayed by the disorder in the factories, as brownshirts and Factory Cell Organization agents attacked and expelled elected union and workers' council representatives and took over the representation of employees themselves. Employers soon began complaining that these agents were interfering in the running of their businesses, making unreasonable demands, and generally disrupting things by throwing their weight around. In Saxony, for example, the Nazi Party Regional Leader Martin Mustchmann even arrested the President of the State Bank, Carl Degenhardt, and held him in custody for a month. Such actions were not welcomed by the business community.[94]

The disruption was a consequence not least of the radical ambitions

of the Factory Cell Organization, whose influence in this period was out of all proportion to its relatively weak membership of a mere 300,000 employees. Backed by the muscle of the stormtroopers and the co-ordinating will of the new regime, its agents had already moved in to trade union offices and were beginning to run their affairs well before the unions were effectively abolished on 2 May 1933. The Factory Cell Organization's leading figure, Reinhard Muchow, not yet thirty years of age at the time of the Nazi seizure of power, had cut his teeth in a series of bitter labour disputes in the final years of the Weimar Republic, most notably in the Berlin transport workers' strike of 1932, when the Nazis had fought side by side with the Communists. As propaganda assistant to Goebbels in the latter's capacity as Party Regional Leader for Berlin, Muchow had directed his appeal to the capital city's working class, to which indeed he himself belonged. In his vision, the Factory Cell Organization would grow into a gigantic trade union organization representing every employed person in the Third Reich. In this capacity it would form a crucial element in the new corporate state; it would determine wages and salaries, present the government with new labour protection measures, and take over the unions' social functions.[95]

But the Nazi leadership did not want class conflict imported from the Weimar Republic into the new Reich. Already on 7 April, Hess had ordered the Factory Cell Organization not to interfere in the running of businesses, or, indeed, to disrupt the work of the trade unions, whose role in paying benefits to unemployed members was crucial during the Depression. The takeover of the unions on 2 May was in some respects a classic example of the Nazi leadership's tendency to try to channel uncoordinated activism into institutional forms when it began to become a nuisance.[96] The unions were immediately replaced by the German Labour Front, officially celebrated at a ceremony attended by Hitler and the cabinet on 10 May 1933. The man appointed to lead the Labour Front was one of the Third Reich's more colourful characters, Robert Ley. Born in 1890 as the seventh of eleven children of a West German farmer, Ley had suffered a life-shaping trauma as a child when his father had got deeply into debt and tried to raise insurance money to repay it by setting fire to his farm. To judge from Ley's later autobiographical writings, the poverty and disgrace that ensued for the family after his father's conviction for arson left the boy with a permanent sense of

social insecurity and resentment against the upper classes. Intelligent and ambitious, he chose to rebound by working hard at his studies, and, unusually for someone of his background, entered university. Partly supporting himself through part-time work, he studied chemistry from 1910 onwards. In 1914, however, the war put a temporary halt to all this; Ley volunteered immediately and served in an artillery unit on the Western Front until 1916, when, bored with the constant pounding and the bloody stalemate of trench warfare, he trained as a pilot and began to fly spotter-planes. On 29 July 1917 his aircraft was shot down; almost miraculously, his co-pilot managed a crash-landing. But they landed behind enemy lines. Ley was captured, and spent the rest of the war as a prisoner of the French. The incident left Ley with serious injuries, including not just damage to his leg, which was saved only after six operations, but also to the frontal lobe of his brain, which seems to have gradually deteriorated over the years. He spoke with a stammer, and became increasingly prone to bouts of alcoholism and unrestrained behaviour of all kinds.[97]

Ley returned to university at the end of the war and completed his studies, gaining a doctorate in 1920 for his dissertation in food chemistry, part of which was published in a scientific journal. With this training, it is not surprising that he secured a good job in the Bayer chemical company, in Leverkusen. This enabled him to marry and start a family. Yet he remained discontented and insecure, his dissatisfaction with the humdrum routine of everyday life fired by his reading of romantic and utopian literature. The French occupation of the Rhineland, where he lived, fuelled his nationalist beliefs, which turned into admiration for Hitler when Ley read reports of the Nazi Leader's speech at the trial of the Munich putschists early in 1924. Ley joined the Nazi Party and soon became a leading local campaigner, rising to become Regional Leader for the Southern Rhineland in June 1925. As with many other prominent early Nazis, Ley was won over by Hitler's oratory on first hearing it. He conceived a boundless admiration for the Nazi Leader, perhaps, as psychohistorians have suggested, finding in him a substitute for the father whose disgrace had cast such a pall over Ley's childhood. Ley backed Hitler in the disputes that divided the Rhineland branches of the Party from the leadership in the mid-1920s, and helped Hitler to take the reins of power in the Party back into his hands again after his enforced

inactivity following the failure of the 1923 Munich putsch. It was for this reason, and because Ley, despite his stutter, proved to be an effective, rabble-rousing speaker, that Hitler repeatedly overlooked complaints from Ley's colleagues about his financial mismanagement, his high-handed attitude towards subordinates, and his administrative incompetence. Ley was soon running a regional Nazi newspaper, full of antisemitic propaganda whose virulence yielded little to that of the more notorious *The Stormer*, published by Julius Streicher, the Party Regional Leader in Nuremberg. The paper, the *West German Observer*, ran repeated allegations of ritual murder by Jews, and carried pornographic stories about the supposed seduction of Aryan girls by their Jewish employers. Such claims led to several prosecutions and fines being imposed on Ley, which did nothing to deter him from repeating them.[98]

Brought by Hitler to Munich Party headquarters in 1931, Ley stepped into Gregor Strasser's shoes on the latter's sudden resignation as Reich Organization Leader of the Party in December, 1932, though he did not inherit the immense administrative power his predecessor had possessed. Ley's experience in trying to win over the voters of the strongly working-class areas of the Rhineland, coupled with his utopian idealism and his social resentments, gave his Nazism a discernibly collectivist tinge. It made him Hitler's obvious choice to work out plans for the remodelling of Germany's labour organizations early in April 1933. In formal political terms, Ley's task was to fulfil Hitler's vision of integrating the working class into the new Germany, to win over perhaps the most recalcitrant, most anti-Nazi part of Germany's population to enthusiastic support of the new order. But Ley lacked the expertise to do this on his own initiative. He was quick to install the Labour Front in the old trade union offices and to incorporate the Factory Cell Organization. But he had little alternative but to make use of the Organization's officials in setting up the Labour Front's internal structures. Initially, these just placed existing union institutions under new management with new names and arranged them into five large sub-groups. Thus the old trade union organization became one sub-group, with all its subordinate divisions such as its press bureau and its newspaper, while the white-collar unions formed another sub-group, retailers a third, the professions a fourth and business the fifth. The way for the Labour Front to become the nucleus of a Corporate State on the Italian Fascist model, reconciling the interests

of all the different sectors of the economy in the service of the new political order, seemed to be open.[99]

But these ideas, pushed by Muchow and the Factory Cell Organization leaders, did not last very long. Neither the professions nor business were enthusiastic about them, the retailers never had much influence, and Muchow and his friends were by far the most dynamic force in the new structure. Before long, the Labour Front had become what they had wanted the Factory Cell Organization to be, a sort of super-union representing above all the interests of the workers. In this capacity it issued orders regulating paid vacations, wage agreements, equal pay for women, health and safety and much more besides. At a local level, agitation continued, with some officials threatening to send employers to concentration camp if they did not give in to their demands. Muchow declared that ex-Social Democrats and even some ex-Communists were responsible, and instituted an investigation of the political past of all the functionaries of the Labour Front with a view to purging 100,000 of them from the organization. But complaints continued to multiply, from the Minister of Labour, the Interior Minister, even the Transportation Minister, all worried that their authority was being eroded by the unilateral actions of lower-level Labour Front functionaries. Things seemed to be getting out of hand, and it was time to bring the situation under control.[100]

II

On 19 May 1933, acting under pressure from the employers and from government Ministries in Berlin, the cabinet promulgated a Law on Trustees of Labour. This established twelve state officials whose job it was to regulate wages, conditions of work and labour contracts in each of their respective districts, and to maintain peace between workers and employers. The Trustees were officials of the Reich Ministry of Labour. Only two of them belonged to the Factory Cell Organization; five of them were corporate lawyers and four were civil servants. The rather vague terms of the Law were filled out in detail in a further measure, the Law for the Ordering of National Labour, issued on 20 January 1934 and drafted by a civil servant who had previously been employed by an industrial pressure-group.[101] The new Laws swept away the framework

of bilateral collective bargaining and regulation between employers and unions that had been one of the great achievements of Weimar labour policy and replaced it with a new structure that incorporated the National Socialist 'leadership principle'. They stressed that there was no need for antagonism between workers and employers in the new National Socialist state; both would work together in harmony as part of the newly unified German racial community. To underline this, the Laws were couched in a neo-feudal language of reciprocity which, like the real feudalism of the Middle Ages, concealed the fact that real power lay predominantly in the hands of one side: the employers. The powers of the Trustees of Labour included the appointment of Councils of Trust for individual plants, the arbitration of disputes, the confirmation of redundancies, the regulation of working hours and the basis for calculating piece-rates, and the referral of abuses of authority, provocation, disruption, breach of confidence and similar misdemeanours to Courts of Honour which would have a quasi-judicial function and include judges appointed by the Ministry of Justice among their members. The employer was now called the 'plant leader' (*Betriebsführer*) and the workers his 'retinue' (*Gefolgschaft*). Replacing Weimar's system of elected works councils and legally binding contracts of employment, the new system put all the cards into the hands of the bosses in collaboration with the Trustees of Labour. In fact, the Courts of Honour were virtually a dead letter; only 516 cases were brought before them in 1934–6, mostly concerning the physical abuse of apprentices by master-artisans. They might have looked fair and just on paper, but in practice they had little real effect.[102]

This new system of industrial relations represented a major victory for the employers, backed by Hitler and the Nazi leadership, who badly needed the co-operation of industry in their drive to rearm. While the new Trustees of Labour poured open scorn upon the idea of a corporate state, the chances of the Factory Cell Organization's ideas gaining wider influence were struck a fatal blow by the shooting of Reinhard Muchow in a tavern brawl on 12 September 1933. This took the driving force out of the radical wing of the Labour Front, and opened the way for Ley, now more versed in the complexities of labour relations than he had been the previous spring, to re-establish his authority. On 1 November 1933, Ley told workers at the Siemens factory in Berlin:

We are all soldiers of labour, amongst whom some command and the others obey. Obedience and responsibility have to count amongst us again . . . We can't all be on the captain's bridge, because then there would be nobody to raise the sails and pull the ropes. No, we can't all do that, we've got to grasp that fact.[103]

Ley now reorganized the Labour Front, getting rid of the remnants of trade union culture and attitudes, abolishing the last separate functions of the Factory Cell Organization, and acceding to the insistence of the Labour Ministry and the new labour laws that it had no role to play in the negotiation of wage agreements. The Labour Front was restructured along the same lines as the Party, with a top-down organization replacing the previous parallel representation of workers, white-collar employees and the rest. It now had a number of central departments – propaganda, law, education, social affairs, etc. – whose orders went down to the corresponding departments at the regional and local level. The old Factory Cell Organization officials did their best to obstruct the new system, but after the 'Night of the Long Knives' they were summarily dismissed *en masse*. Behind these political manoueverings lay the recognition of Hitler and the other regime leaders that rearmament, their principal economic priority, could only be achieved smoothly and rapidly if the workforce could be kept under control. This involved clearing away the more revolutionary elements in the Labour Front, just as it involved clamping down on any ideas of a 'second revolution' pushed by the brownshirts and their leaders. By the autumn of 1934 it was clear that in the battle to control labour relations, the employers had come out on top. Yet the struggle had not left them in the situation they really wanted. The organization and structure of the shopfloor under National Socialism certainly had a lot in common with the kind of management and industrial relations system desired by many employers in the 1920s and early 1930s, but it also introduced massive interference in labour relations by the state, the Labour Front and the Party, in areas where management had traditionally sought exclusive control. The trade unions were gone, but despite this, the employers were not masters in their own house any more.[104]

In the meantime, the huge apparatus of the German Labour Front quickly began to gain a reputation as perhaps the most corrupt of all the major institutions of the Third Reich. For this, Ley himself had to

shoulder a large part of the blame. His position as head of the Labour Front made him comfortably off, with a salary of 4,000 Reichsmarks, to which he added 2,000 Reichsmarks as Reich Organization Leader of the Party, 700 Reichsmarks as a Reichstag deputy, and 400 Reichsmarks as a Prussian State Councillor. But this was only the beginning. His books and pamphlets, which Labour Front officials were encouraged to buy in bulk for distribution to the members, brought in substantial royalties, while profits from his newspaper – 50,000 Reichsmarks a year – went straight into his pocket. Ley made free personal use of the substantial funds confiscated by the Labour Front from the former trade unions, and in 1940 he benefited from a one-off gift of a million Reichsmarks bestowed on him by Hitler. With such funds, he bought a whole series of grand villas in the most fashionable districts of Germany's towns and cities. The running costs, which in his villa in Berlin's Grunewald included a cook, two nannies, a chambermaid, a gardener and a housekeeper, were met by the Labour Front up to 1938, and even after that it paid all Ley's entertainment expenses. He was fond of expensive automobiles and gave two to his second wife as presents. Ley also had a railway carriage refitted for his personal use. He collected paintings and furniture for his houses. In 1935 he bought a landed estate near Cologne and promptly began to turn it into a Nazi utopia, demolishing the old buildings and hiring the architect Clemens Klotz, designer of the Nazi Order Castles, to construct a new house in a grandiose style, confiscated land to increase the acreage of his own, drained marshes, introduced new machinery and set up a training scheme for apprentice farmhands. Here Ley played the neo-feudal landlord, with the staff lined up, standing to attention, to greet him when he flew in from Berlin, and secured the farm's official designation as a hereditary entailed estate.

Ensconced within such pretentious residences, surrounded by expensive paintings and furniture, Ley spent his leisure hours in womanizing and increasingly heavy drinking, both of which often led to embarrassing scenes in public. The drinking bouts he indulged in with his entourage often ended in violence. One such occasion in Heidelberg ended with the Minister-President of Baden being beaten up. In 1937 Ley was visibly drunk while hosting a visit by the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, and after driving them in his Mercedes straight through a set of locked factory gates, was hurriedly replaced on Hitler's orders by Herman Göring for

the rest of the visit. Two years earlier, after a string of affairs, Ley had begun a liaison with the young soprano Inge Spilker, whom he married in 1938 immediately after divorcing his first wife. His infatuation with her physical charms led to him commissioning a painting of her, naked from the waist up, which he proudly showed to visiting dignitaries, while on one occasion he was even said to have torn her clothes off in the presence of guests in order to show them how beautiful her body was. Subjected to such pressure, and unable to cope with Ley's growing alcoholism, Inge herself took to the bottle, became a drug addict, and shot herself dead on 29 December 1942 after the last of many violent rows with her husband. Hitler warned the Labour Front leader about his behaviour on more than one occasion, but he carried on regardless. As so often, the Nazi Leader was prepared to forgive almost anything of a subordinate so long as he remained loyal.[105]

Corruption within the Labour Front by no means ended with Ley himself; indeed he could be said to have set an example to his subordinates in how to milk the organization for personal gain. A huge variety of business enterprises of one kind and another operated by the Labour Front offered multifarious opportunities for making money on the side. The Labour Front's construction companies, led by a senior official, Anton Karl, a man with previous convictions for theft and embezzlement himself, paid out more than 580,000 Reichsmarks in bribes in 1936–7 alone in order to secure contracts. Sepp Dietrich, the leader of Hitler's SS bodyguard, took due note of the gifts showered over him by Karl, including a gold cigarette-case, hunting-weaponry, silk shirts and a holiday in Italy for his wife, and issued Karl's Labour Front construction firm with a contract to rebuild his unit's barracks in Berlin. In return for favour and influence, Karl used the Labour Front's bank to grant leading Nazis cheap credit or even to buy houses for them at well below their market price. Hitler's adjutants, Julius Schaub and Wilhelm Brückner, his photographer Heinrich Hoffmann and anyone else thought to possess the Leader's ear were the frequent recipients of bribes from the Labour Front; Ley gave them 20,000 Reichsmarks each as a 'Christmas present' in 1935 alone.[106] Social Democratic observers gleefully chronicled a whole mass of corruption and embezzlement cases involving officials of the Labour Front every year. In 1935, for example, they noted that Alois Wenger, a Labour Front official in Konstanz, had been condemned

for pocketing funds intended for workers' leisure activities and forging receipts to try and deceive the auditors. Another official, an 'old fighter' of the Nazi Party, embezzled his colleagues' Labour Front contributions and obtained 2,000 Reichsmarks – probably with menaces – from his employer to cover the missing money. He spent it all on drink. What was done with Labour Front contributions, reported another Social Democratic agent, could be seen in front of the organization's headquarters in Berlin:

> 2 to 3 private cars used to be parked in front of the old Trade Union House up to 1932. They belonged to the Workers' Bank or the Trade Unions. Nowadays you ought just to see them waiting there in a rank, it's 50 or 60 cars a day, and sometimes even more. The Labour Front chauffeurs have got blank cheques for petrol, they can fill their tanks as much as they like, and they do it often because they don't have to account for it. The corruption in the Labour Front is vast, and the general standard of morals correspondingly low.[107]

Ley was far from the only beneficiary of the Labour Front's funds; his open and obvious corruption was only the tip of an enormous iceberg of peculation. Such goings-on did not endear the Labour Front to the millions of workers who were forced to sustain it with compulsory contributions from their wages.

III

The Nazi regime was all too aware that the closure of the trade unions and the regimentation and subordination of workers in the corrupt and authoritarian Labour Front might cause discontent in the ranks of Germany's largest social class, a class which until 1933 had given powerful support to Nazism's bitterest enemies, the Communists and the Social Democrats. Along with its constant propaganda trumpeting of victories in the 'struggle for work', therefore, it also sought to provide alternative means of reconciling the working class with the Third Reich. Chief among these was the extraordinary organization known as the 'National Socialist Community Strength Through Joy', founded as a subsidiary of the German Labour Front on 27 November 1933. Strength Through Joy aimed to organize workers' leisure time rather than allow them to

organize it for themselves, and thus to make leisure serve the interests of the racial community and reconcile the divergent worlds of work and free time, factory and home, production line and recreation ground. Workers were to gain strength for their work by experiencing joy in their leisure. Above all, Strength Through Joy would bridge the class divide by making middle-class leisure activities available to the masses. Material prosperity, declared Robert Ley in his inaugural address on 27 November, would not make the German nation happy; that was the vulgar error of the 'Marxists' of the Weimar years. The National Socialist regime would use spiritual and cultural means to achieve the integration of the workers into the national community. Borrowing from the Italian Fascist organization 'After Work' (*Dopolavoro*), but extending its tentacles into the workplace as well, Strength Through Joy rapidly developed a wide range of activities, and quickly mushroomed into one of the Third Reich's largest organizations. By 1939 it had over 7,000 paid employees and 135,000 voluntary workers, organized into divisions covering such areas as sport, education and tourism, with wardens in every factory and workshop employing more than twenty people.[108]

'Strength Through Joy', proclaimed Robert Ley in June 1938, 'is the shortest formula to which National Socialism for the broad masses can be reduced.'[109] It would insert an ideological content into every kind of leisure. In attempting to fulfil this task, it commanded very considerable resources. By 1937 Strength Through Joy was being subsidized by the Labour Front to the tune of 29 million Reichsmarks a year, while its incorporation of the huge leisure and cultural apparatus of the Social Democratic labour movement brought in further assets, including premises such as hiking hostels and sports grounds. With such resources, Strength Through Joy was able to offer heavily discounted leisure activities that were within the financial reach of many workers and their families. By 1934–5, over three million people were taking part in its physical education and gymnastics evenings, while many others took advantage of the cheap coaching it offered in tennis, sailing and other hitherto quintessentially upper-middle-class sports. In the cultural field, the organization purchased blocks of theatre tickets to make available cheaply to its members, accounting for over half of all theatre bookings in Berlin by 1938. It laid on classical music concerts in factories, creating several touring orchestras to play at them; it built theatres, formed

travelling troupes of actors, and arranged art exhibitions. In 1938, over two and a half million people attended its concerts and over thirteen and a half million its 'folk performances'; more than six and a half million went to opera and operetta evenings under its auspices, and nearly seven and a half million to plays. One and a half million visited its exhibitions, and over two and a half million participated in 'entertainments' mounted on the Reich motorways. Membership came automatically with membership of the Labour Front, so that 35 million people belonged to it by 1936. It advertised intensively both at home and abroad, winning many enthusiastic supporters amongst those in Britain, the USA and elsewhere who admired its energy in civilizing the masses.[110]

Strength Through Joy's most striking activity was undoubtedly the organization of mass tourism for the workers. 'For many', it was reported in February 1938, '"Strength Through Joy" is nothing more than a kind of travel organization.'[111] Already in 1934, some 400,000 people participated in package tours provided by Strength Through Joy within Germany itself; by 1937 the number had grown to 1.7 million, while nearly seven million took part in shorter weekend excursions and 1.6 million in organized hikes. Although these numbers fell slightly in 1938–9, there could be no doubt about the success of these operations. Bulk ordering made it possible to put on package tours at a heavy discount – 75 per cent in the case of rail fares, for example, and 50 per cent in the case of hotel and bed-and-breakfast rooms. This could have a major effect on the economies of tourist regions; already in 1934, for example, Strength Through Joy tourists brought in 175,000 people to southern Bavaria, spending a total of five and a half million Reichsmarks on their vacations. Most striking of all were the foreign trips that the organization mounted, whether rail journeys to destinations in friendly Fascist Italy or cruises to Madeira, which was governed by the favourably disposed Portuguese dictatorship of Dr Salazar. In 1939 alone, 175,000 people went to Italy on such organized trips, a good number of them travelling on cruises. By 1939 the organization owned eight cruise ships (two of which it had had specially constructed) and rented four more on a more or less permanent basis, to carry its members to such exotic places as Libya (an Italian colony), Finland, Bulgaria and Istanbul, celebrating Germany's solidarity with real or potential allies and advertising the contours of a future German-dominated European empire. That year

140,000 passengers travelled on these cruises. Wherever they called, delegations from the local German consulates were ready to greet them and arrange onshore visits and tours, while friendly governments frequently arranged lavish receptions for the tourists.[112]

Strength Through Joy cruises were carefully arranged so as to combine pleasure with indoctrination. They were intended to represent the new Germany to the rest of the world, or at least the friendlier parts of it. Traditional passenger liners were divided into different classes of cabin and other facilities, according to the ability to pay, but Strength Through Joy disdained such relics of the past, and celebrated the unity of the German racial community by building its new ships on a one-class basis and converting others to the same model. Once on board, passengers were reminded that they were not there to have fun, or to show off, like traditional bourgeois cruise passengers, but to participate in a serious cultural enterprise. They were exhorted to dress modestly, to avoid excessive drinking, to eschew shipboard affairs and to obey unconditionally the orders of the tour leaders. A new liner such as the *Robert Ley* included a gymnasium, a theatre and a swimming pool to ensure that participants engaged in regular healthy exercise and partook of serious cultural offerings. Tour brochures advertised the achievement of the cruises and land-based tours in bringing Germans of different classes and regional backgrounds together in a common enterprise to help build the organic racial community of the Third Reich. Participants had to travel to foreign parts above all to educate themselves about the world, and in so doing to remind themselves of the superiority of Germans over other races. Within Germany, a prime purpose of the tours was to help bind the nation together by familiarizing people with regions of their native land which they had never previously visited, especially if, as in some of the more remote rural areas, they could be presented as centres of ancient German folk traditions.[113]

Yet, as so often in Nazi Germany, the reality did not really match up to the propaganda claims. Often the facilities provided for Strength Through Joy tourists were poor, involving mass dormitories with little or no privacy, or accommodation without proper sanitation. Classical music concerts were not always to the workers' taste, especially when they had to pay for them. One concert laid on for the organization in Leipzig had to be cancelled when only 130 out of the 1,000 tickets were

sold.[114] Some theatres, like the 'Theatre of the West' in Berlin, put on cheaply staged operettas exclusively for Strength Through Joy, while the mainstream theatres continued to be patronized largely by the middle classes; even when Strength Through Joy bought up blocks of seats for particular performances and made them available to members at a discount, these were generally snapped up by middle-class theatre-goers.[115] The vision of a classless society rapidly receded when Strength Through Joy parties descended noisily upon quiet rural resorts. Far from increasing feelings of national solidarity, package tours in Germany itself led to serious objections from local tourist industries, inns and spas who saw their prices being heavily undercut by the discounted block bookings of the new organization. Well-heeled tourists of the traditional sort, appalled at having their favourite holiday spots invaded by hordes of the socially inferior, whose often rowdy behaviour aroused frequent complaints from innkeepers and hoteliers as well as private holiday-makers, rapidly took their custom elsewhere.[116]

Undeterred, the organization set about building its own model resort on the Baltic island of Rügen, at Prora. Construction began under the supervision of Albert Speer on 3 May 1936 and was scheduled for completion in 1940. The resort spanned eight kilometres of the Baltic shore, with six-storey residence blocks interspersed with refectories and centred on a huge communal hall designed to accommodate all 20,000 of the resort's holidaymakers as they engaged in collective demonstrations of enthusiasm for the regime and its policies. It was consciously designed for families, to make good the lack of tour facilities for them in other Strength Through Joy enterprises, and it was intended to be cheap enough for the ordinary worker to afford, at a price of no more than 20 Reichsmarks for a week's stay. The resort was provided with the most up-to-date facilities available, including centrally heated rooms with hot and cold running water, a heated swimming pool, a cinema, bowling alleys, a pier for cruise liners to moor alongside, a large railway station and much more besides. Designed by Clemens Klotz, the architect of the Order Castle at Vogelsang, it represented pseudo-Classical Nazi modernism at its most monumental. Like everything else in the Strength Through Joy organization, it emphasized gigantism, collectivism, the sinking of the individual in the mass. Unlike the contemporary British holiday camps set up by the entrepreneur Billy Butlin, which provided

vacationers with individual holiday chalets and thus freed them from the intrusive supervision of widely feared figures such as the Blackpool landlady, Prora's massive six-storey accommodation blocks lined up its small guestrooms along endless, anonymous corridors and regimented the visitors whenever they ventured outside, even regulating the amount of space each family was allowed to occupy on the beach. At its height employing almost as many construction workers as the motorways, the resort never opened for business: the outbreak of war led to an immediate suspension of work, though some buildings were later quickly finished to house evacuees from the bombed-out cities. Looted extensively by local people and by the occupying Russians after the war, it was subsequently used as a barracks and training centre by Communist East Germany and today lies in ruins.[117]

IV

Strength Through Joy thus never got round the difficulties that the Prora resort was intended to solve. But there were worse failures than this. For the people who travelled with Strength Through Joy obstinately refused to do so in the spirit in which the regime intended. Concerned at the possible influence of ex-Social Democrats who participated in the tours, and worried about illicit contacts between arms workers and foreign agents, the organization arranged for the Gestapo and the SS Security Service to send along undercover agents disguised as tourists to spy on the participants. The picture their reports revealed almost as soon as they started work, in March 1936, was a disturbing one. Far from overcoming the social divide in the interests of the racial community, Strength Through Joy tours often brought to light social differences that might otherwise have remained merely latent. Because the income they gained from the tours was so low, hoteliers and restaurateurs frequently served inferior food and drink to the package trippers, who took it ill that the private tourists at the next table were getting something better. Theatre tickets sold to the organization were often for the worst seats in the house, adding to class resentments as those who were allotted them were forced to look down from the gods at the fur-clad bourgeois in the stalls. On cruises, where no amount of internal restructuring of the ships

could entirely abolish the differences in quality between cabins on the upper decks and those on or below the water-line, Party officials, civil servants and others took the best berths. Such people indeed took the lion's share of the best cruises anyway, so much so that the Madeira cruise was popularly known as the 'bigwigs' trip' (*Bonzenfahrt*). Surveys of passenger lists of Strength Through Joy's cruise liners revealed that salaried employees were the largest single group, just as they were in ordinary tourism. Only 10 per cent of the thousand passengers on a Strength Through Joy cruise to Norway in 1935 were said to be from the working class; the rest were Party officials, who drank the ship dry long before it reached its home port again. 'These chaps are stuffing themselves with food and slurping up the drinks like pigs,' complained a crew member. Single women and young, unmarried men predominated amongst the workers, or in other words, wage-earners with disposable incomes rather than family men or mothers. Most of the workers on the trip were skilled and relatively well paid. The less well-off were usually heavily subsidized by their employers. The cost of the trips was still beyond the pockets of most wage-earners, who could only increase their income by working longer hours, thus reducing the opportunity to go on vacation. In many cases they could not afford the extra expenses that travel inevitably involved, such as holiday clothing.[118]

On cruises and other trips, while Party officials and middle-class passengers spent lavishly on presents, souvenirs and expensive meals and entertainments onshore, the workers were unable to afford even the simplest additions to the basics provided by the tour itself. There were many complaints from working-class participants about the ostentatious behaviour of their bourgeois fellow tourists, and little real social mixing on most of the trips. Class antagonism was paralleled by regional rivalries; on one cruise to Italy, discord between the Rhinelanders and Silesians on board reached such a pitch that the two groups refused to stay in the same room with each other. On a later Italian trip on the same ship, a group of Westphalians insulted their Silesian fellow passengers, calling them 'Polacks', and only the intervention of the crew stopped the quarrel from degenerating into a brawl.[119] Moreover, the behaviour of many participants on the tours often signally failed to match up to the standards set by the organizers. Like tourists everywhere, what most of them really wanted was to let their hair down. Instead of being restrained and

committed to the racial community, they turned out to be pleasure-seeking and individualistic. Gestapo agents reported frequent mass drunkenness and riotous behaviour. On some ships, the lifeboats were said to be filled with writhing couples every night. Especially shameless, the Gestapo complained, were the young, single women who travelled on the cruise ships in considerable numbers. One agent thought they had only come along for 'erotic purposes'. Flirtations, dalliances and affairs with men on board or, worse, with dark-skinned young Italian, Greek or Arab men on shore, aroused frequent critical comment from the Gestapo spies. The passengers in general showed a distressing lack of interest in political lectures and meetings. Worst of all were the Party functionaries, whose drunkenness and riotous behaviour became notorious. On one cruise organized for Party Regional Leaders, for example, the Gestapo discovered two known prostitutes on the passenger list. Predictably enough, the very worst was Robert Ley himself, who frequently went on Strength Through Joy cruises, where he spent much of the time so drunk that the captain had to have him flanked by two sailors when he went on deck to ensure that he did not fall overboard. Strength Through Joy wardens arranged for him also to be accompanied by a group of blonde, blue-eyed young women to provide him with 'companionship' on the voyage.[120] No wonder a popular nickname for Strength Through Joy was the 'bigwigs' knocking-shop' (*Bonzenbordell*).[121]

Yet while it largely failed to achieve its ideological aims, Strength Through Joy was still one of the most popular of the regime's cultural innovations. By providing holidays and other activities that otherwise would have been beyond the means of many of the participants, the organization became widely appreciated amongst workers.[122] Much of what Strength Through Joy offered was new to those whom it targeted. Early in 1934, for instance, a poll of 42,000 workers at the Siemens factory in Berlin revealed that 28,500 of them had never taken a holiday outside Berlin and its surrounding countryside; they grasped the opportunity provided by Strength Through Joy. 'If you get it so cheaply then it's worth raising your arm now and then!' said one of them to a Social Democratic agent in 1934.[123] 'The Nazis really have created something good,' was often the reaction, noted another such report.[124] Another agent reported from Berlin in February 1938:

'Strength Through Joy' is very popular. Its programmes meet the humble man's longing to get out for once and participate in the pleasures of the 'great'. It's a clever speculation built on the petty-bourgeois inclinations of the unpolitical worker. For such a man it's really something if he goes on a Scandinavian cruise or even just travels to the Black Forest or the Harz. He imagines that this has moved him up a rung on the social ladder.[125]

So widespread was the use of Strength Through Joy's offerings that a popular joke maintained that the people were losing their strength through too much joy.[126] Some despairing Social Democratic commentators concluded, therefore, that the programme did in the end have an important function in reconciling people, especially formerly oppositional elements, to the regime. 'The workers', as one commented in 1939, 'have a strong feeling that sand is being thrown in their eyes with Strength Through Joy, but they take part in it all the same, and in this way its propagandistic aim is still achieved in the end.'[127]

Strength Through Joy, indeed, had a symbolic effect that went far beyond its actual programmes. Its tours and cruises stood out in retrospect amongst the experiences of the peacetime years when workers came to reminisce about the Third Reich after it was over.[128] Even – or, as some former Social Democrats sourly asserted, especially – those who had never been on its organized mass tours or cruises admired its enterprise and initiative, and its concern to bring hitherto unattainable pleasures within the reach of the ordinary man's pocket.[129] A Social Democratic observer summed up its purposes and effects as early as December 1935:

> Atomization and the loss of individuality, occupational therapy and surveillance for the people. There is to be no room for individual leisure, physical exercise and cultural activities, there is to be no space for voluntary get-togethers or for any independent initiatives that could arise from them. And something is to be 'offered' to the masses ... At the very least, Strength Through Joy distracts people, contributes to the befogging of their brains, and has a propagandistic effect on behalf of the regime.[130]

People who took part in Strength Through Joy activities might have taken their ideological content with a pinch of salt, but at the same time these activities brought them still further away from the edifying and

improving traditions of Social Democratic and Communist mass culture. This no doubt was one reason why some Social Democratic observers looked down on them ('"Strength Through Joy"', sniffed one in 1935, 'lacks any cultural foundation. Its events remain at the level of village beer festivals in peasant inns').[131] At the same time, however, they brought about a further, and in the end fatal, undermining of labour movement cultural traditions by the growth of commercialized leisure activities. The vast cultural apparatuses of the Social Democrats and the Communists, built up since the nineteenth century, had been strongly educative, and were linked to a variety of core values of the labour movement. The Nazis not only took all this over, but also reoriented it in a more populist direction, dovetailing with the emergence of popular, unpolitical culture under the Weimar Republic. Partly as a consequence, when working-class culture re-emerged after 1945, it was to be in a far less ideological form than before.[132]

These effects have to be kept in proportion, however. Most of the people who went to plays and concerts continued to do so as private citizens. Strength Through Joy attracted a good deal of attention, but it never accounted for more than 11 per cent of annual overnight stays in German hotels.[133] The annual turnover of the largest commercial tourist agency, the Central European Travel Office, was 250 million Reichsmarks in 1938 compared to 90 million for the tourism department of Strength Through Joy.[134] Moreover, while Strength Through Joy was drastically scaled down on the outbreak of war, its cruise ships converted into troop transports, its hostels into hospitals and its resorts into convalescent homes, commercial tourism, despite a few disapproving noises from the authorities, continued to flourish. From the beginning, however, the regime had sought to mould it to its own purposes, encouraging people to travel within Germany rather than abroad (for both patriotic and economic reasons), and attempting to direct tourists to countries abroad where their presence as ambassadors for the new Germany would be most useful. New tourist sites emerged, from grandiose structures such as the Reich Chancellery to sites of mourning and memory for the Nazi dead; guidebooks were rewritten to conform to the ideological dictates of the regime, giving greater emphasis to continuities with the remote Germanic past at one end, and mentioning wherever possible the association of Hitler and other Nazi leaders with tourist spots at the

other. The leadership of the Third Reich was aware of the tensions that arose between the growing commercial tourist industry and the organized tourism of Strength Through Joy, but far from clamping down on the former in the interests of the latter, Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels and the boss of the tourist industry, Gottfried Feder, realized that people needed to get away from the stresses and strains of everyday work even if they did so in an unpolitical environment. A consumer society was emerging in Nazi Germany, and for all its prioritization of rearmament in its economic policy, the regime was not only unable, but also unwilling, to stop it.[135]

Consumer assertion was perhaps one reason for the failure of the department of Strength Through Joy that went under the name of 'Beauty of Labour'. The basic intention was still to compensate for low wages and long hours, but here it was to be implemented not through the provision of leisure facilities, but through improvements in the workplace. Beauty of Labour campaigned energetically for the provision of washing facilities and toilets, changing rooms and lockers, showers, and generally improved hygiene and cleanliness in factories, for more air, less noise, proper work clothing, tidiness and order. Healthy workers in a clean workplace would work better and be happier in their jobs, and to reinforce all this, Beauty of Labour arranged concerts and similar events on the shopfloor, encouraged the building of onsite sports and recreation facilities and pressured employers to provide decent canteens for their workers and clean up debris and waste lying about on the shop floor. By 1938 it claimed that nearly 34,000 companies had improved their performance in many of these respects, repainting and decorating their shops, building recreation areas and improving sanitation. Tax incentives helped encourage employers to do this, and Beauty of Labour also staged competitions and awarded prizes for the most improved firm, issuing the winners with certificates signed by Hitler declaring them to be 'model firms'. The benefits both to employers and the regime in terms of the increased productivity that could be expected were obvious. But all these improvements were bought at the workers' own expense, since many firms expected their employees to do the painting, cleaning and building themselves after hours for no extra pay, docked their wages to cover the costs, and threatened those who did not 'volunteer' with dismissal or even the concentration camp.[136]

Workers were not fooled by the inflated rhetoric of the scheme, least of all if they had been influenced by Communist or Social Democratic ideas before 1933, as millions of them had. If, despite all this, Strength Through Joy as a whole was popular, it was not because of its ostensible aim of motivating people to work harder, but because it allowed them a means of escape from the tedium and repression of everyday life on the shop-floor. People took its offerings of amusement and diversion because for the great mass of them there was nothing else on offer. Many calculated that they were paying for the organization anyway through their compulsory contributions to the Labour Front, so they might as well get their money's worth. In time, it even overcame the reluctance of former Social Democrats who did not want to be seen taking anything on offer from the hated Labour Front.[137] Strength Through Joy events, a Social Democratic report noted in 1935, 'offer, to be sure, cheap opportunities to find simple relaxation. Old friends can meet each other there in a very casual environment and over a glass of beer they can discuss the very opposite of what the organizers want them to.'[138] It was not only old Social Democrats who recognized the compensatory function of such events. A memorandum circulating in the Reich Labour Ministry in 1936 noted soberly: 'Tourist trips, plays and concerts are not going to clear away any poverty-ridden slums or fill hungry mouths.' 'A relaxing cruise on a luxury steamer', concluded an official of the Labour Front in 1940, 'does not really bring relaxation, if the tourist has to go back at the end to the material oppressiveness of his everyday existence.'[139]

SOCIAL PROMISE AND SOCIAL REALITY

I

That Strength Through Joy and associated programmes were a substitute for real economic improvements was a view that was widely shared, and had a good deal of basis in fact. Most statistical investigations are agreed that the economic situation of the mass of working-class wage-earners did not markedly improve between 1933 and 1939. Nominal hourly wages in 1933 were 97 per cent of what they had been in 1932, and they had still not recovered in 1939, by which time they had risen only by one percentage point, to 98.[140] The German Institute for Business Research conceded on 24 February 1937 that rearmament had entailed 'a large economic sacrifice for the German people' even as it attempted to refute the claim that living standards had actually declined.[141] Calculating real wages has always been a tricky business, more so in the Third Reich than in most economies. Price Commissioner Goerdeler took the business of keeping consumer prices low very seriously; but even the Reich Economics Ministry admitted in 1935 that official statistics underestimated price rises, not to mention rents and other factors. Recent estimates have put average industrial real wages below their levels for 1928 (admittedly a particularly good year) until 1937, rising to 108 per cent in 1939; in practice, however, this meant that many workers in the consumer goods industries continued to earn less than they had done before the Depression; only those in arms and arms-related industries earned substantially more.[142] Moreover, shortages of many kinds also entered the equation, along with the declining quality of many goods in consequence of the growing use of substitutes for basic raw materials like leather, rubber and cotton. *Per capita* consumption of many basic foodstuffs

actually declined in the mid-1930s. In addition, wage increases were achieved above all by longer hours. In July 1934, Trustees of Labour were given the right to increase working time to more than the legal norm of eight hours a day and, particularly in arms-related industries, they used it. In machine engineering, for example, average weekly hours, after falling during the Depression from 49 in 1929 to 43 in 1933, rose to over 50 in the first half of 1939.[143] Despite this, however, wages as a percentage of national income fell by 11 per cent between 1932 and 1938. Inequality actually increased between 1928, when the top 10 per cent of earners took 37 per cent of total national income, and 1936, when they took 39 per cent.[144] The numerous deductions made from pay packets, for Strength Through Joy, Labour Front membership and the like, not to mention the endless collections held on the streets, in effect reduced income still further, in some cases by as much as 30 per cent. Under such circumstances, it was not surprising that by 1937–8 workers were having to put in longer hours just to maintain their existing, very modest standard of living.[145]

Overtime, generally paid at time and a quarter, was the only realistic way of increasing wages for most workers, since the closure of the trade unions had taken away their role in formal wage bargaining processes. Whether or not to work overtime was a matter for the individual employee. The result was a rapid atomization of the workforce, as each worker was pitted against his fellow workers in the struggle to increase wages and improve performance. It was not rationalization, but simple extra work, that led to increased production: the great period of rationalization and mechanization had been the mid-1920s; these trends did continue in many industries under the Third Reich, but at a much slower pace.[146] And of course overtime, frowned on by the regime and its agencies in consumer goods industries, was strongly encouraged in war-relevant production. This was not least because the frantic pace of rearmament led not only to serious bottlenecks in the supply of raw materials but also to an increasingly serious shortage of suitably skilled and qualified workers. In the early days of the Third Reich, the government had concentrated on trying to direct labour into agriculture, where the shortage was obvious, particularly through labour service and labour camps of one kind and another. Laws passed on 15 May 1934 and

26 February 1935 required all workers to carry work-books, containing details of their training and qualifications and employment; these were kept on file at labour exchanges, where they could be consulted when the government was looking for workers to draft into new jobs. If a worker wanted to go abroad on holiday, he had to get permission from the labour exchange to do so. Employers could put critical remarks in the book, making things difficult for the employee in future posts. And as rearmament gathered pace, the government began to use the work-books to direct labour towards arms-related industries. On 22 June 1938 Göring issued a Decree on the Duty of Service, permitting the President of the Reich Institute for Labour Exchange and Unemployment Insurance to draft workers temporarily into particular projects where labour was in short supply. In February 1939 these powers were extended to make labour conscription indefinite in duration. Before long, over a million workers had been drafted in to munitions factories, defensive works like the so-called West Wall, better known as the Siegfried Line, a vast system of fortifications guarding Germany's western borders, and other schemes judged vital for the coming war. Only 300,000 of these were conscripted on a long-term basis, but a million was still a sizeable chunk of a workforce that totalled 23 million by this time.[14]

These measures did not just deprive workers of the power of changing jobs, transferring to a better-paid position or moving to a different area. They also in many cases put them into situations where they found it difficult to cope. In February 1939, for example, Social Democratic observers reported that the workers forcibly removed from their jobs in Saxony to work on fortifications near Trier, on the other side of Germany, included a 59-year-old accounts clerk who had never wielded a pick and shovel before, and similarly unsuitable characters. Forced labour was being used as a punishment: 'Anyone who in any way lets slip an incautious word is sent there, when the labour shortage means that he is not arrested.' Textile workers were made to undergo compulsory medical examinations to see whether they were fitted for manual labour on the fortifications. There were reports that people who refused to go were arrested and transported by the prison authorities to their new place of work, where they were given the most exhausting jobs to do. Travelling by train to Berlin, one observer was surprised when:

In Duisburg a group of about 80 people stormed onto the train, shouting loudly, poorly dressed, in some cases in their work-clothes, their luggage mostly the poor man's suitcase in the Third Reich, the Persil carton. In my compartment the travel guide sits down with a few women and girls. It soon becomes clear that they are unemployed textile workers from the area around Krefeld and Rheydt, who are to be resettled in Brandenburg, the men to work on motorway construction, the women in a new factory in Brandenburg. The people turn up in our compartment one after another, to get their 2 Reichsmarks money for the journey from the travel guide. A short while later some of them are drunk; they have spent their money in the restaurant car, on beer.[148]

Such groups, the reporter was told, were taken by train to new places of work week after week. The married men had the right to visit their families four times a year.

Even this did not solve the problem, which was made still worse by the insatiable appetite of the armed forces for new recruits. In April 1939 the Hanover labour exchange district reported a shortage of 100,000 workers for a variety of jobs, about half of them in construction; the building of the West Wall had drained the industry of large numbers of employees. In August 1939 there were said to be 25,000 vacancies in the metalworking industry in Berlin. Shortly afterwards the air force administration complained that there was a shortage of 2,600 engineers in the aircraft construction industry. So desperate were the labour administrators in the government that they even suggested releasing 8,000 state prisoners who happened to be qualified metalworkers; since a good number of these were probably in prison for political offences, the suggestion was never actually taken up. All this put a new bargaining power in the hands of workers in the key industries. On 6 October 1936 the Ministries of Economics and Labour pointed out in a letter sent directly to Hitler that labour shortages were leading to late fulfilment of contracts and delaying the whole rearmament programme. Employers were taking matters into their own hands and enticing workers away from rivals with higher wage offers, thus increasing the price of the goods they produced. In some factories employees were working as much as fourteen hours a day, or up to sixty hours a week.[149] Workers at Daimler-Benz averaged fifty-four hours a week by the late 1930s, as against forty-eight in the last pre-Depression years.[150] In a number of

cases the Labour Front, concerned about the goodwill of the workforce, took a more flexible line towards wage increases than the government wished, bringing down a fiercely worded directive from Rudolf Hess, in the name of the Leader, on 1 October 1937, urging all Party institutions not to curry popularity by giving in to wage demands. Things would get better eventually, he promised; but for the moment, it was still necessary to make sacrifices.[151]

On 25 June 1938 Göring allowed Trustees of Labour to fix maximum wages in an effort to keep costs under control. The economic logic of rearmament's effects on the labour market was against him. By this time even work stoppages – in effect, informal strikes – were being used by factory employees to try and improve their wages; the pressure to work longer hours was leading workers to go slow or call off sick to a degree that some officials even began to speak of 'passive resistance' on the shop-floor. Labourers drafted into projects such as the West Wall faced arrest and imprisonment if they left without permission; early in 1939, for example, it was reported that one such worker, Heinrich Bonsack, had been sentenced to three months in prison for leaving the West Wall without permission twice to visit his family in Wanne-Eickel. That workers ran away from the West Wall was not surprising: construction was carried out round the clock in twelve-hour shifts, living conditions were primitive, the pay was poor, safety measures non-existent, accidents frequent, and if work got behind schedule, labourers were forced to work for double or even treble shifts to catch up, with a break only once every twelve hours. Another worker, a turner, was refused permission by his employer in Cologne to leave his job for a better-paid one elsewhere, and when he signed off sick, the company doctor forced him back to his workplace. When his workbench was found shortly afterwards to be damaged, he was arrested and sentenced to six months' imprisonment for sabotage, an offence that was being used by the authorities increasingly at this time. Conscription to jobs away from home led to so many incidents that in November 1939 Hitler ordered that workers where possible be conscripted into schemes or factories in the district where they lived, a measure that seems to have had little effect in practice.[152]

In characteristic fashion, the regime increasingly sought to enforce its measures by terror. A favourite measure on the part of employers was to threaten alleged troublemakers with sacking and immediate transfer

to work on the West Wall. This had little impact. At their wits' end, some employers began to call in the Gestapo to place agents on the shop-floor to spy out cases of loafing and slacking. From the second half of 1938, labour regulations had included increasingly severe penalties for contraventions such as refusing to work as ordered, or even smoking and drinking on the job, but these were relatively ineffective, and the courts were getting clogged with cases that were taking far too long to resolve. In August 1939 the Labour Front administration in the I.G. Farben factory at Wolfen wrote to all workers warning them that slackers would be handed over to the Gestapo without trial in future. Already in April, four companies in Nuremberg had called in the Gestapo to catch out under-performing employees. In the railway engineering works at Dresden, the Gestapo even carried out twice-weekly searches of the workforce without giving any reason. Munitions and war production factories were frequently convulsed by management fears of espionage or sabotage. Former Communists and Social Democrats were particularly vulnerable to arrest, even if they had long since ceased to be politically active. In the autumn of 1938, at the Heinkel aircraft works in Rostock and Warnemünde, where workers were relatively privileged and well paid, the works police were said to be arresting employees virtually every day, acting on denunciations from the spies they kept in the workforce. In many factories, workers were arrested for sabotage when they protested against the lowering of piece-rates or the worsening of working conditions. So intrusive did the Gestapo become in some factories that even the employers started to object. After the arrest of 174 employees at a munitions factory in Gleiwitz in 1938, the employers obtained their release after twenty-four hours, explaining to the Gestapo that a bit of criticism of the regime by the workers had to be tolerated, otherwise production would be disrupted, and that was surely not in the national interest.[153]

The suppression and fragmentation of political and organizational life directed people towards private pleasures and purposes: getting a steady job, marrying, having children, improving living conditions, going on holiday. It was for this reason that Strength Through Joy was so fondly remembered by many Germans after the war. Yet when people recalled this period, they found it difficult not just to remember public events, but even to recount their memories in chronological order. The years

from 1933 to 1939 or even 1941 became a retrospective blur, in which the routines of private life made one day difficult to distinguish from the next. Economic achievement became the only real meaning in life for many: politics was an irrelevant irritation, a life in which it was impossible to participate with any kind of autonomy or independence and so not worth participating in at all, except insofar as one was obliged to. From this point of view, 1939 attracted a kind of nostalgic glow, the last year of relative peace and prosperity before plunging into a maelstrom of war and destruction, destitution and ruin that lasted until 1948. It was in the mid-to-late 1930s, indeed, that the foundations were laid for the hard-working, relatively unpolitical German society of the years of the 'economic miracle' in the 1950s. By the end of the 1930s, the great mass of German workers had reconciled themselves, often with varying degrees of reluctance, to the Third Reich. They might be unpersuaded by its core ideological tenets, irritated by its constant appeals for acclamation and support and annoyed by its failure to deliver a greater degree of prosperity. They might grumble about many aspects of life and privately pour scorn on many of its leaders and its institutions. But at least, most people reflected, it had given them a steady job and overcome, by whatever means, the economic hardships and catastrophes of the Weimar years, and for that alone, the vast majority of German workers seem to have thought it was worth tolerating, especially since the possibility of organized resistance was so minimal and the price of expressing dissent so high. There was widespread informal and individual refractoriness in Germany's factories and workplaces on the eve of the Second World War, but it did not really amount to anything that could be called opposition, let alone resistance, nor did it create any real sense of crisis in the Third Reich's ruling elite.[154]

II

How did the Third Reich deal with the unemployed and the destitute who suffered in their millions under the Depression and were still suffering when they came to power? Nazi ideology did not in principle favour the idea of social welfare. In *My Struggle*, Hitler, writing about the time he had spent living amongst the poor and the destitute in Vienna before

the First World War, had waxed indignant about the way in which social welfare had encouraged the preservation of the degenerate and the feeble. From a Social Darwinist point of view, charity and philanthropy were evils that had to be eliminated if the German race was to be strengthened and its weakest elements weeded out in the process of natural selection.[155] The Nazi Party frequently condemned the elaborate welfare system that had grown up under the Weimar Republic as bureaucratic, cumbersome and directed essentially to the wrong ends. Instead of giving support to the biologically and racially valuable, Weimar's social state, backed by a host of private charities, was, the Nazis alleged, completely indiscriminate in its application, supporting many people who were racially inferior and would, they claimed, contribute nothing to the regeneration of the German race. This view was in some respects not too far from that of the public and private welfare bureaucracy itself, which by the early 1930s had become infused with the doctrines of racial hygiene, and also advocated the drawing of a sharp distinction between the deserving and the degenerate, although putting such a distinction into effect was not possible until 1933. At this point, welfare institutions, whose attitudes towards the destitute had become increasingly punitive in the course of the Depression, moved rapidly to bring criminal sanctions to bear on the 'work-shy', the down-and-out and the socially deviant. Nazi ideas on welfare were thus not wholly alien to the thinking of welfare administrators in the later stages of the Weimar Republic.[156]

Faced with ten million people in receipt of welfare assistance at the height of the Depression, however, it would have been political suicide for the Nazis to have written off the mass of the unemployed and destitute as not worth helping. However much the employment situation improved, or was made to look as if it improved, in the spring, summer and autumn of the Nazis' first year in office, Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels recognized that the economic situation would still be serious enough for many people to be living below the poverty line in the first full winter of the Third Reich in power. To boost the regime's image and convince people it was doing everything it could to foster solidarity between the better-off and the worst-off amongst the Germans, he announced on 13 September 1933 that he was setting up a short-term relief programme which he called the Winter Aid Programme of the German People. This built on, formalized, co-ordinated and carried

further a number of emergency relief schemes already launched by Regional Party Leaders; more importantly, it continued and expanded similar schemes that had already been mooted under the Weimar Republic and formally established in 1931 under Reich Chancellor Brüning.[157] Soon, some 1.5 million volunteers and 4,000 paid workers were ladling out soup to the poor at emergency centres, taking round food parcels to the destitute, collecting and distributing clothes to the unemployed and their families, and engaging in a wide variety of other centrally directed charitable activities. When Hitler, in a widely publicized speech, urged people to contribute, two million Reichsmarks were pledged by a variety of institutions, including Nazi Party headquarters in Munich, the very next day. Donations received during the winter of 1933–4 eventually totalled 358 million Reichsmarks. Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry blared forth its satisfaction at this evidence of a new spirit of community solidarity and mutual help amongst the German people.[158] This was not charity, therefore, or state welfare, even though it was in fact run by the state, by the Propaganda Minister and by a specially appointed Reich Commissioner for Winter Aid. It was, on the contrary, Goebbels declared, a form of racial self-help run by the German people for the German people.[159]

Yet again the reality was different from the propaganda. For contributions to the Winter Aid were virtually compulsory for everyone from the outset. When a burly, brown-uniformed stormtrooper appeared at the door demanding a donation, few were brave enough to refuse, and those who did faced the prospect of escalating threats and intimidation until they relented and put their money in the collection box. In Bavaria it was announced that those who did not contribute would be regarded as enemies of the Fatherland; some were publicly paraded through the streets with placards round their necks advertising their sin of omission; others were even dismissed from their jobs as a result. The experience of a Reich Entailed Farmer in Franconia who had refused to contribute in 1935 can hardly have been untypical: he was informed by Party District Leader Gerstner 'that you are not worthy to bear the honourable title of farmer in National Socialist Germany' and warned that it would be necessary 'to take measures to prevent public disorder being created by your attitude' – in other words, that he could expect either removal to 'protective custody' in a concentration camp or face physical violence

from the local SA. In one cinema in Breslau in December 1935, eight armed SS men appeared on the stage at the end of the performance and announced that the exits had all been sealed; there were enemies of the state in the auditorium, and everyone had to make a donation to the Winter Aid to prove that they were not amongst their number. As the brief announcement ended, the doors burst open and fifty stormtroopers poured in, armed with collection boxes. Across the land, workers came under pressure to allow their contributions to be automatically deducted from their wage packets at a rate of 20 per cent of the basic income tax (later reduced to 10 per cent). Those who earned too little to pay tax still had to contribute 25 pfennigs from each pay packet. In one factory in 1938, workers were told that if they did not agree to a deduction, the sum they should be paying would be added to the sums deducted from the pay packets of their fellow employees.[160]

Crucially, regular, automatic contributions entitled the donor to receive a plaque which he could nail to the front door of his home, which brownshirts, Hitler Youth members and other Party members knocking on doors to collect donations were instructed to take as an instruction to move on without disturbing him. In some factories, however, workers were asked for additional contributions even if they had agreed to have Winter Aid deducted from their wage packets. And this still did not protect such donors from the importunities of brown-uniformed men standing on the streets with their collecting-boxes, or the pressure exerted by shopkeepers and customers to put loose change into the Winter Aid receptacles that were placed on the counters of most retail outlets. Winter Aid vendors also offered opportunities to collect various sets of illustrated cards, including a set of photographs of Hitler. Children were sometimes given part of a day off school and provided with knick-knacks to sell on the street for the Winter Aid collection. Purchase of a Winter Aid badge might help ward off the importunities of street-collectors; better still was to buy a Winter Aid nail, evidence that one possessed a Winter Aid shield, into which the nails, costing 5 pfennigs each, could be hammered, until the entire surface was covered with an estimated 1,500 of them. Wearing a Winter Aid badge on the street might have been a form of self-protection, but it also had the effect of advertising to others one's solidarity with the regime. Nearly 170 million badges were

sold in the winter of 1938–9. It became popular to use them as a decoration for Christmas trees in the home.[161]

As with so many other emergency measures in the Third Reich, the Winter Aid soon became a permanent feature of the sociopolitical landscape. The action was underpinned legislatively on 5 November 1934 by a Collection Law which allowed the Interior Minister and the Nazi Party Treasurer to suspend any charities or funds that competed with the Winter Aid, thus forcing all other philanthropic activities into the summer months and ensuring that demands for contributions would be addressed to the German people all the year round. On 4 December 1936 this was backed up by a Winter Aid Law that formally put the scheme on a permanent basis. The statistics were impressive. By the winter of 1938–9, 105 million Reichsmarks were coming in from wage deductions, with collections and donations, the largest from industry and big business, making up the rest of the total of 554 million. Winter Aid donations thus accounted for nearly 3 per cent of the average worker's income at this time. Some changes had taken place since 1933, of course: after the winter of 1935–6, Jews were no longer included in the ranks of either donors or receivers. And the economic recovery had brought about a halving of the number of those in receipt of Winter Aid, from 16 million in 1933–4 to 8 million in 1938–9. Notable additions to the scheme included a 'Day of National Solidarity' every 1 December, when prominent members of the regime appeared in public to solicit donations on the streets, netting 4 million Reichsmarks in 1935 and no less than 15 million in 1938. By this time, too, it had become more or less compulsory for every family, indeed every German, to eat a 'one-pot meal' or cheap stew, with ingredients costing no more than 50 pfennigs in all, on the first Sunday of each month, 'one-pot Sunday'; in the evening, stormtroopers or SS men or a representative of the Nazi People's Welfare would appear at the door to demand the difference between 50 pfennigs and the normal cost of a family meal as a contribution. The same policy was implemented in restaurants as well. Hitler ostentatiously followed suit, passing round the Sunday dinner-table a list for his guests to pledge a donation of suitable grandeur. Every such meal, Albert Speer later complained, 'cost me fifty or a hundred marks'. Under such pressure, the number of Hitler's guests on the first Sunday

of every month soon shrank to two or three, 'prompting', Speer reported, 'some sarcastic remarks from Hitler about the spirit of sacrifice among his associates'.[162]

In the meantime, however, the Nazi Party had also been active in reshaping the private charity sector. The leading figure here was Erich Hilgenfeldt, a Saarlander, born in 1897 and an officer in the First World War. A former Steel Helmet activist, Hilgenfeldt had joined the Nazi Party in 1929 and become a District Leader in Berlin; he was thus close to Joseph Goebbels, who was his immediate Party boss as Berlin's Regional Leader. Hilgenfeldt had co-ordinated and centralized a variety of internal brownshirt and Party welfare groups in the capital into the National Socialist People's Welfare. With Magda Goebbels, the Propaganda Minister's wife, as its patron, and with the backing of Hitler himself given on 3 May 1933, Hilgenfeldt extended his grip on Party self-help groups across the entire country, against considerable opposition from Robert Ley and Baldur von Schirach, who wanted welfare to be run by their own respective organizations. Hilgenfeldt successfully argued that welfare was not the first priority for either the Labour Front or the Hitler Youth, so a separate, comprehensive institution was needed that would put welfare at the top of its agenda. In the turbulent months from March to July 1933, he successfully took over virtually all the private welfare and philanthropic organizations in Germany, above all the massive welfare arms of the Social Democrats and the Communists. From 25 July 1933 there were just four non-state welfare organizations in Germany: the Nazi People's Welfare, the Protestant Inner Mission, the Catholic Caritas Association and the German Red Cross. However, only the Nazi organization now received state funding; a good number of welfare institutions such as church kindergartens were passed over to it by the Inner Mission during the brief hegemony of the German Christians over the Protestant Church; and despite formal permission to collect contributions during the summer months, the other organizations, especially the Caritas, were increasingly disrupted in their work by physical attacks from brownshirt gangs, and then from 1936 onwards they were required to run their street and house-to-house collections at the same time as those of the Nazi organization, putting them at a severe disadvantage against this powerful competitor.[163]

Interior Minister Wilhelm Frick left people in no doubt as to where

their contributions should go: it was, he declared in October 1934, 'indefensible to allow the population's charitable impulses and sense of sacrifice to be used for purposes whose implementation is not in the interests of the National Socialist state and thus not for the common good'. As this suggested, Christian charity was now to be displaced by the desire for self-sacrifice that Nazi ideology placed so high on its list of supposed attributes of the German race. There was another point to this, too: unlike the Winter Aid and other organizations like the Red Cross, the Nazi Party restricted its donations from the very beginning exclusively to people of 'Aryan descent'.[164] The National Socialist People's Welfare enshrined in its constitution the statement that its aim was to promote 'the living, healthy forces of the German people'. It would only assist those who were racially sound, capable of and willing to work, politically reliable, and willing and able to reproduce. Those who were 'not in a condition completely to fulfil their communal obligations' were to be excluded. Assistance was not to be extended to alcoholics, tramps, homosexuals, prostitutes, the 'work-shy' or the 'asocial', habitual criminals, the hereditarily ill (a widely defined category) and members of races other than the Aryan. People's Welfare officials were not slow to attack state welfare institutions for the indiscriminate way in which they allegedly handed out their charity, thus pushing them still further down the racial hygiene road they had in fact already begun to tread. The Christian concept of charity was if anything even more reprehensible in Nazi eyes, and the pushing aside of Caritas and the Inner Mission by the Nazi welfare organization was in part designed to limit as far as possible what were seen as the racially undesirable effects of Church philanthropy.[165]

Despite these limitations, the National Socialist People's Welfare was, alongside Strength Through Joy, probably the most popular Party organization in the Third Reich. With 17 million members by 1939, it projected a powerful image of caring and support for the weaker members of the German racial community, or at least, those who were judged to have got into difficulties through no fault of their own. By 1939, for example, it was running 8,000 day-nurseries, and it was providing holiday homes for mothers, extra food for large families and a wide variety of other facilities. Yet it was feared and disliked amongst society's poorest, who resented the intrusiveness of its questioning, its moral judgments on their

behaviour and its ever-present threat to use compulsion and bring in the Gestapo if they did not fulfil the designated criteria for support. Many others were dismayed at the way it brusquely elbowed aside the Church welfare institutions upon which they had traditionally relied in time of need. It was also impossible to ignore the widespread irritation, even anger and fear, aroused more widely by the ubiquity of street collections which, a Social Democratic agent reported in 1935, had 'completely assumed the character of organized highway robbery'. 'The importunity is so great', reported another agent, 'that nobody can escape it.' 'Last year one could still speak of it as a nuisance,' one informant complained of the Winter Aid in December 1935, 'but this winter it has become a plague of the first degree.' There were not only Winter Aid collections but also Hitler Youth collections for the building of new youth hostels, collections for the support of Germans abroad, collections for air-raid shelters, collections for needy 'old fighters', a lottery for the benefit of job creation, and many more collections for local schemes. There were pay deductions for the Volkswagen car and workplace contributions for Strength Through Joy and Beauty of Labour, and much, much more. Such contributions, whether in kind or in money or in the form of unpaid voluntary work, amounted in effect to a new, informal tax. People grumbled and cursed, but all reports agree that they paid up anyway. There was no organized boycott of any of the collection actions, despite a few individual incidents of refusal to pay. People got used to the perpetual demands for money, clothing and other contributions; it became a normal part of everyday life. It was widely believed that old Nazis were amongst the most frequent and most favoured recipients of the aid dispensed in this way, and there were many stories of preferential treatment to Party members over ex-Communists or Social Democrats. This was not surprising, since political reliability was indeed a prime criterion for the receipt of support. Those who benefited were indeed most frequently Party members and their hangers-on. It was equally unsurprising that there were also many jokes about the corruption that was said to be inherent in the whole operation. One joke had two Party officials discovering a 50-Reichsmark note in the gutter as they were walking along the street. Picking it up, one of the two men announced he was going to donate it to the Party's Winter Aid relief scheme. 'Why are you doing it the long way round?' asked the other.[166]

By devolving welfare spending onto the (allegedly) voluntary sector, the regime was able to save official tax-based income and use it for rearmament instead. Conscription, marriage loans and other schemes to take people out of the labour market led to further reductions in the burden of benefit payments on the state and so to further savings in state expenditure that could then be turned to the purposes of military-related expenditure. Unemployment benefits had already been severely cut by governments and local authorities before the Nazis took power. The new regime lost little time in cutting them even more sharply. Voluntary Labour Service and other, similar schemes to massage the unemployment statistics downwards also had the effect of reducing the amount of unemployment benefits that had to be paid out. Unemployment, of course, as we have seen, had by no means vanished from the scene by the winter of 1935–6, but local authorities continued to drive down the level of benefit payments by whatever means they could. From October to December 1935, when the official figure of welfare unemployed rose from 336,000 to 376,000, the total benefits paid to them across the Reich actually fell from 4.7 to 3.8 million Reichsmarks. Everywhere, welfare authorities were calling in the unemployed for questioning and examination as to whether they were fit to work; those who were deemed fit were drafted into the Reich Labour Service or emergency relief schemes of one kind or another; those who failed to appear were taken off the register, and their payments stopped. Rent supplements were cut, payments to carers for the old and the sick for medication were slashed. In Cologne, a working-class woman who asked the welfare officer for help in paying for medication for her 75-year-old mother, whom she cared for at home, was told that the state would no longer pay for such people, who were nothing but a burden on the national community.[167]

Cutting back on welfare payments was only part of a wider strategy. Urging the German people to engage in self-help instead of relying on payouts from the state carried with it the implication that those who could not help themselves were dispensable, indeed a positive threat to the future health of the German people. The racially unsound, deviants, criminals, the 'asocial' and the like were to be excluded from the welfare system altogether. As we have seen, by 1937–8 members of the underclass, social deviants and petty criminals were being arrested in large numbers and put into concentration camps since they were

regarded by the Nazis as being of no use to the regime. In the end, therefore, as soon as rearmament had soaked up the mass of the unemployed, the Nazis' original scepticism about the benefits of social welfare reasserted itself in the most brutal possible way.

III

The National Socialist Welfare organization, Winter Aid and Strength Through Joy were by far the most popular schemes mounted by the Third Reich at home. For many, they were tangible proof that the regime was serious about implementing its promise to create an organic national community of all Germans, in which class conflict and social antagonisms would be overcome, and the egotism of the individual would give way to the overriding interests of the whole. These programmes explicitly aimed to obliterate distinctions of class and status, to involve the better-off in helping their fellow Germans who had suffered in the Depression and to improve the lives of the mass of ordinary people in a variety of different ways. Paradoxically, it was the better-off who were most attracted to the ideology of the people's community; workers were often too deeply imbued with Marxist ideas of class conflict to yield directly to its appeal. Not untypical was the reaction of Melita Maschmann, a young woman brought up in a conservative, upper-middle-class household, where her nationalist parents instilled in her a conception of Germany that she later described as 'a terrible and wonderful mystery'.[168] Conversation in her parents' home in the early 1930s frequently turned to matters such as the humiliation of Germany's defeat in the First World War, the divisions and squabbles of the political parties in the Reichstag, the constantly escalating violence and mayhem on the streets, and the poverty and desperation of the growing numbers of unemployed. Nostalgic for the Kaiser's day, when, her parents said, Germans had been proud and united, Melita herself found it impossible to resist the lure of the Nazis' promise to stop internal dissension and unite all social classes in a new national community in which rich and poor would all be treated as equals.[169] Her experience was echoed by that of many others. Yet although reactions to the welfare and leisure schemes that the Nazis deployed to give effect to such unifying ideas were often favourable,

especially in retrospect, there was a down-side too. The element of compulsion in all of them could hardly be ignored. Despite the regime's constant trumpeting of the virtues of self-sacrifice, these did not possess a universal appeal; on the contrary, many people were fixated on the achievement of material improvements in their own situation – hardly surprising after all they had been through in the war, the inflation and the Depression. Class distinctions seemed as alive as ever, and were compounded by a newly emerging distinction between 'old fighters' and local Party bosses, who were widely perceived as the principal beneficiaries of these schemes, and the rest. Deeply held beliefs among wide sections of the population, possibly even the majority, ranging from faith in the Christian idea of universal charity to an ingrained habit amongst many workers of viewing everything through the lens of a Marxist-influenced idea of class struggle, proved extremely difficult for the regime to eradicate.

By 1939, therefore, disillusion was widespread even with some of the most popular schemes implemented by the Third Reich. The first flush of enthusiasm for the regime had already begun to fade in 1934, and by early 1936 it had reached such a low level that even Hitler's popularity was beginning to wane.[170] How far did this disillusion reach, how general was it, and why did it fail to translate into a wider and more principled opposition to the regime? A good picture of how ordinary people regarded the Third Reich, the ways in which society changed between 1933 and 1939, and the extent to which the promise of a united, organic national community was realized, can be derived from the experience of a provincial town during this period. In the Lower Saxon town of Northeim, the most obvious outward and visible sign of change in the eyes of the inhabitants was the return of prosperity and order after the poverty and disorder of the last years of the Weimar Republic. Street clashes and meeting-room brawls, which had caused so much anxiety among the citizenry, were now a thing of the past. The town's Nazi mayor, Ernst Girmann, after ousting his rivals within the local Party in September 1933, ruled Northeim alone, unfettered by any democratic controls, a position confirmed in January 1935 when a new, nationwide law came into effect giving mayors untrammelled power over the communities they ran. Girmann put out a substantial propaganda campaign unveiling elaborate plans for a revival of the job market in the town.

These plans were never taken up by Northeim's hard-headed businessmen; but after the unemployed had been taken off the streets into labour camps and public works schemes, the general revival of the economy that had already begun before the Nazi seizure of power started to have a real impact. Workers drafted into the Reich Labour Service were engaged on highly visible municipal improvements such as the extension of the town's parkland, or the repainting of some of the town's old houses.[171]

The most notable construction project involved the building of a *Thingplatz* or Nazi cultic meeting-place, an open-air theatre in a nearby forest, on land purchased by the city at an extremely high price from one of Girmann's friends. A large number of new houses and apartment blocks were built in the town with subsidies made available by the government, though the most widely trumpeted construction project, a settlement of forty-eight new houses on the outskirts of the town, had been conceived already in the early 1930s and had in fact been delayed by objections raised by the local Nazis themselves in 1932. Only Aryan families who belonged to the Party or an ancillary organization could move in, and only if they were sponsored by the local Party. Still, the propaganda surrounding the 'battle for work' had the effect in Northeim of convincing most people that the Third Reich had indeed brought about a miraculous economic recovery. The sense of everyone pulling together to get Germany out of the economic rut was strengthened by the hyper-activism of the local National Socialist Welfare organization, with its collection boxes, benefit evenings, stewpot Sundays and mass rallies. However, the Third Reich's most significant benefit to the local economy was brought by the army's reoccupation of a local barracks, whose refurbishment triggered a mini-boom in Northeim's construction industry. A thousand soldiers and ancillary staff meant a thousand new consumers and customers for local shops and suppliers.[172]

Yet according to regional Gestapo reports, none of this convinced the town's many former Social Democrats and Communists, who were still unreconciled to the regime at the end of 1935, and were continuing to spread negative propaganda by word of mouth. Hostility was also noted amongst local Catholics; people still shopped in Jewish stores; conservatives were disillusioned and forging contacts with the army; and Girmann's attempt to crush the local Lutheran congregation and make the

town the first town in Germany without Christians foundered on the passive resistance of both clergy and laity. In conformity with national policy, Girmann did manage to force the closure of the town's Catholic school, achieved mainly through a series of personal interviews with its pupils' parents in which an undertone of intimidation must have been clearly audible to them. But higher authority would not allow him to employ overt violence against the Lutherans, and getting the Hitler Youth to throw snowballs at the crucifix on the town church was not really very effective, and so his campaign failed. Girmann was not above threatening people he observed failing to conform. People who did not turn up to meetings or left them early were confronted and asked for an explanation, and in one case, Girmann personally wrote to a young woman who had neglected to raise her arm in the Nazi salute, telling her she would be in danger of physical assault if she did the same again. Faced with such threats, local people were generally careful to conform, at least outwardly. All the same, there was no denying a widespread loss of enthusiasm for the regime in the town after the first months of euphoria.[173]

The local Party found it difficult to counter such disillusionment. By the end of 1935 it had lost its dynamism; its leaders, Mayor Girmann included, had become comfortable, well-off even, drawing high salaries and reaping the rewards of their earlier struggles. Even Girmann did little in the later 1930s except rebuild the town's horse-riding facilities, which he proceeded to use himself on regular occasions. Nazi festivals and celebrations became empty rituals, with people participating more out of fear than commitment. The few open incidents of antisemitic violence in the town met with reactions from the townsfolk ranging from indifference to outright disapproval; this was, after all, the kind of disorder they had supposed the Third Reich had come into being in order to suppress. Former Social Democrats were grudgingly tolerated if they abstained from oppositional activities, which on the whole they did after 1935, when the last remaining resistance groups had been suppressed. Block Wardens visited the households in their charge on a regular basis, to extract Winter Aid payments and to check on their political reliability. They had to submit reports on anyone from their block who was applying for social welfare, seeking a position in any of the town's numerous guilds and clubs, or looking for a government job.

They had to fill in a form to this end, giving details of the applicant's attendance at meetings, contributions to charity and so on. Yet of the thousands of such reports stored in the local archives, hardly a single one after 1935 classified the subject as politically unreliable; only for a brief while, at the height of the Church struggle, did the reports contain negative comments along these lines, usually concerning active Catholics. Many of the Block Wardens' notes were vague or said little that was meaningful, but on one point, they were all specific, and that was whether or not their subjects contributed to Winter Aid and similar schemes. Failure to do so earned the person in question a black mark and a designation as 'selfish' or 'unfriendly'. Such an individual had made the Block Warden's job more difficult, and held the potential to get him into trouble if he did not deliver his designated quota of payments. Nothing much else mattered, except on occasion a rare failure of someone to hang out a flag on Hitler's birthday or forgetting to give the Hitler greeting. Some kind of political stability had been achieved, and most Block Wardens now seemed to want little more than to carry out their regular duties unhindered and without trouble. They no longer cared very much about people's political beliefs, so long as they conformed in outward appearance and kept their beliefs to themselves. No doubt they were somewhat more vigilant in former Communist strongholds in Berlin or the Ruhr than in a small provincial town like Northeim. Still, by 1939, a kind of *modus vivendi* had been reached: townspeople, whatever their views, participated in public rituals as required, though generally without much enthusiasm; the local Party was careful to leave it at that and not push people too far. Acquiescence and lip-service were all, in the end, that it had been able to achieve; but it was realistic enough to admit that this would have to do, and that was probably the situation elsewhere as well.[174]

The situation in Northeim reflected that of many other parts of Germany. Germans had not all become fanatical Nazis by 1939, but the basic desire of the vast majority for order, security, jobs, the possibility of improved living standards and career advancement, all things which had seemed impossible under the Weimar Republic, had largely been met, and this was enough to secure their acquiescence. Propaganda may not have had as much effect in this regard as the actual, obvious fact of social, economic and political stability. The violence and illegality of the

Röhm purge had been widely accepted, for example, not because people supported Hitler's use of murder as a political tool, but because it appeared to restore the order that had been threatened by Röhm's storm-troopers over the preceding months. There was a broad consensus on the primacy of orderliness that the Nazis recognized, accepted and exploited. In the long run, of course, it was to prove illusory. But for the moment, it was enough to take the wind out of the sails of any oppositional movements that tried to convert rumblings of dissatisfaction with one or the other aspect of daily life under the Third Reich into a broader form of opposition.[175]

IV

The social promises made by the Third Reich's leaders were far-reaching indeed. Nazism had won support at the polls in the early 1930s not least because of its incessantly reiterated promise to overcome the divisions of the Weimar Republic and unite the German people in a new national, racial community based on co-operation not conflict, mutual support not mutual antagonism. Class differences would disappear; the interests of the Germanic race would be paramount. The two great symbolic propaganda demonstrations choreographed by Goebbels and the Nazi leadership in the opening months of the Third Reich, the 'Day of Potsdam' and the 'Day of National Labour', had both been intended to demonstrate how the new Germany would unite the old traditions of the Prussian Establishment on the one hand and the labour movement on the other. Interviewed by the Nazi playwright Hanns Johst on 27 January 1934, Hitler declared that Nazism 'conceives of Germany as a corporate body, as a single organism'. 'From the camp of bourgeois tradition', he told Johst, National Socialism 'takes national resolve, and from the materialism of the Marxist dogma living, creative socialism.' He went on:

> People's Community: that means a community of all productive labour, that means the oneness of all vital interests, that means overcoming bourgeois privatism and the unionized, mechanically organized masses, that means unconditionally equating the individual fate and the nation, the individual and the

people . . . The bourgeois must become a citizen of the state; the red comrade must become a racial comrade. Both must, with their good intentions, ennoble the sociological concept of the worker and raise the status of an honorary title for labour. This patent of nobility alone puts the soldier and the peasant, the merchant and the academician, the worker and the capitalist under oath to take the only possible direction in which all purposeful German striving must be headed: towards the nation . . . The bourgeois man should stop feeling like some sort of pensioner of tradition or capital and separated from the worker by the Marxist concept of property; rather, he should strive, with an open mind, to become integrated in the whole as a worker.[176]

Hitler underlined these points by projecting himself as a worker by origin, a humble man of the people who had risen through the ranks without ever losing touch with his lowly origins.

Hitler frequently reminded his audiences that, as he told an audience of over a million people assembled in Berlin's Pleasure Gardens on Mayday 1937, he 'did not issue from some palace: I came from the worksite. Neither was I a general: I was a soldier like millions of others.' The camaraderie of the front line in 1914–18, when social barriers were wiped away in the heat of commitment to the national cause, was to live again in the spirit of the Third Reich:

It is a miraculous thing that, here in our country, an unknown man was able to step forth from the army of millions of German people, German workers and soldiers, to stand at the fore of the Reich and the nation! Next to me stand German people from every class of life who are today Regional Leaders etc. Though, mind you, former members of the bourgeoisie and former aristocrats also have their place in this movement. To us it makes no difference where they come from; what counts is that they are able to work for the benefit of our people.[177]

As Hitler's use of the word 'former' on this occasion suggested, the Third Reich sedulously propagated the notion that all class distinctions had been abolished in the new Germany. 'We are', declared Robert Ley in 1935, 'the first country in Europe to overcome the class struggle.'[178] In token of this, many institutions of the Nazi Party made a point of elevating members of the lower classes into positions of authority over members of the bourgeoisie, as in the Hitler Youth, or of subjecting the

scions of the elites to the authority of their supposedly former social inferiors, as when university students were sent to labour camps, or schoolteachers were disciplined by 'old fighters' from humble backgrounds in their compulsory training sessions. The Nazi students' attack on the traditional student duelling corps was only one instance of a widespread assault on Germany's most publicly prominent bastions of social privilege, and – to the disgust of traditionalists like Reck-Malleczewen – it was accompanied by a good deal of egalitarian rhetoric and verbal assaults on the reactionary nature of the class discrimination that the duelling corps so openly practised.[179]

Crucially, the rhetoric was accompanied by actual deeds. The decline in status, autonomy and power of the academically trained professions in the first six years of the Third Reich was real. Traditional institutions like the universities had been downgraded as part of the life-experience of young Germans, and far fewer went to them in 1939 than had done six years before. Small businessmen and white-collar workers saw the social divisions between them and the working class eroded by more than just Nazi speechifying. Aristocrats found themselves elbowed aside in the corridors of power by brash young Nazis from social classes far below theirs. Old-established figures of authority, from doctors to pastors, large landowners to village elders, found themselves under attack. Everywhere, the young, or at least a significant minority among them, seized their chance and asserted themselves against their elders: in the aristocracy, in the village, in the schoolroom, in the university. A new political elite had undeniably taken over. From the top rank of Nazis such as Goebbels and Göring, Schirach and Ley, down through the Regional Leaders to the bottom level of the Block Wardens and Hitler Youth commanders, new men, mostly young, often from unorthodox social backgrounds, sometimes, like Rosenberg for example, even from outside Germany itself, took over the reins of power. Moreover, a whole range of traditional social values had been downgraded: the professor's prioritization of learning for its own sake, the doctor's Hippocratic ethic of putting the patient's interests before everything else, even the businessman's enshrinement of profit as the ultimate measure of success – all these were swept aside by the Third Reich's prioritization of war, race and the national community.

Yet the equality of status so loudly and so insistently proclaimed by

the Nazis did not imply equality of social position, income or wealth. The Nazis did not radically revise the taxation system so as to even up people's net incomes, for example, or control the economy in the way that was done in the Soviet Union, or later on in the German Democratic Republic, so as to minimize the differences between rich and poor. Rich and poor remained in the Third Reich, as much as they ever had. In the end, the aristocracy's power over the land remained undisturbed, and younger nobles even found a new leadership role in the SS, Germany's future political elite. Peasant families that had run their village communities for decades or even centuries managed for the most part to retain their position by reaching a limited accommodation with the new regime. Businessmen, big and small, continued to run their businesses for the usual capitalist profit motive. Professors shunted the most obviously unscientific and unscholarly excrescences of Nazi ideology into little institutes on their own, where they could be isolated from the mainstream of teaching and research, and continued much as before. Judges and lawyers still judged and pleaded, still fought cases, still sent people to prison. Doctors had more power over their patients, employers over their workers. The Churches undeniably lost ground in areas such as education, but all reports agree that the priest and the pastor by and large retained the loyalty of their flock despite all the efforts of the regime to undermine it. The rhetoric of the national community convinced many, perhaps even most Germans on the political level: party rivalries had gone, everyone seemed to be pulling together under Hitler's leadership. 'No more class struggle', as Luise Solmitz noted in her diary on 27 April 1933, 'or Marxism, religious antagonisms, – only Germany, – in Hitler.'[180] But far fewer were convinced that the social utopia promised by the Nazis in 1933 ever really arrived.

A society cannot be totally transformed in a mere six years without huge, murderous violence of the kind that occurred in Russia, from the 'red terror' of the civil war years (1918–21) to the massive purges carried out by Stalin in the 1930s. The leadership of the Third Reich did, as we have seen, carry out a limited killing action against dissidents, or supposed dissidents, within its own ranks at the end of June 1934, and it also killed some thousands of its own real or supposed opponents within Germany, but its major violence was reserved for people outside the country and was carried out in wartime. There was no parallel to the

Soviet regime's killing of some three million of its own citizens, mostly in time of peace, nor to its imprisonment of many more millions in labour camps, nor to the violent upheavals that brought about the state ownership of industry and the collectivization of agriculture in Stalin's Russia. Similarly, while the Third Reich restricted wages and consumption, this was not as part of a deliberate attempt to narrow the gap between rich and poor, as with the far more drastic restrictions imposed in Soviet society, but simply as a means of saving money to pay for rearmament. Nazism did not try to turn the clock back, for all its talk of reinstating the hierarchies and values of a mythical Germanic past. As we have seen, the groups who hoped for a restoration of old social barriers and hierarchies were as disappointed as were those who looked to the Third Reich to carry out a radical redistribution of land and wealth.[181]

The problem was that any programme of social change that the Nazis might have desired was in the end ruthlessly subordinated to the overriding determinant of preparation for war. Whatever helped get Germany ready for the conquest of Eastern Europe was good; whatever got in the way was bad. The realization of any social or racial utopia was postponed until Germany had acquired its much-vaunted living-space in the East, just as economic prosperity for the masses was ultimately made dependent on the same thing. Yet any assessment of what might have been then becomes increasingly speculative, the more so since there is every indication that Hitler would not have stopped with the conquest of the East but would have transformed the war from one waged for European supremacy to one fought for world domination. Still, something of the nature of the utopian character of the future Third Reich imagined by its leaders and ideologues could already be discerned by 1939. Nazism's romance with technology, though driven by rearmament, went beyond the merely military. Here was a regime that wanted the latest machinery, the latest gadgets, the latest means of communication. All these things implied big factories, large businesses, modern cities, elaborate organizations. The principles on which the Nazi future would be based were scientific: the appliance of racial hygiene and Darwinist selectionism to human society without regard for any traditional morality or religious scruples, directed by an elaborate, hierarchical state apparatus that would brook no dissent. At times, Nazi rhetoric might seem to envision

a Europe of peasant farmers, of Germans united by ties of 'blood and soil', enslaving and exploiting members of inferior races in a pseudo-feudal world shorn of the complexities and ambiguities of industrial society; de-industrialization and de-urbanization would be the essentials of the final incarnation of the Third Reich on a European scale.[182] But the fiercest proponents of this view, such as Darré, were outflanked by those who believed that the new European racial order had to combine the most advanced industry, technology and communications with the reordering of agriculture and the countryside in a new balance between the two.[183]

In the real world of twentieth-century Germany, Nazism's modernizing effects impacted on a context where rapid social and economic change had already been going on since the industrial revolution of the mid-nineteenth century. Here too there were ultimately fatal contradictions. Preparation for war, for example, undoubtedly speeded up already existing processes of concentration and rationalization in industry, and accelerated technological developments of many kinds. Military and medical technology and research, as we have seen, forged ahead in government-funded institutes and company research and development departments. On the other hand, the educational policies of the Third Reich moved rapidly towards reducing the professional, scientific and intellectual competence of Germany's future professional elites, which were already beginning to decline in strength and numbers by 1939. If a future elite was beginning to emerge from the SS and from the new elite schools and Order Castles, then it was a dumbed-down elite that would find difficulty in managing a complex, modern industrial and technological social and economic system of a kind that would be capable of waging and sustaining a complex, modern, industrial and technological war. Traditional social institutions such as the trade unions were cleared away to make room for a total identification of the individual with state and race; yet the result was the exact opposite, a retreat of ordinary people into their private worlds of the home and family, a prioritization of consumer needs that the Third Reich was neither willing nor able wholly to satisfy. The destruction of the traditional institutions of the labour movement can plausibly be seen as a blow for modernity, paving the way for a very different, less antagonistic structure of labour relations after 1945. In the longer run, however, the decline of the traditional

industrial working class and the rise of the service sector in a post-industrial society would have achieved this result by other means.

The problem with arguing about whether or not the Third Reich modernized German society, how far it wanted to change the social order and in what ways it succeeded in doing so, is that society was not really a priority of Nazi policy anyway. True, social divisions were to be, if not abolished altogether, then at least bridged over, social discord was to be replaced by social harmony, and status, though not class, was to be equalized as far as possible in new Reich. But much of this was to be achieved by symbols, rituals and rhetoric. Above all, what Hitler and the Nazis wanted was a change in people's spirit, their way of thinking, and their way of behaving. They wanted a new man, and for that matter a new woman, to emerge out of the ashes of the Weimar Republic, re-creating the fighting unity and commitment of the front in the First World War. Their revolution was first and foremost cultural rather than social. Yet it was underpinned by something more concrete, that had real physical consequences for thousands, and in the end millions of Germans, Jews and others: the idea of racial engineering, of scientifically moulding the German people into a new breed of heroes, and its corollary, of eliminating the weak from the chain of heredity and taking those who were seen as the Germans' enemies, real and potential, out of the reforged national community altogether. This meant a concerted attempt to improve the physical quality of the German race on the one hand: and a comprehensive drive to remove elements the Nazis considered undesirable, including above all the Jews, from German society on the other, as we shall now see.

mismus und Selbstbehauptung', in Broszat *et al.* (eds.), *Bayern*, II. 237–80.
209. Tim Mason, 'The Domestic Dynamics of Nazi Conquests: A Response to Critics', in Childers and Caplan (eds.), *Reevaluating the Third Reich*, 161–89.
210. Benhken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, VI (1939), 643–9; Overy, '"Domestic Crisis"', 216, table 7.1.

Chapter 5. BUILDING THE PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY

1. Friedrich Reck-Malleczewen, *Diary of a Man in Despair* (London, 1995 [1966]), 36–9, 59, 36, 95, 85–6.
2. Ibid., 63.
3. Ibid., 78.
4. Ibid., 52.
5. Ibid., 84–5.
6. Ibid., 85.
7. Christine Zeile, 'Ein biographischer Essay', in Friedrich Reck, *Tagebuch eines Verzweifelten* (Frankfurt am Main, 1994), 251–98. Norman Stone, in his Introduction to the English edition, does not question Reck's title (*Diary*, 5–15, at 12); nor does his translator (Translator's Preface, 17–20, at 18). Burleigh, *The Third Reich*, 5, also describes him as an 'aristocrat'; Gellately, *The Gestapo*, 131, calls him a 'noble from southern Germany'. For a detailed dissection of his fantasies, see Alphons Kappeler, *Ein Fall von 'Pseudologia phantastica' in der deutschen Literatur: Fritz Reck-Malleczewen* (2 vols., Göppingen, 1975), I. 5–179.
8. Kappeler, *Ein Fall*, II. 482–92.
9. Heinz Reif, *Adel im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1999), 54, 112, 117; Georg H. Kleine, 'Adelsgenossenschaft und Nationalsozialismus', *VfZ* 26 (1978), 100–143; Shelley Baranowski, 'East Elbian Landed Elites and Germany's Turn to Fascism: The *Sonderweg* Controversy Revisited', *European History Quarterly*, 26 (1996), 209–40; Willibald Gutsche and Joachim Petzold, 'Das Verhältnis der Hohenzollern zum Faschismus', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 29 (1981), 917–39; Wolfgang Zollitsch, 'Adel und adlige Machteliten in der Endphase der Weimarer Republik. Standespolitik und agrarische Interessen', in Heinrich August Winkler (ed.), *Die deutsche Staatskrise 1930–1933: Handlungsspielräume und Alternativen* (Munich, 1992), 239–62; Karl Otmar von Aretin, 'Der bayerische Adel von der Monarchie zum Dritten Reich', in Broszat *et al.* (eds.), *Bayern*, III. 513–68, at 525, 542, 554–6. Stephan Malinowski, *Vom König zum Führer. Sozialer Niedergang und politische Radikalisierung im deutschen Adel zwischen Kaiserreich und NS-Staat* (Berlin, 2003), 321–475, provides a comprehensive and readable survey of aristocratic clubs and pressure-groups.
10. Höhne, *The Order*, 142–8; Gutsche and Petzold, 'Das Verhältnis'; Reif, *Adel*, 54; more generally, Martin Broszat and Klaus Schwabe (eds.), *Die deutschen Eliten und der Weg in den Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Munich, 1989).

11. Malinowski, *Vom König*, 560–78. See also the studies in Heinz Reif (ed.), *Adel und Bürgertum in Deutschland*, II: *Entwicklungslinien und Wendepunkte im 20. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 2001) and the detailed examples presented in Friedrich Keinemann, *Vom Krummstab zur Republik: Westfälischer Adel unter preussischer Herrschaft 1802–1945* (Bochum, 1997) and Eckart Conze, *Von deutschem Adel: Die Grafen von Bernstorff im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 2000).

12. Tyrell, *Führer befiehl . . .*, 24; Noakes and Pridham (eds.), *Nazism*, I. 61.

13. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*, 369–73; Corni, *Hitler and the Peasants*, 39–65; Petzina, *Die deutsche Wirtschaft*, 115–16.

14. Matthias Eidenbenz, *'Blut und Boden': Zu Funktion und Genese der Metaphern des Agrarismus und Biologismus in der nationalsozialistischen Bauernpropaganda R. W. Darrés* (Bern, 1993); Oswald Spengler was the first to bring the two words into the same context, though setting them in opposition to one another (ibid., 2–3).

15. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*, 228, 334; Gustavo Corni, 'Richard Walther Darré: The Blood and Soil Ideologue', in Smelser and Zitelmann (eds.), *The Nazi Elite*, 18–27; Horst Gies, *R. Walther Darré und die nationalsozialistische Bauernpolitik 1930 bis 1933* (Frankfurt am Main, 1966); idem, 'Die nationalsozialistische Machtergreifung auf dem agrarpolitischen Sektor', *Zeitschrift für Agrargeschichte und Agrarsoziologie*, 16 (1968), 210–32; Horst Gies, 'NSDAP und landwirtschaftliche Organisationen in der Endphase der Weimarer Republik', *VfZ* 15 (1967), 341–67; Farquharson, *The Plough* 13–73; Herlemann, *'Der Bauer'*, 53–73.

16. Horst Gies, 'Die nationalsozialistische Machtergreifung', 210–32; idem, 'Landbvevölkerung und Nationalsozialismus. Der Weg in den Reichsnährstand', *Zeitgeschichte*, 13 (1986), 123–41.

17. Farquharson, *The Plough*, 107–40.

18. Corni, *Hitler and the Peasants*, 121; Minuth (ed.), *Akten der Reichskanzlei: Die Regierung Hitler, 1933–1934*, I. 399–401.

19. Corni, *Hitler and the Peasants*, 116–42; Farquharson, *The Plough*, 141–60.

20. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, I (1934), 52 (April/May).

21. Ibid., 52.

22. Ibid., 741 (November/December, report from southern Bavaria); more generally, Friedrich Grundmann, *Agrarpolitk im 'Dritten Reich': Anspruch und Wirklichkeit des Reichserbhofgesetzes* (Hamburg, 1979); Herlemann, *'Der Bauer'*, 127–45.

23. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, I (1934), 741–2.

24. Ibid., 232 (also for the preceding passage); more generally, see the account in Corni, *Hitler and the Peasants*, 143–55.

25. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, I (1934), 232–3; see also Michael Schwartz, 'Bauern vor dem Sondergericht. Resistenz und Verfolgung im bäuerlichen Milieu Westfalens', in Anselm Faust (ed.), *Verfolgung und Widerstand im Rheinland und in Westfalen 1933–1945* (Cologne, 1992), 113–23.

26. See for example Herlemann, *'Der Bauer'*, 226–9.
27. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, IV (1937), 1,098–140; examples on 1,100 and 1,103.
28. Wolfram Pyta, *Dorfgemeinschaft und Parteipolitik 1918–1933: Die Verschränkung von Milieu und Parteien in der protestantischen Landgebieten Deutschlands in der Weimarer Republik* (Düsseldorf, 1996), 470–73.
29. Zdenek Zofka, *Die Ausbreitung des Nationalsozialismus auf dem Lande: Eine regionale Fallstudie zur politischen Einstellung der Landbevölkerung in der Zeit des Aufstiegs und der Machtergreifung der NSDAP 1928–1936* (Munich, 1979); Herlemann, *'Der Bauer'*, 77–88.
30. Zdenek Zofka, 'Dorfeliten und NSDAP. Fallbeispiele der Gleichschaltung aus dem Kreis Günzburg', in Broszat *et al.* (eds.), *Bayern*, IV. 383–434, at 429 (Aus dem Schreiben des Landrats von Bad Aibling an die zuständige Behörde der US-Militärregierung vom 12. Dezember 1945).
31. Ibid., 431 (Aus einem Schreiben des Bezirksamts Erding an die Kreisleitung Erding vom 5. März 1937).
32. Ibid., 432 (Aus der Stellungnahme des Bezirksamtes München vom 27. September 1938).
33. Caroline Wagner, *Die NSDAP auf dem Dorf: Eine Sozialgeschichte der NS-Machtergreifung in Lippe* (Münster, 1998).
34. Gerhard Wilke, 'Village Life in Nazi Germany', in Richard Bessel (ed.), *Life in the Third Reich* (Oxford, 1987), 17–24. See also the full-length study by Kurt Wagner, *Leben auf dem Lande im Wandel der Industrialisierung: 'Das Dorf war früher auch keine heile Welt': Veränderung der dörflichen Lebensweise und der politischen Kultur vor dem Hintergrund der Industrialisierung am Beispiel des nordhessischen Dorfes Körle (1800–1970)* (Frankfurt am Main, 1986).
35. Gerhard Wilke and Kurt Wagner, 'Family and Household: Social Structures in a German Village Between the Two World Wars', in Richard J. Evans and William Robert Lee (eds.), *The German Family: Essays on the Social History of the Family in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-century Germany* (London, 1981), 120–47; Grunberger, *A Social History*, 200, citing Hans Müller, *Deutsches Bauerntum zwischen Gestern und Morgen* (Witzburg, 1940), 28.
36. Gerhard Wilke, 'The Sins of the Fathers: Village Society and Social Control in the Weimar Republic', in Richard J. Evans and W. R. Lee (eds.), *The German Peasantry: Conflict and Community in Rural Society from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Centuries* (London, 1986), 174–204.
37. For similar findings for Lippe, see Wagner, *Die NSDAP*, *passim*.
38. Kurt Wagner and Gerhard Wilke, 'Dorfleben im Dritten Reich: Körle in Hessen', in Peukert and Reulecke (eds.), *Die Reihen fast geschlossen*, 85–106. For another, comparable study, see Wolfgang Kaschuba and Carola Lipp, 'Kein Volk steht auf, kein Sturm bricht los. Stationen dörflichen Lebens auf dem Weg in den Faschismus', in Johannes Beck *et al.* (eds.), *Terror und Hoffnung in Deutschland 1933–1945: Leben im Faschismus* (Reinbek, 1980), 111–55, and idem, *Dörfliches*

Überleben: Zur Geschichte materieller und sozialer Reproduktion ländlicher Gesellschaft im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert (Tübingen, 1982), 232–59. For a more general assessment, see also Wolfgang Kaschuba, *Lebenswelt und Kultur der unterbürgerlichen Schichten im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1990), 47–9.

39. Daniela Münkel, *Nationalsozialistiche Agrarpolitik und Bauernalltag* (Frankfurt am Main, 1996), 192–320; see also eadem, *Bauern und Nationalsozialismus: Der Landkreis Celle im Dritten Reich* (Bielefeld, 1991); and eadem, 'Hakenkreuz und "Blut und Boden": Bäuerliches Leben im Landkreis Celle 1933–1939', *Zeitschrift für Agrargeschichte und Agrarsoziologie*, 40 (1992), 206–47.

40. See also the discussion in Herlemann, *'Der Bauer'*, 88–119.

41. Münkel, *Nationalsozialistische Agrarpolitik*, 278–80, 319–20, 466–81; Wagner, *Die NSDAP*, however, emphasizes the relatively high level of denunciations in some villages in Lippe. For the failure of agricultural modernization, see Peter Exner, *Ländliche Gesellschaft und Landwirtschaft in Westfalen, 1919–1969* (Paderborn, 1997); Joachim Lehmann, 'Mecklenburgische Landwirtschaft und "Modernisierung" in den dreissiger Jahren', in Frank Bajohr (ed.), *Norddeutschland*, 335–46; and Daniela Münkel (ed.), *Der lange Abschied vom Agrarland: Agrarpolitik, Landwirtschaft und ländliche Gesellschaft zwischen Weimar und Bonn* (Göttingen, 2000). For a brief assessment of the Harvest Thanksgiving Festival, see Herlemann, *'Der Bauer'*, 223.

42. From a large literature, see in particular Heinz-Gerhard Haupt (ed.), *Die radikale Mitte: Lebensweisen und Politik von Kleinhändlern und Handwerkern in Deutschland seit 1848* (Munich, 1985); David Blackbourn, 'Between Resignation and Volatility: The German Petty Bourgeoisie in the Nineteenth Century', in idem, *Populists and Patricians: Essays in Modern German History* (London, 1987), 84–113; Heinrich August Winkler, *Mittelstand, Demokratie und Nationalsozialismus: Die politische Entwicklung von Handwerk und Kleinhandel in der Weimarer Republik* (Cologne, 1972); Adelheid von Saldern, *Mittelstand im 'Dritten Reich': Handwerker – Einzelhändler – Bauern* (Frankfurt am Main, 1979).

43. David Schoenbaum, *Hitler's Social Revolution: Class and Status in Nazi Germany, 1933–1939* (London, 1967), 136–7; Saldern, *Mittelstand, passim*; Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, VI (1939), 228–32.

44. Friedrich Lenger, *Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Handwerker seit 1800* (Frankfurt am Main, 1988), 195–203. For the Labour Front, see below, 459–65.

45. Blaich, *Wirtschaft*, 19–20; Petzina, *Die deutsche Wirtschaft*, 142.

46. Lenger, *Sozialgeschichte*, 132–7 and 163–202; Bernhard Keller, *Das Handwerk im faschistischen Deutschland: Zum Problem der Massenbasis* (Cologne, 1980), 68–84 (some useful information despite Marxist-Leninist approach).

47. Schoenbaum, *Hitler's Social Revolution*, 136–43, 147–50; Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, VI (1939), 251–4.

48. Lenger, *Sozialgeschichte*, 195–203; Schoenbaum, *Hitler's Social Revolution*, 136–43, 147–50. The contention of Adelheid von Saldern that artisanal trades

achieved much of what they wanted in the Third Reich is only partially convincing even for the period 1933–6 and not at all for the period thereafter: see Heinrich August Winkler, 'Der entbehrliche Stand. Zur Mittelstandspolitik im "Dritten Reich"', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 17 (1977), 1–4; Adelheid von Saldern, *Mittelstand*; eadem, '"Alter Mittelstand" im "Dritten Reich". Anmerkungen zu einer Kontroverse', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 12 (1986), 235–43; Heinrich August Winkler, 'Ein neuer Mythos vom alten Mittelstand. Antwort auf eine Antikritik', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 12 (1986), 548–57.

49. Gerald Schröder, 'Die "Wiedergeburt" der Pharmazie – 1933 bis 1934', in Mehrtens and Richter (eds.), *Naturwissenschaft*, 166–88; Franz Leimkugel, 'Antisemitische Gesetzgebung in der Pharmazie, 1933–1939', in Meinel and Voswinckel (eds.), *Medizin*, 230–35.

50. Martin F. Brumme, '"Prachtvoll fegt der eiserne Besen durch die deutschen Lande." Die Tierärzte und das Jahr 1933', in Meinel and Voswinckel (eds.), *Medizin*, 173–82.

51. Schoenbaum, *Hitler's Social Revolution*, 144–6.

52. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, I (1934), 49–50.

53. Ibid., 111–12.

54. Ibid., II (1935), 453–60.

55. Ibid., 1,334–54.

56. Ibid., VI (1939), 868–98.

57. Günther Schulz, *Die Angestellten seit dem 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 2000), 36–7; Michael Prinz, *Vom neuen Mittelstand zum Volksgenossen: Die Entwicklung des sozialen Status der Angestellten von der Weimarer Republik bis zum Ende der NS-Zeit* (Munich, 1986), 92–143, 229.

58. Prinz, *Vom neuen Mittelstand*, 334–5.

59. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, III (1936), 732–3.

60. Konrad H. Jarausch, *The Unfree Professions: German Lawyers, Teachers, and Engineers, 1900–1950* (New York, 1990), 142–69.

61. Kater, *Doctors*, 35–6.

62. See above, 317–18.

63. Kater, *Doctors*, 35–40.

64. Ibid., 25–34, 54–74; see also idem, 'Medizin und Mediziner im Dritten Reich', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 244 (1987), 299–352.

65. Domarus, *Hitler*, II. 692.

66. Boberach (ed.), *Meldungen*, II. 281 (Vierteljahrslagebericht 1939 des Sicherheitshauptamtes Band 2).

67. Jane Caplan, *Government without Administration: State and Civil Service in Weimar and Nazi Germany* (Oxford, 1988), 215–59.

68. Document printed in Hans Mommsen, *Beamtentum im Dritten Reich: Mit ausgewählten Quellen zur nationalsozialistischen Beamtenpolitik* (Stuttgart, 1976) 146–8.

69. Caplan, *Government*, 321–5.

70. Jane Caplan, '"The Imaginary Unity of Particular Interests": The "Tradition" of the Civil Service in German History', *Social History*, 4 (1978), 299–317; eadem, 'Bureaucracy, Politics and the National Socialist State', in Stachura (ed.), *The Shaping*, 234–56.
71. Hedda Kalshoven, *Ich denk so viel an Euch: Ein deutsch-holländischer Briefwechsel 1920–1949* (Munich, 1995 [1991]), 151–2.
72. Ibid., 152.
73. Ibid., 161 (3 February 1933).
74. Ibid., 169 (10 March 1933).
75. Ibid., 177–8 (14 March 1933).
76. Ibid., 182–4 (22 March 1933).
77. Ibid., 187 (30 March 1933).
78. Ibid., 189 (6 April 1933).
79. Ibid., 199 (17 May 1933).
80. Ibid., also 198 (12 May 1933).
81. Ibid., 202–3 (25 May 1933).
82. Ibid., 202 (25 May 1933).
83. Ibid., 175–6 (14 March 1933).
84. Ibid., 180 (14 March 1933).
85. Ibid., 189 (6 April 1933).
86. Ibid., 189–90 (6 April 1933).
87. Ibid., 216 (18 October 1933).
88. Ibid., 212–13 (*Braunschweigische Landeszeitung*, 19 October 1933).
89. Ibid., 236 (14 July 1934); also her daughter's letter of 7 July on the same page.
90. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*, 425.
91. Kalshoven, *Ich denk*, 17–31. There is no reason to suppose that the family stopped mentioning politics in their letters out of fear that they were being intercepted by the Gestapo, although this must remain a possibility.
92. Hanna Haack, 'Arbeitslose in Deutschland. Ergebnisse und Analyse der Berufszählung vom 16. Juni 1933', *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (1986), 36–69; useful brief summary in Heinrich August Winkler, *Der Weg in die Katastrophe: Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung in der Weimarer Republik 1930 bis 1933* (Berlin, 1987), 93–9; see also the classic study by Thedor Julius Geiger, *Die soziale Schichtung des deutschen Volkes* (Stuttgart, 1967 [1932]). The category of the 'economically active' (*Erwerbspersonen*) includes registered unemployed in these sectors as well as persons still in employment (*Erwerbstätige*).
93. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*, 333–49, 355–61.
94. Boelcke, *Die deutsche Wirtschaft*, 68–9. Hans-Gerd Schumann, *Nationalsozialismus und Gewerkschaftsbewegung: Die Vernichtung der deutschen Gewerkschaften und der Aufbau der 'Deutschen Arbeitsfront'* (Hanover, 1958), 63; Ronald Smelser, *Robert Ley: Hitler's Labor Front Leader* (Oxford, 1988), 117–25; Mason, *Social Policy*, 63–108.
95. Smelser, *Robert Ley*, 126–34.

96. Schumann, *Nationalsozialismus und Gewerkschaftsbewegung*, 63–5.
97. Ronald Smelser, 'Robert Ley: The Brown Collectivist', in idem and Zitelmann (eds.), *The Nazi Elite*, 144–54, at 144–5; also, at greater length, Smelser, *Robert Ley*, 6–16.
98. Ibid., 17–69.
99. Ibid. 125–34.
100. Ibid., 135–9.
101. Timothy W. Mason, 'The Workers' Opposition in Nazi Germany', *History Workshop Journal*, 11 (1987), 120–37.
102. Smelser, *Robert Ley*, 140–42; Noakes and Pridham (eds.), *Nazism*, II. 149; Schoenbaum, *Hitler's Social Revolution*, 91–8.
103. Quoted in Broszat, *Der Staat Hitlers*, 190 (note).
104. Heidrun Homburg, *Rationalisierung und Industriearbeit. Arbeitsmarkt – Management – Arbeiterschaft im Siemens-Konzern Berlin 1900–1939* (Berlin, 1991), 681–2.
105. Smelser, *Robert Ley*, 98–116; Speer, *Inside*, 217; Felix Kersten, *The Kersten Memoirs 1940–1945* (London, 1956 [1952]) (not always reliable); Hans-Peter Bleuel, *Strength Through Joy: Sex and Society in Nazi Germany* (London, 1973 [1972]), 3.
106. Bajohr, *Parvenüs*, 55–62.
107. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, IV (1937), 538–40.
108. Shelley Baranowski, *Strength Through Joy*, 11–51; see also Hermann Weiss, 'Ideologie der Freizeit im Dritten Reich: Die NS-Gemeinschaft "Kraft durch Freude"', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 33 (1993), 289–303.
109. Quoted in Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, VI (1939), 463.
110. Baranowski, *Strength Through Joy*, 51–66; also von Saldern, '"Art for the People"', 322–9; Schneider, *Unterm Hakenkreuz*, 228–9.
111. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, V (1938), 158.
112. Baranowski, *Strength Through Joy*, 118–42; Schneider, *Unterm Hakenkreuz*, 230–34.
113. Baranowski, *Strength Through Joy*, 142–54.
114. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, II (1935), 176; similar reports in ibid., 846–7.
115. Ibid., VI (1939), 468.
116. Baranowski, *Strength Through Joy*, 165–7; Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, VI (1939), 464–8.
117. Jürgen Rostock and Franz Zadnicek, *Paradiesruinen: Das KdF-Seebad der Zwanzigtausend auf Rügen* (Berlin, 1997 [1992]); Baranowski, *Strength Through Joy*, 155–61, 231; Hasso Spode, 'Ein Seebad für zwanzigtausend Volksgenossen: Zur Grammatik und Geschichte des Fordistischen Urlaubs', in Peter J. Brenner (ed.), *Reisekultur in Deutschland: Von der Weimarer Republic zum 'Dritten Reich'* (Tübingen, 1997), 7–47; for comparison, John K. Walton, *The British Seaside: Holidays and Resorts in the Twentieth Century* (Manchester, 2000). The resort

had an everyday parallel in 'Strength-Through-Joy Town', built to accommodate the workers at the new Volkswagen plant: see Mommsen and Grieger, *Das Volkswagenwerk*, 250–82.

118. Baranowski, *Strength Through Joy*, 66–74; Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, II (1935), 175; further reports in ibid., V (1938), 165–75, and VI (1939), 468–85 and 879–87.

119. Baranowski, *Strength Through Joy*, 166–75.

120. Ibid., 162–75; Mason, *Social Policy*, 160 and n. 20; William D. Bayles, *Caesars in Goosestep* (New York, 1940); Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, I (1934), 524; ibid., VI (1939), 479.

121. Ibid., (1936), 884.

122. Hasso Spode, '"Der deutsche Arbeiter reist": Massentourismus im Dritten Reich', in Gerhard Huck (ed.), *Sozialgeschichte der Freizeit: Untersuchungen zum Wandel der Alltagskultur in Deutschland* (Wuppertal, 1980), 281–306; Schneider, *Unterm Hakenkreuz*, 670–78; Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, I (1934), 523–7.

123. Mason, *Social Policy*, 159.

124. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, VI (1939), 474.

125. Ibid., V (1938), 172.

126. Mason, *Social Policy*, 158–64.

127. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, VI (1939), 468.

128. Herbert, '"Die guten und die schlechten Zeiten"', 67–96.

129. Schneider, *Unterm Hakenkreuz*, 676; Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, VI (1939), 474.

130. Ibid., II (1935), 1,455–6.

131. Ibid., 849.

132. For an important study of this process, see Lynn Abrams, *Workers' Culture in Imperial Germany: Leisure and Recreation in the Rhineland and Westphalia* (London, 1992); for the labour movement's cultural traditions see, among many other studies, Vernon L. Lidtke, *The Alternative Culture: Socialist Labor in Imperial Germany* (New York, 1985), and W. L. Guttsman, *Workers' Culture in Weimar Germany: Between Tradition and Commitment* (Oxford, 1990).

133. Baranowski, *Strength Through Joy*, 165.

134. Schneider, *Unterm Hakenkreuz*, 672; Christine Keitz, 'Die Anfänge des modernen Massentourismus in der Weimarer Republik', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 33 (1993), 179–209, at 192.

135. See Kristin A. Semmens, *Seeing Hitler's Germany: Tourism in the Third Reich* (London, 2005).

136. Baranowski, *Strength Through Joy*, 75–117; Chup Friemert, *Schönheit der Arbeit: Produktionsästhetik im Faschismus* (Munich, 1980); and Anson G. Rabinbach, 'The Aesthetics of Production in the Third Reich', in George L. Mosse (ed.), *International Fascism: New Thoughts and New Approaches* (London, 1979), 189–222. For one example, see Matthias Frese, *Betriebspolitik im 'Dritten Reich':*

Deutsche Arbeitsfront, Unternehmer und Staatsbürokratie in der westdeutschen Grossindustrie, 1933–1939 (Paderborn, 1991), 383–95; further reports in Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, III (1936), 886–7, and V (1938), 173–5.

137. Ibid., VI (1939), 463.

138. Ibid., II (1935), 846.

139. Cited in Schneider, *Unterm Hakenkreuz*, 678.

140. Blaich, *Wirtschaft*, 19–20.

141. 'Upswing Without Prosperity? Some Notes on the Development in the Lower Income Classes in Germany', *Supplement to the Weekly Report of the German Institute for Business Research* (Berlin, 24 February 1937).

142. Rüdiger Hachtmann, *Industriearbeit im 'Dritten Reich': Untersuchungen zu den Lohn- und Arbeitsbedingungen in Deutschland 1933–1945* (Göttingen, 1989), 156–9; Dietmar Petzina *et al.* (eds.), *Sozialgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch*, III: *Materialien zur Statistik des Reiches 1914–1945* (Munich, 1978), 98; Mason, *Social Policy*, 128–33.

143. Schneider, *Unterm Hakenkreuz*, 546–52.

144. Petzina *et al.* (eds.), *Sozialgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch*, III. 103.

145. Klaus Wisotzky, *Der Ruhrbergbau im Dritten Reich: Studien zur Sozialpolitik im Ruhrbergbau und zum sozialen Verhalten der Bergleute in den Jahren 1933 bis 1939* (Düsseldorf, 1983), 81–7; Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, V (1938), 311–12.

146. See, for example, Michael Stahlmann, *Die erste Revolution in der Autoindustrie: Management und Arbeitspolitik von 1900–1940* (Frankfurt am Main, 1993), 85–8 (on the Opel car factory); Magnus Tessner, *Die deutsche Automobilindustrie im Strukturwandel von 1919 bis 1938* (Cologne, 1994), 205–6; and Homburg, *Rationalisierung, passim*.

147. Timothy Mason, *Arbeiterklasse und Volkgemeinschaft: Dokumente und Materialien zur deutschen Arbeiterpolitik 1936–1939* (Opladen, 1975), 669–70; Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, VI (1939), 163–7; for the disciplining of the workforce in the automobile industry, see Ernst Kaiser and Michael Knorn, '*Wir lebten und schliefen zwischen den Toten': Rüstungsproduktion, Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung in den Frankfurter Adlerwerken* (Frankfurt am Main, 1994), 39–48.

148. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, VI (1939), 159–60.

149. Mason, *Arbeiterklasse*, 198–203.

150. Bernard P. Bellon, *Mercedes in Peace and War: German Automobile Workers, 1903–1945* (New York, 1990), 227.

151. Mason, *Social Policy*, 181–94.

152. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, VI (1939), 167–8, 338–46.

153. Mason, *Social Policy*, 266–74; Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, V (1938), 1,086–94; VI (1939), 352–6; see also, for a detailed example, Andreas Meyhoff, *Blohm und Voss im 'Dritten Reich': Eine Hamburger Grosswerft zwischen Geschäft und Politik* (Hamburg, 2001).

154. Herbert, '"Die guten und die schlechten Zeiten"', 93; for the thesis that class conflict of this kind contributed towards a prewar crisis, see Timothy Mason, 'Arbeiteropposition im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland', in Peukert and Reulecke (eds.), *Die Reihen fast geschlossen*, 293–314; second thoughts in Mason, *Social Policy*, 275–331; balanced assessment in Schneider, *Unterm Hakenkreuz*, 752–65; detailed local study of a mining community in Klaus Tenfelde, 'Proletarische Provinz: Radikalisierung und Widerstand in Penzberg/Oberbayern 1900 bis 1945', in Broszat *et al.* (eds.), *Bayern*, IV: 1–382, at 320–37.
155. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 27–8.
156. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*, 140–45, 378–80; David F. Crew, *Germans on Welfare: From Weimar to Hitler* (New York, 1998), 6, 212–15.
157. Florian Tennstedt, 'Wohltat und Interesse. Das Winterhilfswerk des Deutschen Volkes. Die Weimarer Vorgeschichte und ihre Instrumentalisierung durch das NS-Regime', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 13 (1987), 157–80.
158. Thomas E. de Witt, '"The Struggle Against Hunger and Cold": Winter Relief in Nazi Germany, 1933–1939', *Canadian Journal of History*, 12 (1978), 361–81.
159. Herwart Vorländer, *Die NSV: Darstellung und Dokumentation einer nationalsozialistischen Organisation* (Boppard, 1988), 4–5, 44–62.
160. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, II (1935), 1,430, and V (1938), 77–115; De Witt, 'The Struggle'.
161. De Witt, 'The Struggle'; also Herwart Vorländer, 'NS-Volkswohlfahrt und Winterhilfswerk des deutschen Volkes', *VfZ* 34 (1986), 341–80; and idem, *Die NSV*, 230, 53–4.
162. De Witt, '"The Struggle"'; Speer, *Inside*, 179–80; Vorländer, *Die NSV*, 51–2.
163. Ibid., 6–37.
164. Ibid., 214.
165. Quoted in Adelheid Gräfin zu Castell Rüdenhausen, '"Nicht mitzuleiden, mitzukämpfen sind wir da!" Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt im Gau Westfalen-Nord', in Peukert and Reulecke (eds.), *Die Reihen fast geschlossen*, 223–44, at 224–5.
166. Gamm, *Der Flüsterwitz*, 90; Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, II (1935), 1,421–47; Castell Rüdenhausen, '"Nicht mitzuleiden"'; see also Peter Zolling, *Zwischen Integration und Segregation: Sozialpolitik im 'Dritten Reich' am Beispiel der 'Nationalsozialistischen Volkswohlfahrt' (NSV) in Hamburg* (Frankfurt am Main, 1986).
167. Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte*, II (1935), 1,447–55; see also ibid., I (1934), 42–8.
168. Maschmann, *Account Rendered*, 13.
169. Ibid., 10–18.
170. Kershaw, *The 'Hitler Myth'*, 64–5, 73–7.
171. William Sheridan Allen, *The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single German Town 1922–1945* (New York, 1984 [1965]), 266–73.

172. Ibid.
173. Ibid.
174. Ibid., 274–91. See also the richly detailed though more politically oriented local study by Struve, *Aufstieg*, and the documentary collection edited by Lawrence D. Stokes, *Kleinstadt und Nationalsozialismus: Ausgewählte Dokumente zur Geschichte von Eutin, 1918–1945* (Neumünster, 1984) (both North Germany).
175. Bernd Stöver, *Volksgemeinschaft im Dritten Reich: Die Konsensbereitschaft der Deutschen aus der Sicht sozialistischer Exilberichte* (Düsseldorf, 1993), 115–203, 421.
176. Domarus (ed.), *Hitler*, I. 415–17.
177. Ibid., II. 892.
178. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 29 September 1935, cited in Schoenbaum, *Hitler's Social Revolution*, 67.
179. See above, 268, 300–301; for Reck's views, see *Diary*, 63–4.
180. Tagebuch Luise Solmitz, 28 April 1933.
181. For a selective comparison, see Overy, *The Dictators*, 218–64; for the argument that the Third Reich modernized German society through Keynesian economic policies and the destruction of traditional social institutions like the trade unions, see Werner Abelshauser and Anselm Faust, *Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik: Eine nationalsozialistische Revolution?* (Tübingen, 1983).
182. Henry Ashby Turner, Jr, 'Fascism and Modernization', in idem (ed.), *Reappraisals of Fascism* (New York, 1975), 117–39.
183. See the useful discussion in Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* (4th edn, London, 2000 [1985]), 161–82; Horst Matzerath and Heinrich Volkmann, 'Modernisierungstheorie und Nationalsozialismus', in Jürgen Kocka (ed.), *Theorien in der Praxis des Historikers* (Göttingen, 1977), 86–116; Jeremy Noakes, 'Nazism and Revolution', in Noel O'Sullivan (ed.), *Revolutionary Theory and Political Reality* (London, 1983), 73–100. For the view that Nazism deliberately sought to modernize German society, see Rainer Zitelmann, *Hitler: The Politics of Seduction* (London, 1999 [1987]). This has not been widely accepted, at least, not in the form put by Zitelmann.

Chapter 6. TOWARDS THE RACIAL UTOPIA

1. Paul Weindling, *Health, Race and German Politics between National Unification and Nazism, 1870–1945* (Cambridge, 1989), 60–84; Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*, 35–6; Robert N. Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine under the Nazis*, (London, 1988), 47.
2. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*, 34–8, 377–8; Hans-Walter Schmuhl, *Rassenhygiene, Nationalsozialismus, Euthanasie: Von der Verhütung zur Vernichtung 'lebensunwerten Lebens', 1890–1945* (Göttingen, 1987), 49–105.
3. Weindling, *Health*, 489–503.