

THE GOEBBELS EXPERIMENT

A Study of the Nazi Propaganda
Machine

By

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Jeylan
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THE ACADEMIC EXCHANGE SERVICE

disguised agencies for carrying on this work is the German Academic Exchange Service.

This organization is nominally under the control of Rosenberg, and the constitution of his Party Office for Foreign Politics, as set out in the Handbook of Party Organization, lays down that the President of the Academic Exchange Service shall also hold a stated rank in the Party Office.

Put briefly, the activities of the Academic Exchange Service have meant that since 1933 hundreds of seemingly disinterested German students abroad have been propagandists and every foreign student in Germany has been the object of concentrated propaganda.

An article by an American girl student of Missouri University, written in October 1938, illustrates in an illuminating way the activities of German "exchange students" in the U.S.A. The writer of the article had met in 1937 a German student, Elisabeth Noelle, studying at the School of Journalism in Missouri University. Nothing particularly remarkable was noticed about the German girl's behaviour except a tendency to write frequent articles defending and eulogizing National Socialism for the College magazine. Then at Christmas Miss Noelle went to spend her holidays on a fruit farm in Florida owned by a certain Herr Hachmeister. Also spending Christmas on the farm were 54 other German exchange students.

A group of liberal students in Missouri University, interested in the implications of this "organized Christmas," made some investigations and turned up a despatch from the *New York Times* correspondent in Germany, dated August 27th, 1937. It revealed that at Neustrelitz on the previous day a mobilization had taken place of all German "exchange students" who were about to leave for universities abroad. Dr. Burmeister, the Director of the Academic Exchange Service, addressing the students, had told them that they were an important element of Germany's foreign propaganda. This mobilization had come as a climax to a year's special ideological training.

In a later despatch from Germany in the same year, the

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New York Times correspondent gave the other side of the picture and described the treatment of American students in Germany. He reported that there had been a marked increase during 1937 in the number of American preparatory schools "exchanging" with the official National Socialist boarding schools. "The American boys in Germany undergo a year's thorough training in National Socialism and wear the customary brown shirt uniform," he said.

The Foreign Division has always played an active part in the entertainment of all foreign schoolboys and students in Germany. They are treated to tea-parties, theatre tickets at reduced prices and conducted tours round Party buildings. Special societies which profess to exist for cultural purposes play their part in entertaining and influencing foreign youth. One of these is the German-Iberian Society, whose President is General Faupel, the first German Ambassador to Franco. Spanish, Portuguese and South American students are offered recreation and social facilities by this organization. In pre-war days, Bertling, the director of the German-American Institute, used to give fortnightly "beer evenings" for American students in Germany in his villa, with German students forming an amateur Tyrolean band and singing Alpine songs translated into American slang. Songs deriding Churchill and the Jews were also sung, but, as one young man who attended said, "only very late in the evening."

Since the United States and most of the South American Republics broke with Germany the Academic Exchange Service has had to concentrate on European students. At the end of January 1942, Dr. Baatz, the head of the German Academic Teachers' Union, said in a broadcast that 1,100 foreign research students were working in Germany.

Certain picked German students are from time to time earmarked by the Propaganda Ministry for permanent employment. In the past such selected students were often sent abroad under "exchange arrangements," to gain experience and to serve a kind of apprenticeship in Nazi propaganda. Here is an actual case: A young Austrian studied at the Philosophical Faculty of Vienna University and after-