

WAS NIETZSCHE A NAZI?

BY LUDWIG MARCUSE

It is reported that Mrs. Gladys Rockmore Davis, an artist, owns a dachshund named Nietzsche. We may safely assume that the idea was not to honor the dog but to insult the philosopher. The current legend places Nietzsche beside the aggressive Hitler, not beside the suffering Christ, though Nietzsche's autobiography is called, not *Mein Kampf*, but *Ecce Homo*.

A number of circumstances have contributed to this superficial identification of Nietzsche with the Hitler gang. His phrases, "the superman" and "the blond beast," happen to fit perfectly into Hitler's vocabulary. Nietzsche's call to build houses on Vesuvius seems to jibe with the Nazi romantics about the dangerous life. Most unfortunate of all for the philosopher's reputation, many German Nietzscheans became prominent Nazi professors; they celebrated Nietzsche's "Siegfried-like assault on the urbanism of the West" and, alluding to Nietzsche's book *The Gay Science*, called their philosophical schools "guardrooms of the gay science."

As if that were not enough, a publicity-fed world learned that Nie-

tzsche's sister had presented her brother's walking stick to the Führer. It learned that the collapsing Führer had presented a set of Nietzsche's works as a birthday present to the collapsed Duce. There is also the fact that the German philosopher glorified the Renaissance prototype of Hitler, the bloody Cesare Borgia. Everything taken together, who could doubt that Nietzsche and Hitler were cut from the same timber, especially when the Pope and many American professors proclaim this?

It is likely, however, that the Germans are less certain about the similarity between the Austrian and their famous philosopher. A few months ago the New York Public Library organized an exhibition of books prohibited by the Nazis. Works of Nietzsche were in that exhibition. While Nazi propaganda is not averse to being credited with such a great intellectual progenitor, it is sensibly averse to having some of his writings read by Germans.

It would take more space than any magazine can afford to demonstrate that Nietzsche was no Nazi by a thor-

LUDWIG MARCUSE is a former German newspaperman, author and dramatic critic. His books include *Heine and Soldier of the Church*, a biography of Loyola.

ough analysis of his brilliant writings. But the same purpose can be approximated by a simpler method. We have only to compare some fundamental utterances of Hitler and Nietzsche on subjects which are of prime importance to both of them.

The Aryan Race

The terms "Aryan" and "racism" were not invented by Hitler. They were a great nuisance even in Bismarck's time. It was Count Gobineau, a Frenchman, who gave them wide currency. And it was Richard Wagner and his circle who popularized Gobineau's racism, translated into German.

Only the white peoples, Gobineau argued, have a history. The white man alone possesses energy, love of freedom, aversion to every form of mandarinism and, above all, a sense of honor unknown to the yellow and black races. There was a time when the white race had the monopoly on beauty, intelligence and vigor; if the races had not mixed, leadership would have always remained in the hands of the most beautiful white tribes. Historical decadence began with cross-breeding. Therefore, the pure white races, the "Aryans," are superior. All civilizations in Europe derive from the Aryans, he taught; wherever the Aryan blood was exhausted, progress came to a standstill. And the Germans are the cream of the Aryans.

Who is Hitler's spiritual ancestor: Gobineau, the Frenchman, or Nie-

tzsche, the German? As we suggested above, a few quotations, translated, of course, provide the answer:

Nietzsche: The Aryan influence perverted the whole world . . . Against Aryanism and anti-Semitism . . . Mixed races are the sources of great civilizations . . . Maxim: never speak to a man who believes in the race fraud.

Hitler: What we see before us of human culture today, the results of art, science and techniques, is almost exclusively the creative product of the Aryan . . . Ideas such as "Democracy," "World Solidarity," "World Peace," "Internationality of Art," etc., disintegrate our race-consciousness, breed cowardice, and so today we are bound to say that the simple Turk is more man than we are.

Germans and Jews

When a man is accused of being the philosopher of National Socialism, the least one can ask of him is not to contradict the Führer's key obsessions about the Germans and the Jews. Yet Nietzsche does exactly that:

Nietzsche: When a nation is afflicted and wants to be afflicted with the mania of nationalism and political ambition, one must put up with all sorts of obscurities and disturbances which becloud its mind, in brief with little fits of stultification; the Germans of today, for instance, now have fits of anti-French stupidity, now of anti-Jewish, then anti-Polish, anti-Christian-Roman, Wagnerian, Teutonic and Prussian stupidity . . .

Hitler: The National Socialist movement must remain conscious that we are also obligated to a high duty as the guardians of the highest human race on this earth, and it will be all the more able to fulfill this duty, the more it contrives that the German people recovers its ra-

cial sense and, in addition to breeding dogs, horses and cats, takes mercy on its own blood.

And just as these two men sharply contradict each other on the score of Germanism, so do they differ on the score of Judaism and anti-Semitism:

Nietzsche: How refreshing it is to see a Jew among Germans! All this dullness, all these flaxen heads, these blue eyes; the absence of *esprit* in their faces, words, demeanor; their lazy sprawling, the German need for "recuperating" that stems not from overwork, but from their repulsive habit of stimulating and over-stimulating themselves with alcohol . . . The anti-Semites do not forgive the Jews for having "spirit" and money. Anti-Semites — another name for "failures."

Hitler: As National Socialists we see our program in our flag. In the red we see the social idea of the movement, in the white the national idea, in the swastika the mission of the fight for the victory of Aryan man, and at the same time also the victory of the idea of creative work which in itself is and will always be anti-Semitic.

The Christian Church

The complete truth about Nietzsche's struggle against Christianity cannot be told in one sentence nor in ten sentences. But let those who think they know all about it answer this one question: Do you know that Nietzsche always portrayed himself when he tried to portray Jesus? Even in the struggle against Christianity, in which Hitler and Nietzsche seem to be comrades-in-arms more than in any other fight, they are not on the same side of the barricades. Nietzsche does not

fight the Christian church for racial reasons. His point of view is in contradiction to Hitler's in the following:

Those who have tried hardest to keep and preserve Christianity, have become its most efficient wreckers: the Germans. It seems that the Germans are incapable of understanding the nature of a church. Are they insufficiently spiritual for this purpose? Insufficiently distrustful? In any case, the edifice of the church rests on a southern freedom and independence of mind and on an equally southern distrust of nature, man and spirit — it rests upon a quite different knowledge of man, experience of man than the north has had. The Lutheran Reformation was throughout an outburst of simple-minded indignation against something complex, to speak with circumspection, a gross but honest misunderstanding in which much can be excused — the expression of a triumphant church was not understood, the Germans saw only corruption; the noble skepticism, that luxury of skepticism and tolerance that every triumphant power sure of itself indulges in, were misunderstood. . . .

And in the following excerpt from Nietzsche we need only substitute "Hitler" for "Luther":

Today it is quite well forgotten that in all cardinal questions of power Luther was fatally sketchy, superficial, imprudent, above all as a man of the people who lacked any heritage of a ruling caste, all instincts for power: so that his achievement, his will to restore that Roman achievement, without his will or knowledge, was the beginning of an act of destruction. He ripped, he tore, with honest wrath, what the old spider had woven most carefully with long and patient efforts.

The parallel between Luther and Hitler is popular today. But Luther's

primitive fanaticism was rooted in the most sublime religious tradition, whereas Hitler's attitude toward Christianity is that of a racist gone berserk.

France and America

Similar comparisons can be made with regard to any number of subjects. Even where they seem to say something similar, close examination reveals fundamental differences. Thus both occasionally praise America, but how differently each is motivated; Hitler stresses America's good behavior in racial matters:

The American Union, by principally refusing immigration to elements with poor health, and even simply excluding certain races from naturalization, acknowledges by slow beginnings an attitude which is peculiar to the National State conception.

Nietzsche's few utterances about the United States seem to be expressly directed against the German mind and the dictatorship over opinion of the most powerful living German:

I find American laughter refreshing, I mean the type of robust seaman like Mark Twain. Nothing German could ever make me laugh . . . Perhaps no change in customs will be more advantageous to free man and knowledge than the spread of the "immoral" mode of thinking of the Americans: in the United States everyone takes the liberty of living in his own way and of changing ten times and is not exposed to any danger of ill-repute because he does so — in the end everyone will take the liberty of changing his views ten times and being ten times another man.

One country aroused the passions of the German Nietzsche and the German Hitler more than any other, namely France. How differently we may judge from these words:

Nietzsche: At the very moment when Germany is emerging as a great power, France as a cultural power is winning new importance. Even today much new earnestness, much new passion of the spirit has moved to Paris . . . almost all psychological and artistic problems are weighed there far more subtly and thoroughly than in Germany — the Germans are incapable of this kind of earnestness . . . In the history of European civilization the rise of the "Reich" means above all a displacement of gravity. This is already known everywhere.

Hitler: This people, which is constantly becoming more Negrified, constitutes, by its tie with the aims of Jewish world dominion, a grim danger for the existence of the European white race. For infection in the heart of Europe through Negro blood on the Rhine corresponds equally to the sadistic perverse vengefulness of this chauvinistic, hereditary enemy of our people.

The author of *Ecce Homo* and the author of *Mein Kampf* not only write and think on different levels — they are by nature bitter enemies. It certainly would not be hard to find similar utterances in both of them; Hitler has retained something from his readings of Nietzsche. But one should recall the Chinese proverb: "When the wrong man uses the right means, the right means work in the wrong way." Even when Hitler seems to proclaim Nietzschean principles, these are no longer true principles.

SAM ADAMS: OUR FIRST AGITATOR

BY STEWART H. HOLBROOK

UNTIL quite recently most popular textbook histories of the United States managed to give the impression that the American Revolution was a spontaneous uprising of enraged farmers, a sudden combustion of patriotism and pitchforks. Actually the first certainty about our Revolution is that it was carefully planned by a few shrewd men. It was carried out by home-made and talented and ruthless agitators, whom historians have termed statesmen; and by military leaders of little experience but great adaptability. The second certainty is that the great mass of American colonists were either passive to the revolt, or actively opposed to it. It is to be gravely doubted that throughout the war more than one-third of the colonists were heart and soul for the Revolution, and this number was much smaller before the Declaration. Hence, our glorious revolt was in reality a struggle, on the part of a few able minds, to impose an idea on the mass of the people, to make them fight and die for it, and finally to make Great Britain recognize it as fact. This took, as they say, some doing.

The American colonies were fortunate in having a few agitators fit to compare with the best in all history,

and the foremost of these was Samuel Adams, a man who has been ignored or cavalierly treated by too many writers. *This* Adams, a poor relation of John and John Quincy, was the one who stopped at nothing to hasten revolt. Lies, subterfuges, misrepresentations, violations of confidence were his common practice where the Crown was concerned. He would as soon hit below the belt as above. And when he thought it necessary, as apparently he did on two notable occasions, Adams did not stop short of cold-blooded arrangements for producing thoroughly dead Patriot Martyrs — a commodity of almost absolute necessity in staging revolutions.

Samuel Adams came from a prominent Boston family, dating from Genesis. Sent to Harvard, he soon discovered that both theology and the law bored him. Out of college, he failed in business on his own, then ran his father's brewery into bankruptcy. He had made many friends in Boston's political clubs, and they elected him to a seat in the General Court (legislature). He was also made city tax collector, a job he allowed to get out of hand to the tune of £5000 and which brought him no end of embarrassment.

But no matter what he was doing,