

it home on foot by eight o'clock, even if I now felt rested and could walk faster.

"Pavel, you'll have to lend me something for the streetcar," I managed to stammer.

"You don't have any money, do you?" Pavel smiled. He seemed to wake up suddenly; his face relaxed. "Take this." He pulled five large bills out of his wallet and gave them to me.

"But that's five thousand crowns, Pavel, and I only need some change for the streetcar."

"Here's some change," and he took five crowns out of a small purse.

"But . . ." I stammered.

"Take it and don't say another word. Do you want them to get it, silly? This is the thing to do, right, Heda?"

"Yes," said Heda.

I said goodbye, and Pavel walked me to the door. I stood on the street with my head going around in circles. I had money. I would have no worries in this respect for some time. So this was the way this particular day was to end. At home I would open the window and breathe in the summer air. Tomas the cat would come to ask me to stroke him. I would look out for a long time, until it grew dark, and then I would continue to look into the night. I would think of Ruzena, and in the small pocket of my trousers, carefully folded and hidden, I would have the money to keep me warm.

Translated from Czech by Rita Klímová with Rosalyn Schloss

On the Elimination of the Czech Nation

Reinhard Heydrich (1904–1942)

Konstantin von Neurath turned out to be too weak to head the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and on September 27, 1941, Hitler replaced him with "Hangman Heydrich," chief of police and second man in importance to Heinrich Himmler in the Nazi SS organization. In appointing a top functionary of Nazi Germany, one of the architects of the Holocaust, to administer the Czech lands, Hitler hoped to dispose of the growing Czech resistance movement. Immediately after his arrival, Heydrich proclaimed martial law, and on October 2, in a secret meeting, informed the functionaries of the Nazi party about Hitler's plans for the elimination of the Czech nation.

THE SPEECH OF THE REICHSPROTEKTOR REINHARD HEYDRICH
ON THE ELIMINATION OF THE CZECH NATION—

Members of the party, Gentlemen!

Three days ago, by the Führer's order, I assumed the leadership of the Reichsprotektor's¹ office, in place of imperial minister von Neurath, who fell ill. I am happy that already after three days I have the opportunity to greet you, colleagues at the Protektorat's headquarters staff of the Protektorat's government, the clerical sector, and also above all the representatives of Party leadership in this combat zone—of course, besides my closer collaborators in my function as the head of security police and SD,² also you, gentlemen, supreme administrators of the country, who are abroad bearers of salvation and—as I hope—of the combat mission in the field of administration. . . .

We must be clear that all the events of recent years, all military and political questions, have amazing organic coherence. We must be also clear that the goals are . . . to preserve and further develop this Reich and to lead it to greatness. All political entr'actes . . . were only preparations for one great and unambiguous goal . . . the ultimate end of enemies of the Reich, led by Jews and freemasons . . . because Germany was a menace to the world plan of Jews of the whole world. That is why everything was done to make this Germany small and to annihilate it, because they realized that in the history of the German empire, whenever the Jew believed he had us on the ground,

always somewhere in German territory, from among the German people, someone stood up and united Germans by unprecedented ideological power, by his personality. He solidified them, and afterwards led them to greatness, overcoming dangers. He saw that German progress can be disturbed and hindered only if a dagger stab comes from a German territory.

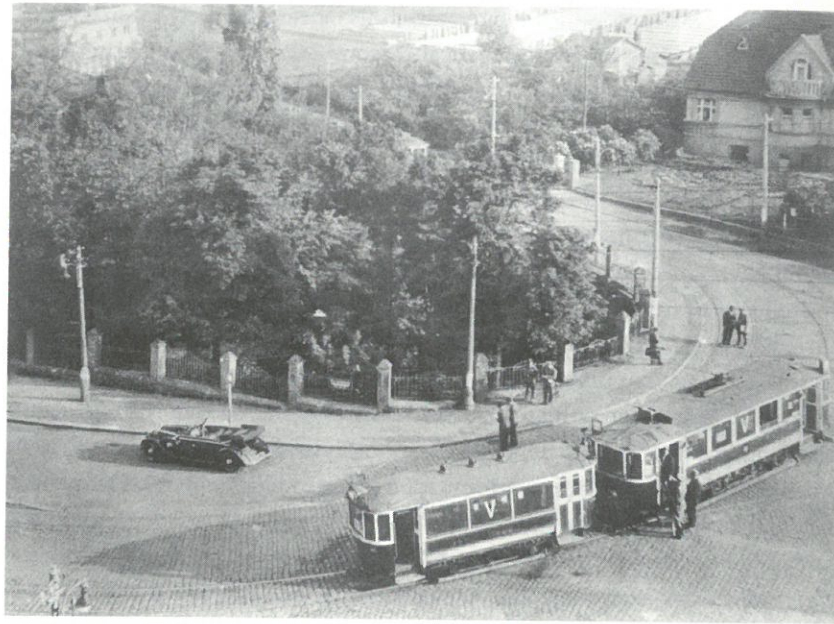
Now we occupy under the Führer's leadership a very extensive territory, which is a military prerequisite of future war campaigns and their victorious conclusion. We must say openly that the occupation of this territory will not be in any case temporary, but it will be a final occupation, regardless of the forms of contact which this territory will maintain with us. This means that the future of the Reich depends on the conclusion of the war, on the Reich's ability and the ability of people of the Reich to keep the acquired territory, lead them, and connect them with us. We must differentiate two great groups, one formed by territories with Germanic people that are people of our blood, who have consequently our character. These are people who were corrupted due to bad political leadership and the Jewish influence and who must be slowly steered to the basic elements of contemporary thinking. As I see it these territories are as follows: Norway, The Netherlands, Flanders, later also Denmark and Sweden. These territories are already settled by Germanic peoples who in the future will somehow belong to us, but this is as yet not settled, whether it will be confederate unity, governing districts, or something else. It is clear that we must find ways of treating these people which will be different from our relations with other races—Slavic and similar other ones. The Germanic man must be treated firmly, justly, but humanely, as we are leading our nation, if we want him to stay permanently in the Reich and if we want him to be integrated into it. The second group is formed by eastern territories which are partly peopled by Slavs. We must bear in mind that in these territories our kindness will be interpreted as weakness. In these territories the Slav himself does not want to be treated as a man of equal rights; he is accustomed to a lord high above him. These are the territories which we have to lead and keep in the east. In these territories the German upper class must take leadership and, after further military development, we will stretch deep into Russia, far towards the Urals. From these territories we will draw our mineral resources, and their inhabitants will become workers toward great tasks, also cultural ones, and if I may express it drastically, they must serve us as slaves. . . .

And now, when you have in front of you the general picture, it must be clear to you that the territory of Bohemia and Moravia cannot be left permanently in a state that would make it possible for Czechs even to think that this is their territory. . . . At this moment, however, every action of German peo-

ple in this territory must be directed absolutely clearly, namely in such a way, as to prevent—due to war and tactical reasons—Czechs from getting upset and rebelling. Even though we must be for tactical reasons tough at this moment, nevertheless we must never act in such a way that a Czech, having no other option, would think that he had to raise a revolt at this very moment. The main line, however, even if left unspoken, must lead all our activities: this territory must become German; the Czechs have after all nothing to lose here anymore. My task here is divided into two great and clearly outlined stages and spheres of activity. One is near, oriented to war; the other task opens the far-reaching definitive solution. The first, nearer one, is dictated by the needs of war. I need peace in this territory in order that the Czech worker may devote all his working energy to the German war effort, so that the enormous war industry which exists here works smoothly and expands itself. It follows from this that the Czech worker must be given fodder,³ if you allow me the expression, so that he can fulfill his tasks.

But it also follows that we must not allow the Czech to abuse this emergency situation, according to his habits, for personal and particular Czech advantages. This approaching task assumes that we at first show the Czech who is the master of the house; he must know exactly that it is German interests which dictate here, that in all circumstances the Reich has the last word. The Reich is represented by the local administration, which means also you, gentlemen. The Reich does not allow making fun of it; it is indisputably the master in the house. It means that not even one German will forgive one thing to a Czech, like the situation of Jewry in the Reich, so that there must not be even one German to say that this Czech is after all a decent man. That was the problem with the Jewish question in the Reich, and you can imagine how the solution of the Jewish question would end under these circumstances. If we do not all outwardly keep together and create one front against Czechness, the Czech would go on looking for a back door to slip out cannily. The question of whether one individual is really a good fellow will be meaningful only at the moment when we approach the far-reaching definitive solution of our task, that is to say when we approach Germanization and other challenges of this kind. . . .

Further I expect you to acknowledge, that in dealing with Czechs you must work on certain tactical assumptions. When I give an order, for instance, to the press, they must write what I need without grumbling. Nevertheless I will maintain with the Czechs correct social conduct, but doing so I must be careful not to overstep borders; at all times I must say to myself: "Pay attention, these are Czechs, after all!" Do you understand? When we, from tactical reasons, socialize with Czechs who serve us, we must again and again return to



Reinhard Heydrich's Mercedes car, abandoned on a street in Prague after his assassination. On May 27, 1942, Reinhard Tristan Eugen Heydrich was assassinated in Operation Anthropoid, led by Jozef Gabčík and Jan Kubiš, soldiers of the Czechoslovak army-in-exile who were parachuted into the country by the British. Thousands of innocent Czechs paid for the death of Heydrich—which was, however, immensely important in its implications. The second most powerful officer in Hitler's regime was killed in the heart of Germany's expanded territory and at the time of its greatest expansion, when British, Russians, and Americans were otherwise losing ground almost everywhere. Even more important perhaps was the assassination's symbolic message, namely, that every Nazi was personally accountable for crimes against humanity committed in the Third Reich. Photo used by permission of ČTK.

the same thought: these are Czechs, after all. There is an altogether different matter . . . namely that in preserving our toughness completely, we ought to care about things which are not in order. It makes no sense to beat the Czech and with all effort, with the help of police, make him work, if he really does not receive what he needs to have the physical power to carry out his work. In this direction a meeting initiated by the state secretary Frank was held by the Führer, to which Secretary Backe was also invited. And we in all probability will consent to raise the ratio of fat for Czech workers to about four hundred grams, that is the amount about which we can already speak. But please, keep this to yourself, until it is published, because we must properly arrange it in terms of propaganda. To use it adroitly for propagandistic goals I will connect

it with the following idea: "You, Czech workers, better be quiet; otherwise the ratio of fat will again be reduced." These things must be appropriately grasped in terms of psychology. . . .

It is necessary in the coming wartime to say clearly to Czechs: "Whether you love us or not, whether you aspire to an independent state later or not, the important thing is that at least now you acknowledge that at this moment it would be damaging if you attempted an uprising or put up resistance." This is the tactic and line which I think we must follow at this moment. We do not want to win over these people, we do not want this and we would not succeed in it anyway. We shall only explain very clearly in practical life to everybody, by propaganda, measures, et cetera, that for the Czech it is really advantageous if at this moment he works a lot, even though he secretly thinks: "In case the Reich goes down after all, I will again have my freedom." We do not care about this at all; the important thing is that he is calm, because we need calmness and silence for the definitive takeover of this territory. . . .

And now, gentlemen, a few thoughts on the definitive solution, which must result in the following: this territory must be definitively settled by Germans. This territory is the heart of the Reich and it cannot bear—and this shows the course of events in German history—that dagger stabs against the Reich come again from this territory. I do not want to say about the definitive Germanization of this territory: "Let us try, according to old methods, to Germanize the Czech rabble."⁴ No, I say sensibly that it begins with things which we may do now, in a masked way of course. In order to have a good count of the amount of people who can be Germanized in this territory, we must make a survey in a racial and national sense. This means that we must find an opportunity, with different methods and by various detours, to evaluate the entire population from the racial and national point of view. Whether with the help of radiography and by medical examinations at school, we might racially examine youth under the pretext of working obligations. We must have an overall picture of the nation, and only after that can we say, the population looks so and so. These people are as such: some are of good race and right-thinking; with them it is simple, we may Germanize them. Then we have others, who stand on the opposite pole: people of bad race and evil thinking. We must expel these people. There are enough places for them in the East. A class in the middle remains, and this must be carefully examined. In this class there are right-thinking people of the bad race and evil-thinking people of the good race. With those of bad race who think well, we must probably give them work somewhere in the Reich, but we must take care that they have no children, because we do not want them to expand in this territory. But we must not deter them. All this is said only as a theory. Then

there remain the evil-thinking people of the good race who are the most dangerous, because they belong racially to a potentially leading class. We must think over what to do with them. We will not be left with any alternative but to try to settle certain parts of these evil-thinking people of the good race in the Reich, in a purely German milieu, Germanize them and change their thinking or, if it fails, put them in front of the firing squad. We cannot move them out because over there, in the East, they will form a leading class that will stand up against us. These are clear, essential thoughts, which must serve us as guidelines. When it will happen is the question which our Führer must decide. But to plan and gather material, these are the things with which we may begin.

Notes

1. After the Nazi occupation on March 16, 1939, Czechoslovakia was renamed the Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren (Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia) with the Reichsprotektor (imperial protector) at its head.
2. Intelligence service of the SS (Protective Squadron) and NSDAP (National Socialist German Workers' Party).
3. In German, *Fressen*.
4. In German, *Tschechengesindel*.

The Cowards

Josef Škvorecký (1924–)

The novel describes an anti-German uprising in 1945 in a small Czech town, but its protagonist, a twenty-year-old dandy, is more interested in American jazz and his girlfriend. The events are described without any ideological content, and the brutality of Czech revenge on German captives is not muted. Absolutely credible dialogue using colloquial language and slang expressions made an especially great impact on readers and permanently influenced Czech literary tradition. When Škvorecký wrote the book in 1948, he was only twenty-four; it could not be published for ten years. The book was warmly welcomed, but after a few weeks it was withdrawn from bookshops and the authors of positive reviews were punished. The Cowards was discussed at the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and stimulated a campaign against "liberal" culture.

Friday, May 11, 1945

On Friday, I wandered over in front of the loan association office. It was nine. It was going to be another warm spring day and there were flags in the windows and bedding had been hung out to air. There were banners hanging all over the place. The shops were closed like on Sunday and there were all kinds of displays in the windows—pictures of Masaryk and Benes and little flags and flowers and coloured streamers. The revolution was definitely over now and I sauntered on towards the square. . . . People dressed up in their Sunday best were already heading towards the square. A smaller bunch was crowding around Moutelik's display window. All those pictures he was taking, I thought to myself, and headed over. And there they were. I shoved my way up close to the window and saw that Bertý, that fool, had put me at the top of his display and underneath my picture was the caption: "Defender of Our Fatherland." Jesus Christ! I hadn't wanted anything like that! I'd wanted the picture to show off with but not have myself put on display in his show window like the village idiot. I could already hear the other guys razzing me about it. Hell. I looked at my picture. Well, it wasn't a bad snapshot. But that awful caption underneath—"Defender of Our Fatherland." I could have socked Bertý; it