

One of the best of British illustrators has gone to Europe for us, and here is his first series of impressions

HITLER'S PROBLEM CHILDREN

Drawn by MERVYN PEAKE, with
a commentary by Tom Pocock



HITLER YOUTH

THE Hitler Youths tossed a squib behind an American sentry and hugged themselves in silent laughter. The squib popped and the sentry spun round with his carbine levelled. The Hitler Youths slapped

their brown knees and cackled with mirth. Even the long-faced elderly Germans on the corner allowed themselves a smile. The sentry looked sheepish—there was nothing he could do—and the shock-headed hooligans laughed all the more. Still shaking, they flung off down the street and, staring insolently at an Allied major, went on chattering.

In Western Germany the terror of our assault is wearing off, for the Germans have short memories, and the reaction is setting in. Already the Germans are sorry for themselves and resentfully compare our occupation policy with the Russian. But most marked of all is the arrogance of the Nazi youth. This was brought home when I journeyed up the Rhine with Mervyn Peake from the twin ruins of Mannheim-Ludwigshafen to the rusting scrap-iron of the Ruhr, and then west to the ancient coronation city of Aachen.

Contemptuous Youth

We remember the silently contemptuous boy at Frankenthal who lounged against the new "Whose Guilt?" poster of the Belsen and Dachau horrors, casting an approving eye at the soldier-playing children around him. Then there were the gangling Hitler Youths of Wiesbaden, who sneaked out after dark to tear down AMGOT notices with the same feeling of petty guilt with which an English boy smokes his first cigarette. As Mervyn Peake sat sketching near the floundering Remagen bridge a mop-haired colt sauntered up to him, picked up his petrol lighter, and demanded, "You give me!" When told to get to hell out of it he sloped off resentfully. They all say with their eyes, "You started the war"—they blame us as damningly as we blame them—"now look what you have done to our beautiful Germany."

The stately flow of the Rhine, between castle-crowned peaks and hanging woods, from Bingen to the Drachen-Fels, is still such a picture postcard that stories of secret Nazi radio stations and Werewolves in the Rhineland become as unreal as the river legends themselves. A number of Hitler Youths have tried their hands at Werewolfing, in the form of snipping telephone wires, but the amusement is palling.

Some swim in deeper waters. Members of the Hitler Jugend have faced the firing squad for espionage. Recently a Trier court sentenced three to fifteen years' imprisonment for carrying arms. Others act as messengers for such fascist organisations as the "Neues Deutschland," just uncovered in Wuppertal, or the Nazi-turned-Communist Parties that are springing up. With their help, SS men seep back into civilian life and live like foxes in ruined towns or try to force doctors to remove the SS tattoo mark from their left armpits. Thus many ruined cities become thug warrens. A typical 24-hour report from Dusseldorf reads: "Crime: 1 accidental death, 2, violent deaths, 1 rape, 4 embezzle-



THE GERMAN BOY LEANS AGAINST THE CONCENTRATION CAMP PICTURES (Wessen Schuld means "Whose Guilt?") AND LOOKS AT THE OCCUPATION FORCES (At Frankenthal)

