

Worksheet – Sixth Pamphlet distributed by the White Rose Movement, Munich, February 1943

"Fellow Students!

Shaken, our people face the downfall of our men of Stalingrad. Three hundred and thirty thousand German men have been senselessly and irresponsibly rushed into death and destruction by the brilliant strategy of the man who served as a private in the Great War. Führer, we thank you!

It is festering in the German people: Do we want to continue entrusting the fate of our armies to a dilettante? Do we want to sacrifice the rest of our young Germans to the base, power-seeking instincts of a Party clique? Not any more.

The day of reckoning has come, our young Germans' reckoning with the most abhorrent tyranny that our people has ever endured. In the name of all young Germans, we demand that Adolf Hitler's State return to us our personal freedom, the German's most valuable possession, which he has cheated us out of in the most disgraceful way.

We have grown up in a State where every free expression of opinion has been ruthlessly gagged. The Hitler Youth, SA, and SS have tried to make us uniform, to revolutionise us, to drug us in the most promising years of our lives. "Ideological training" was the name given to the despicable method of stifling our budding independent thought and self-esteem in a haze of empty phrases. A "Führerauslese" of a kind as fiendish and at the same time as narrow-minded as one can possibly imagine, grooming its future Party bosses at Ordensburg (special educational centres for Party cadres) to become godless, shameless, and unscrupulous exploiters and cutthroats, to become blind, mindless followers of the Führer. We "brain-workers" were exactly right for becoming the cudgel of this new ruling class. Front-line soldiers are disciplined like schoolboys by student leaders and would-be Gauleiter; Gauleiter, with rude jokes, assault the honour of female students. German female students at the university in Munich have given a dignified reply to the insult to their honour, and German male students have intervened and stood their ground on behalf of their female classmates. That is a first step toward gaining our right to free self-determination, without which intellectual values cannot be created. We are grateful to our brave fellow students, female and male, who have led the way by setting this shining example!

For us, there is only one watchword: Fight against the Party! Get out of the Party formations, in which the goal is to keep us politically muzzled! Get out of the lecture rooms of the SS Unter- or Oberführer and the Party bootlickers! True scholarly activities and genuine intellectual freedom are at stake! No threat of any kind can frighten us, not even the closing of our universities. Each of us must fight for our future, our freedom and honour in a body politic that is aware of its moral responsibility.

Freedom and honour! For ten long years, Hitler and his comrades have squeezed these two magnificent German words and made them loathsome, have banged on them and twisted them as only dilettantes can, dilettantes who cast the highest values of a nation before swine. They have sufficiently demonstrated what freedom and honour mean to them during ten years of the destruction of all physical and intellectual freedom, of all moral substance in the German people. Even the dumbest German's eyes have been opened by the dreadful blood bath which they have brought about everywhere in Europe and continue to bring about each day. The German name will remain forever disgraced unless German youth stand

up at last, engage simultaneously in revenge and atonement, smash their tormentors, and bring about a new intellectual and spiritual Europe.

Students! The German people are watching us! They expect us, as in 1813 with the breaking of Napoleon's domination, now also in 1943 to break the domination of National Socialist terror through the power of the mind.

Berezina and Stalingrad blaze in the East; the dead of Stalingrad implore us!

"Fresh on, my people, the flame signals are smoking!"

Our people are rising up against the enslavement of Europe by National Socialism, in a new, truthful breakthrough of freedom and honour!"

Questions

1. How are Hitler and the Nazi party characterised in the pamphlet? Give examples from the text to support your answer.
2. What is the intended audience of the pamphlet?
3. What does the pamphlet suggest about indoctrination under the Nazi regime?
4. Note how many times the word 'honour' appears in the pamphlet. Why do you think the authors use this word so often?
5. What is the pamphlet encouraging people to do?

Glossary

Atonement: making amends for wrongdoing.

Cadre: a small group of people trained for a special purpose. In this case, Nazi leaders.

Clique: a small, close-knit, exclusive group.

Cudgel: a short, thick stick or club; a blunt weapon.

Dilettante: a person who has a shallow interest in an area of knowledge. An amateur.

Führerauslese: process of selecting national political leaders.

Gauleiter: a political official or governing officer under Nazi rule.

Tyranny: cruel and oppressive rule.

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