

WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH HITLER AFTER THE WAR?

Six Keen Analysts of Current Events Tell How They Would Dispose of the Beast of Berlin

AGAR 3

Journal

HERBERT Agner, eloquent President of Freedom House, editor of the *Louisville Courier* and author of *A Time for Greatness*, suggested this symposium. PICTURE SCOOP thought it was a fine idea so we invited five others to suggest their opinions as to how we should dispose of Hitler after the war. They are: Quincy Howe, CBS news commentator and editor-in-chief of Simon and Schuster, Frazier Hunt, CBS news analyst, George Putnam, NBC news reporter, Jonathan Steel, WMCA news commentator, and Rex Stout, creator of *Nero Wolfe*, author of *Black Orchids*, and leading commentator of CBS's *Our Secret Weapon*—a radio show which exposes the lies of Nazi propagandists.

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By HERBERT AGAR

WHAT shall we do with Hitler, if we have the disposal of him when the war is over? He is likely to solve the problem for us, by suicide. But if he doesn't?

I suggest that we keep him as a warning, that we preserve him as long as possible, and let him write books.

The genius of Hitler is his knowledge of all the darkness and corruption in the human heart. His twisted mind understands every sin and every weakness of man. There are passages in *Mein Kampf* which show an insight of which the greatest of novelists might be proud.

The insight is never present except when Hitler is discussing man's wickedness. He knows nothing of man's goodness. Yet he has overthrown many countries and half-murdered our world. Surely he should be useful as a warning.

A man who understands only corruption would not have conquered a large part of our world if that world had been healthy and upright. He got his chance to work his ruin because we were living too much on the bad side of our nature—the side that Hitler understands.

A world wherein I made noble professions, but were content with onerous deeds, was a world ripe for Hitler. A world increasingly selfish, increasingly greedy, increasingly callous, was a world Hitler could comprehend, a world in which he could rise to power by exploiting every malevolent feature of his nature.

Since he only knew what was bad about man, he assumed that the way to the most effective political weapon. And for a time he was right. He assumed that the nations would stand politely aside and let him murder his victims one by one. And for a time he was right. He assumed that he could turn his German people into pirates and his subject people into slaves. And for a time he was right.

Let us keep Hitler as a warning, and let us encourage him to write more books telling us how wicked we are, capable of being. When we have found a better world we shall still have the same old weaknesses in our hearts, the same old temptations to relapse. Let's keep Hitler to remind us of these horrible things that happen when we do relapse.

By QUINCY HOWE

BEFORE you cook your fish, you first must catch him. What happens to Hitler after the war depends on who catches him—and how. The fifties of Germany, Europe, and the whole world would best be served if the German people themselves caught up with Hitler, and then proceeded to administer the punishment that they think he deserves.

Americans have not yet played such an important part in the struggle against Hitler to have any right to recommend punishment. We can only hope that the Germans can devise a punishment which would clear them of some of the hatred that the Nazi regime has engendered everywhere for all things German. But if the Russians, the British, the Poles, the Czechs, the French, or any other victims or enemies of Hitler, catch up with him, it would be for them to say what should be done.

Should the dirty business finally fall to America, I believe the best solution would be to dispatch Hitler as quickly, ruthlessly, and inconspicuously as one would rid the world of a rat, a louse, or the germ of the bubonic plague.

By FRAZIER HUNT

ON Christmas Day, 1922, Hitler came to my hotel room in Munich and spent three hours talking to me. I thought so little of him at that time that I never even bothered to write a magazine story about the long conversation. Twenty years later, millions of us are pounding our heads in fright over what in the world we should do with Hitler when this war is over. In those 20 years, and less, this incredible Figure of Mischief has thrown the world into utter grief and chaos.

Now, this question of what to do with Hitler after the war is over, makes for granted, one very large IF. That is: "IF Hitler loses." Right now we might profitably be spending more time and worry making certain that Hitler IF does come true.

Before we can hang a thief we must first catch him. And that goes for Hitler. If we do catch him—if we whip him, as we can, if we wake up and fight right—then we surely can hang him. And here is one way to do the dirty job.

Turn Hitler over to the Austrians in Vienna, and publicly try him for the murder of Dollfuss. The blood of the poor little Chancellor shall stick to Hitler's hands.

All right, try him for a definite act, and then, when he is legally found guilty, fit his neck to a hemp necktie.

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By GEORGE PUTNAM

OUR main problem after the war will not be the disposal of Hitler. For, after we have vanquished our enemy, the ogre of Europe will probably be no more. He will have been annihilated by the peoples he enslaved. And his fate at their hands will be far more gruesome than any torture we could possibly inflict.

But getting rid of Hitler will not solve the problem completely. Hitler has engendered a number of vile, diabolical concepts. In effect, he is a symbol of despotism. Many of his adherents will still be alive. Inflamed and maddened by defeat, they may be more venomous than before, more eager to seek revenge. Such men have been so completely seduced by Nazi teachings that nothing less than death will sever them from their beliefs. However, there will be others who can be salvaged — people who were helpless under the slave-master's yoke. To these unfortunates we must administer the medicine of Democracy. We must teach them a new way of life. We must give them new hope and an entirely new set of values. We must make them think once more like human beings.

There is another task ahead, an equally important one. If we are to avert future catastrophes, if we are to vanquish power-mad dictators, even before they are born, we must lay bare the history of Hitler and his hordes. We must show, step by step, how these monsters came into power. We must expose the traitors who paved the paths for them. We must reveal the perverted brutalities of the Fuehrer's heel-clicking lieutenants, his secret police, and his depraved party leaders.

By doing so, everyone will become completely cognizant of what Fascism means. Its scourge must never slash the civilized world again.

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By JOHANNES STEEL

THE question of what to do with Hitler after the war will not arise — he will not survive it himself. He will either be killed by one of his own followers or commit suicide when the collapse comes.

The real problem is what to do with his followers and the Nazi Party and with the men who have conducted this war for Germany. My suggestions about what to do with them are very simple. Shoot all the members of the Nazi party who hold Nazi Party membership books from one to one hundred thousand. Shoot every member of the Gestapo. Shoot every German officer above the rank of Colonel. Try all the Nazi civil officials who helped in the looting of the occupied countries, and if they are found guilty, sentence them to long prison terms of exile in some desolate penal colony.

Once you have done this, you will have removed the obstacle in the way of the political reeducation of the German people, in general, and German youth, in particular.

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By REX STOUT

SHOOT him, or hang him, or electrocute him. What is the difference? I think the personal fate of Adolph Hitler is highly unimportant.

Of supreme importance is the question: what are we going to do with the 70,000,000 Germans who have accepted Hitler, not only as their political and military leader, but as their God? Certainly they cannot all be shot, or hanged, or electrocuted. But we shall be repeating once more the same old dismal and disastrous blunder if we assume that the military defeat of the Nazis and the punishment of a few hundred Nazi leaders will persuade all Germans of the error of their ways and make them decent and democratic members of a world organization.

It was the Nazi head of the Bureau of Education who ordered, in 1934, that this sentence should be prominently displayed on the blackboard of every schoolroom in Germany:

"The Ten Commandments are the deposit of the lowest human instincts."

Yet many German people, without effective protest, continued to send their children day after day, and year after year, to the schoolrooms where such sentiments were displayed and were drummed into the heads of 20,000,000 of their sons and daughters.

Vindictiveness has nothing to do with it. It is not a question of vengeance; of punishing the Nazis, or making them pay for their crimes against all morality and decency. It is not a moral problem at all; it is a practical problem. The question is, what kind of treatment of the Nazis will convince them, clear to their bones, that they cannot be permitted to function as equal partners with other people in the organization of this world unless, and until, they understand and accept the ethical doctrines which are the foundation upon which modern civilization has been built?

I do not pretend to have the perfect answer to that question. No one has. But it is vital for us to realize that that is the question, and unless we do realize it, any military victory we might win, no matter how complete and glorious, will be entirely in vain.

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