

Albert Speer Personal Custom Engraved & Inscribed 9mm Artillery Luger



49312-1

Albert Speer
Minister of Armaments & War Production
Hitler's First Architect of The Third Reich



Serial # 870 – 160mm Custom Length Barrel
Chamber Date 1920 & 1921 Stamped In Gold
Front Toggle Link "DWM" Stamped In Gold
Front Sight: Germanic Style Rib & Barleycorn
Engraving – Foliate Arabesque Floral Pattern
Frame Side Panel & Rail (L): Engraved Foliate Patterns
Frame Side Panel & Rail (R): Letter S's (Speer's Initial)
Grip (L): Smooth Ivory Carved "Albert Speer"
Grip (R): Oak Leaf / Acorn / Oak Leaf Pattern
Proof Marks – Imperial Crown & Large Eagle
Magazine: FXO – Blue With Two "Eagle 37" Proof Marks
Provenance: Dr. Frank Miller Estate Collection → James D. Julia
Accompanying Tag: "Given to Ben Miller by Count Bennadotte 1946"

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Albert Speer Wartime Signed Photograph
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RARE ENGRAVED & INSCRIBED CUSTOM LUGER ARTILLERY SEMI-AUTO PISTOL THAT BELONGED TO ALBERT SPEER. Serial Number 870. Caliber 9 mm. Custom blue finish with 6-3/8" custom barrel with Germanic style rib and barleycorn front sight with fixed rear sight at back of rear toggle link. Entire pistol has about 60% coverage fine foliate, floral and arabesque pattern engraving with almost full coverage on barrel. It has dates "1920" & "1921" in gold over chamber and the DWM scroll on front toggle link is also in gold.

Mounted with smooth ivory grips carved on left side "Albert Speer" with acorn and oak leaf patterns and acorn and oak leaf patterns on right side. Left side panel on frame and rail are engraved in foliate patterns with shaded background, while right side rail is engraved with a series of "S"s ostensibly for "Speer". All engraving has matching shaded background. Bottom of barrel has serial number and a crown proof with the full serial number also on left side of receiver with another crown proof on right side of receiver. Frame has serial number in usual position at front edge. Left side of breech block has a large eagle proof. Right side of breech block has the imperial crown proof. Accompanied by an FXO all blue magazine with two eagle "37" Waffenampt proofs. Accompanied by a small tag which is inscribed "Given to Ben Miller by Count Bennadotte 1946".

Ben Miller was Dr. Frank Miller's father. Ben Miller was a world traveler and big game hunter who traveled throughout Europe and Africa and therefore would have been in a position to have met someone such as Count Bennadotte. It appears that the name on tag is misspelled and should read Bernadotte. Another pistol, a Walther PP, of the Nazi era also has a similar tag with the name "Count Folke Bernadotte". A Google search disclosed that Folke Bernadotte was nephew of the Swedish King and during WWII helped save thousands of Jews during the Holocaust fleeing Nazi occupied Denmark into Sweden. As the war was ending he organized a convoy of white buses into Germany to rescue concentration camp prisoners, saving 20,000 before the end of the war and transporting them back to Sweden and another 10,000 in the month after the end of the war. In 1948 with the occupation of Palestine he became first UN mediator ever dispatched to negotiate a peace. His plans for peace between Israel and Palestine were rejected by both sides and on September 17, 1948 he was assassinated by an Israeli gang. The Israeli commander who approved and signed off on the hit is alleged to have been none other than Yitzak Shamir, who later became Prime Minister of Israel.

How Ben Miller became closely associated with Count Bernadotte is unclear, but they were both active during the same period and conceivably could have crossed paths on one of Mr. Miller's hunting safaris. Albert Speer was born in 1905, educated in Germany as an architect and received his license in 1927. He joined the Nazi party in 1931 and very shortly thereafter became Hitler's personal architect. He designed numerous facilities and buildings for Hitler and in 1942 became Germany's Minister of Armaments and supervised wartime production. It is speculated that his great organizational skills prolonged the war at least for an additional year. However, at the end he thwarted Hitler's scorched earth policy which, allegedly, would have utterly destroyed Germany. In 1946, at the Nuremberg war trials, he was sentenced to twenty years imprisonment. After he was released he wrote his memoirs, became wealthy and spent the remainder of his years trying to make amends for himself and the Nazi Party. He died in 1981.

Firearms

October 2008 - Selected Highlights

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Lot 1151A.
***RARE ENGRAVED & INSCRIBED CUSTOM
LUGER ARTILLERY SEMI-AUTO PISTOL
THAT BELONGED TO ALBERT SPEER.**

Est: \$4,000.00 - \$5,000.00

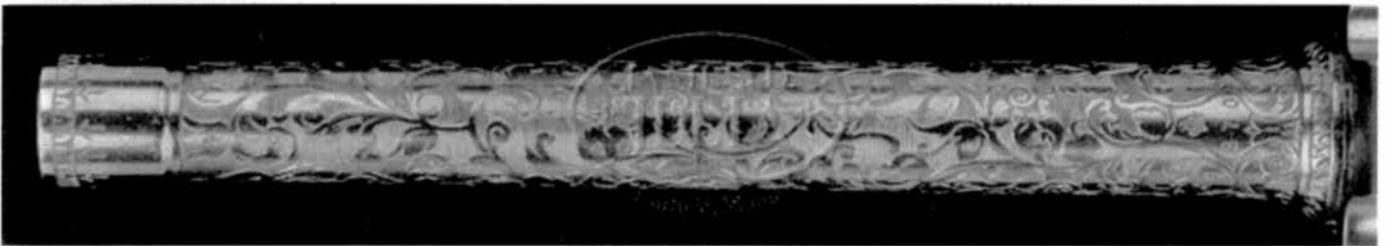
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JAMES D.
+ JULIA +
INC.
Fitchfield, MAINE





Albert Speer, Nazi Minister of Armaments and War Production

Albert Speer

AKA Albert Speer, Sr.

Born: 19-March-1905

Birthplace: Mannheim, Germany

Died: 1-September-1981

Death Location: London, England

Cause of Death: Cerebral Hemorrhage

Gender: Male

Race or Ethnicity: White

Occupation: Architect, Government

Nationality: Germany

Executive summary: Adolf Hitler's Personal Architect
Third Reich Minister of Armaments and War Production

Wife: Margarete Weber

Son: Albert Speer, Jr.

University: Berlin Institute of Technology (1931)

National Socialist German Workers Party Member: #474,481 1-March-1931

Nuremberg Trials Charge: Crimes Against Humanity

Sentenced Imprisonment: Spandau Prison – 20 Years

Rotten Library Page: Albert Speer

Authored Books:

Die neue Reichskanzlei: Architekt Albert Speer (1940)

Inside the Third Reich (1970, memoir)

Spandau: The Secret Diaries (1976)

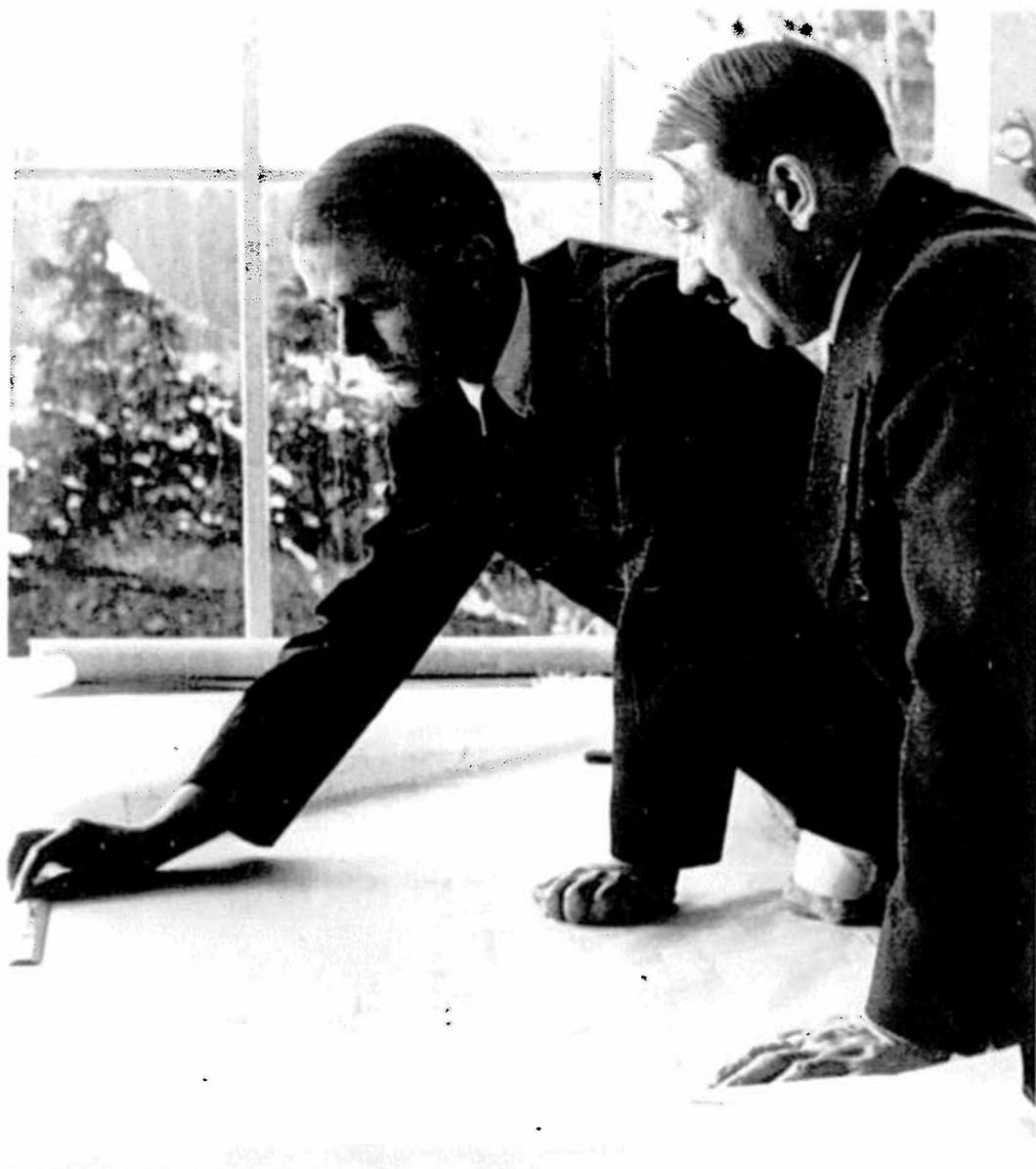
The Slave State: Heinrich Himmler's Masterplan for SS Supremacy (1981)



Albert Speer – Hitler's Personal Architect



Albert Speer – First Architect of the Third Reich (1934–1939)



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-100555-3
Foto: o. Ang. 1 1038 ca.

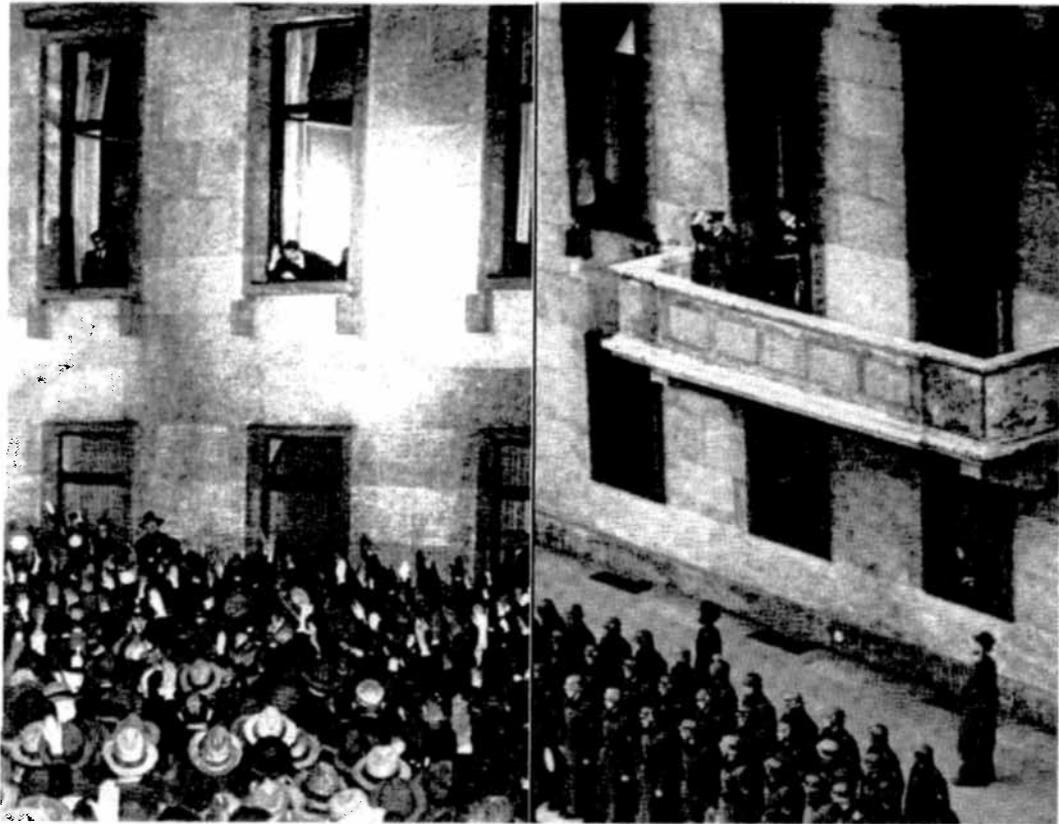
Albert Speer and Adolf Hitler examine an architectural drawing

Albert Speer – First Architect of the Third Reich (1934–1939)



Adolf Hitler making sketches while Albert Speer awaits the finished drawing

Albert Speer – First Architect of the Third Reich (1934–1939)



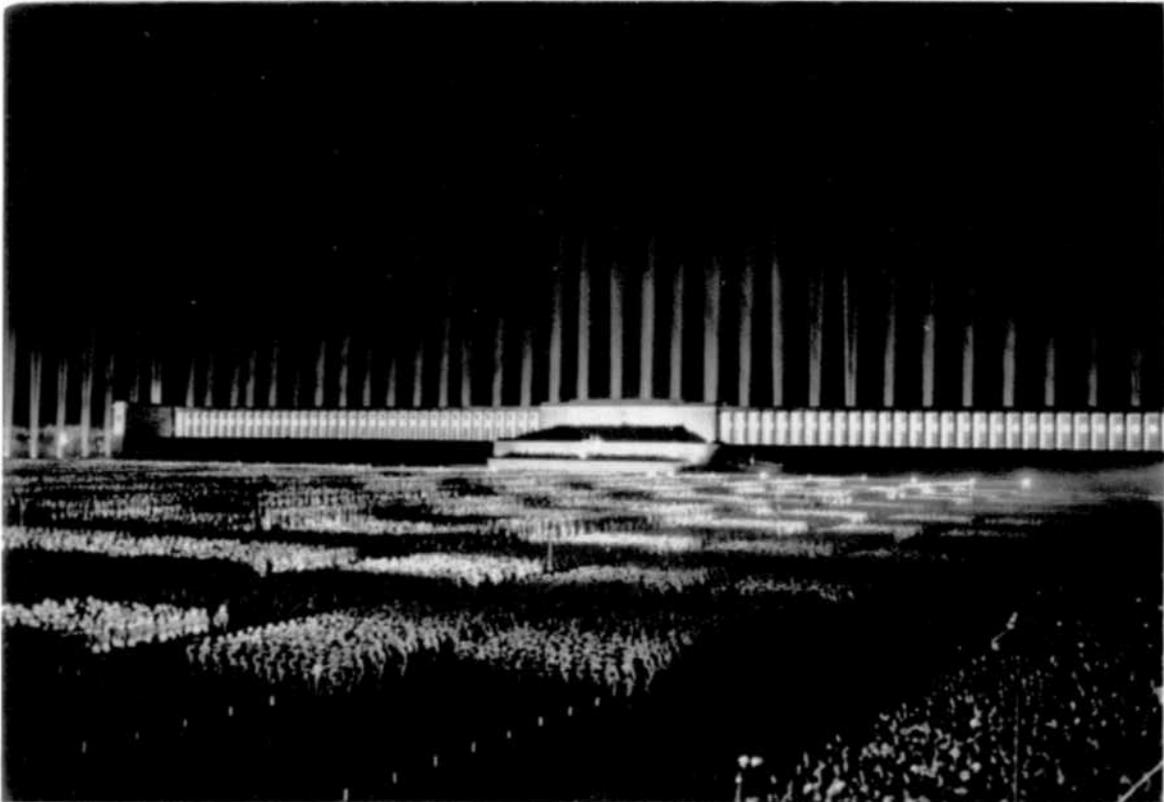
In the early days Speer made a lot of reconstruction work. This is an extraordinary example; as Hitler wanted a balcony, sketched one and then asked Speer to build it.

Albert Speer – First Architect of the Third Reich (1934–1939)



Speer's German pavilion (left) facing the Soviet pavilion (right) crowned with a gigantic statue of *Worker and Kolkhoz Woman*, by Vera Mukhina.

Albert Speer – First Architect of the Third Reich (1934–1939)



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-1082-1130-502
Foto: o.Ang. | 8. September 1936

Albert Speer insisted that as many events as possible be held at night, both to give greater prominence to his lighting effects and to hide the individual Nazis, many of whom were overweight. Speer surrounded the site with 130 anti-aircraft searchlights. This created the effect of a cathedral of light. Speer described this as his most beautiful work, and as the only one that has stood the test of time.



Hitler with architect Speer on one side and sculptor Arno Breker on the other. A useful and important image for the propaganda trying to show the humanity of the conquerors.



Hitler visits Paris in 1940 with Speer (left) and sculptor Arno Breker.

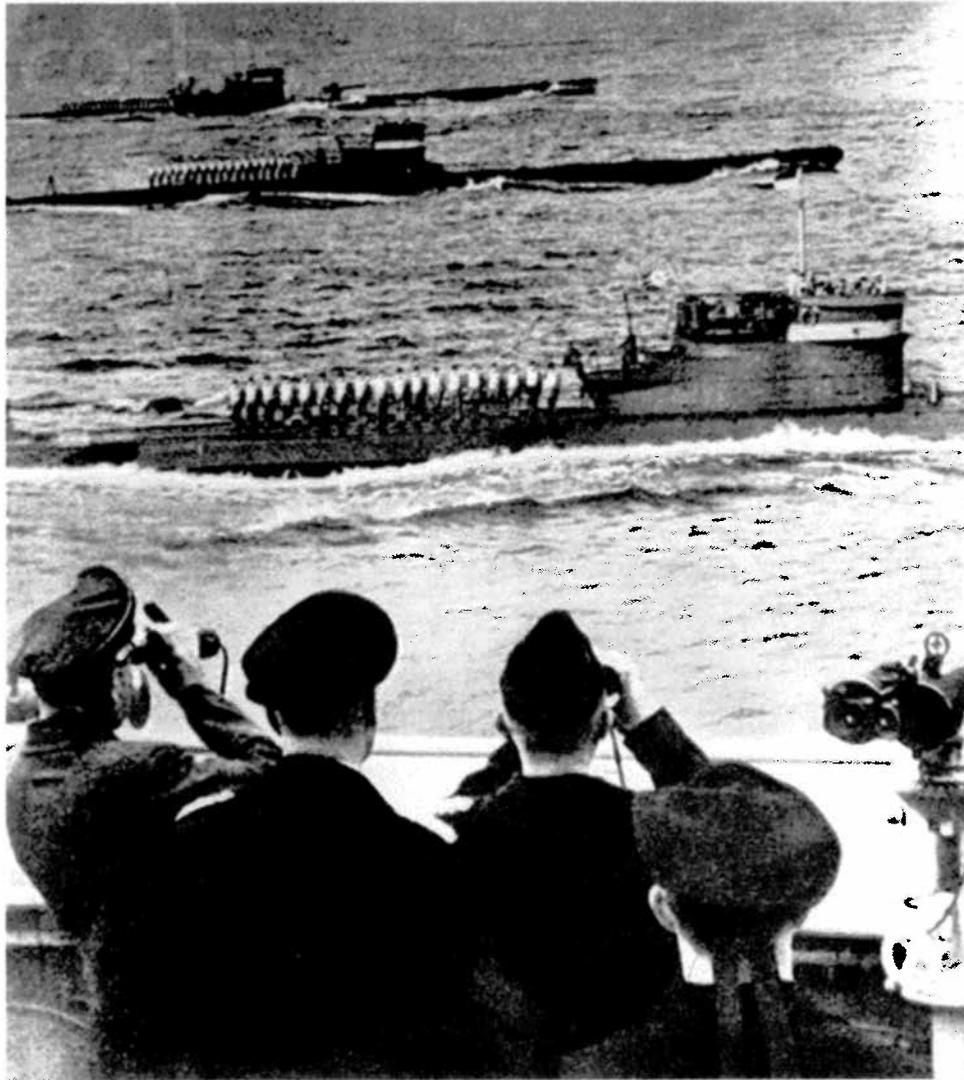


Albert Speer, Nazi Minister for Armament and Munitions is the pleased looking test pilot of this new German "Tractorcycle" designed to make the Nazi way easier through the mud of Russia and Tunisia. The vehicle is so deeply mired here, that it is impossible to check, but apparently it runs on tractor treads. Germans claim it is a success.



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-J14056
Foto: Koblenzsk | Jun 1943

Albert Speer inspects a T-34 tank.



With their crews standing at attention on their decks, three new U-boats pass in review before Admiral Donitz and War Production Minister Albert Speer in the Baltic on January 16, 1944

Albert Speer – Hitler’s Personal Architect and Minister of Armaments & War Production



Hitler views progress on construction of the House of German Art in Munich with his architects Professor Gall (left) and Albert Speer (right). (1933-1937)



Hitler with Albert Speer, Minister of Armaments & War Production



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-H28428
Foto: o. Ang. | Mai 1944

Speer with *Luftwaffe* Field Marshal Erhard Milch and aircraft designer Willy Messerschmitt



Hermann Goering, Adolf Hitler and Albert Speer



Bundesarchiv, Bild 146-1885-079-31
Foto: o. Ang. | Mai 1946

Leading members of the Flensburg Government after their arrest. Speer (right) walks alongside Alfred Jodl with Karl Dönitz ahead.



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-V01057-3
Foto: o. Ang. | 1945/1946 ca.

Nuremberg defendants listen to the proceedings (Speer – top seated row, fifth from right)

Albert Speer



(1905-1981)

by Elihai Braun

Albert Speer was born in Mannheim, Germany. He was educated in architectural studies at the Institute of Technology in Karlsruhe, and later at the Universities of Munich and Berlin. Inspired by Hitler's oratory prowess, he joined the National Socialist party in January 1931, where he developed a close friendship with Hitler. He believed Hitler and the Nazis could answer the communist threat and restore the glory of the German empire that he considered lacking under the Weimar Republic.

Speer quickly proved his worth by his efficient and creative staging of Nazi events. He designed monuments and decorations, as well as the parade grounds at Nuremberg where a party congress was held in 1934 and captured on film by Leni Riefenstahl in *Triumph of the Will*. That Nuremberg rally was the archetype of what became identifiable as a Nazi-style of public rallies as spectacles, characterized by huge crowds of uniformed marchers, striking lighting effects, and impressive flag displays directed by Speer.

In 1937, Hitler gave Speer the opportunity to fulfill his youthful architectural ambitions by appointing him Inspector General of the Reich. Hitler selected Speer, his "architect of genius," to construct the Reich Chancellery in Berlin and the Party palace in Nuremberg. Hitler also commissioned him to refurbish Berlin, a project for which Speer prepared grandiose designs that were never completed.

Speer became one of the most loyal members of the Nazi regime and was a member of Hitler's inner circle. In 1938, he was awarded the Nazi Golden Party Badge of Honor. A year later, Speer's office assumed control of the allocation of apartments belonging to Berlin Jews who were evicted. His workload grew in 1941 after Berlin's Jews were deported to the east.

When Fritz Todt was killed in an air accident in February 1942, Speer was appointed to succeed him as Minister of Armaments. He later took on the grander title of Minister of Armaments and War Production and became the principal planner of the German war economy, responsible for the construction of strategic roads and defenses, as well as military hardware.

Despite the unrelenting Allied bombing attacks designed to disrupt war production, Speer managed to increase armament production dramatically. In 1941, Germany produced 9,540 front-line machines and 4,900 heavy tanks; in 1944, output reached 35,350 machines and 17,300 tanks. This impressive growth was achieved as a result of Speer's use of prisoners of war and civilian slave laborers in the munitions factories. By September 1944, some seven and a half million foreigners worked as slave laborers and, in violation of the Hague and Geneva Conventions, Speer exploited two million prisoners of war in the production effort.

Speer's relations with Hitler deteriorated when Speer disobeyed Hitler's order to destroy Nazi industrial installations in areas close to the advancing Allies. He later claimed that he independently conspired to assassinate Hitler, though historians doubt whether he ever meant to execute this plan.

Speer was found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity at the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal in 1946. He had been charged with employing forced laborers and concentration camp prisoners in the German armaments industry. His testimony was notable because he was the lone defendant to accept responsibility for the practices of the Nazi regime — both for his actions and for those not under his control. He was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment in Spandau prison, after which he published his best-selling memoir, *Inside the Third Reich* (1970). He described himself in this account as a technician unconcerned with politics, but he still took responsibility for his role in aiding the Nazis, and expressed his regret at having done so. Again, he assumed responsibility for those actions beyond his immediate control, and expressed regret for his inaction during the slaughter of the Jews.

Speer died in London in 1981.



Captain Tony Solomon of London, questions Albert Speer, Reich Production Minister, after his arrest at Flensburg along with other members of the Doenitz Cabinet. Speer was hauled out of his bath and informed that the Government had been outlawed. 01/02/1945



Russian soldiers stand guard outside Spandau Prison, where Albert Speer was held.

In 1947, nine months after the conclusion of the Nuremberg Trials, the seven remaining prisoners were moved to Spandau Prison. In 1951, all seven were still serving their sentences at the prison; Konstantin von Neurath, Karl Doenitz, Walther Funk, Erich Raeder, Baldur von Schirach, Rudolf Hess, and Albert Speer. A military guard, rotating on a monthly basis, was provided by the four occupying powers, the US, Britain, France and Soviet Union. The military guard was provided by a platoon strength which manned the six watch towers.

Albert Speer – His battle With Truth

Synopsis: A psychological portrait of Albert Speer, Hitler's Minister of Armaments and War Production. Speer oversaw operations in the munitions factories in which tens of thousands of slave laborers died. During the Nuremberg trials, Speer pleaded ignorance to the Holocaust and evaded capital punishment. In this work, the author investigates Speer's troubled childhood and speculates that a lack of love drove him to become a Nazi. Furthermore, she asserts that before Speer died in 1981, he had accepted responsibility for his participation in the Final Solution.

Publisher's Note: A rich and revelatory biography—the product of twelve years' work—of the German architect who became perhaps the most powerful of all Hitler's cohorts, closest to the Fuehrer and, by 1942, in effect overlord of Hitler's entire war economy. Sereny's reconsideration of this brilliant, paradoxical figure sheds new light on the dark history of Nazi Germany, in which he played a role both crucial and enigmatic. Gitta Sereny first saw Albert Speer on trial at Nuremberg. Over the last years of his life she came to know him—through hundreds of hours of conversations—as no other biographer has known a Nazi leader. She interviewed as well the people around him—the celebrated, the notorious and the ordinary. Speer gave Sereny, for her use, a number of unpublished manuscripts, and after his death she obtained access to many of his papers. Out of her probings a huge, and hugely alive, portrait emerges. Sereny takes us through the emotional desert of Speer's childhood and marriage, through his embrace (basically, she demonstrates, for nonideological reasons) of the Nazi Party and his service as Minister of Armaments and Munitions, during which his brutal use of slave labor extended a lost war. She superbly portrays the circles in which Speer functioned: the ambivalent General Staff and the infinitely peculiar and nightmarish upper echelons of Nazism. We see Speer accused of war crimes at Nuremberg, and during his twenty years at Spandau prison, struggling to accept INDIVIDUAL responsibility for his actions. Throughout, in person or in memory, Hitler is startlingly present, his friendship with Speer bordering on love. Sereny shows us Speer as inveterate schemer, as spectacular planner and maneuverer. We see him also as unique among Hitler's men in the integrity of his battle with conscience. His progress from moral blindness through moral self-education to a torturous coming-to-terms with his own acts—this is the elemental matter at the heart of a book that stunningly illuminates the man, the war, the Third Reich, the Nazi mind and the complex comingling, in one person or society, of good and evil.

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Albert Speer

A Philosophical Case Study

By Peter Cassidy

Introducing Albert Speer

A brief biography.

Albert Speer served as Adolf Hitler's chief architect from 1933 to 1945. He was also minister for armaments and war production from 1942 until the end of the war in 1945.

Albert Speer was born in Mannheim, Germany in 1905. His childhood was one of privilege but not a happy one. An emotionally cold atmosphere prevailed in the Speer home. Speer studied at technical schools in Karlsruhe, Munich and Berlin receiving an architectural licence in 1931. Like many others in his university, Speer attended a Nazi party rally and listened to a speech given by Hitler. Hitler's message greatly appealed to the downtrodden Germans of the post World War I era¹. Soon after seeing Hitler, Speer joined the National Socialist party.

Speer's membership of the party bought a few modest commissions. His success with these brought him to the attention of Joseph Goebbels who gave him a somewhat larger commission. Hitler was greatly impressed when he observed that Speer could meet near impossible completion deadlines and quickly perceived the promise in this young architect and organiser. Speer enthusiastically crafted the party rallies in Nuremberg, designing, amongst other things, the huge eagle above the stage and the spectacular 'cathedral of light'. Hitler would entrust him with constructing the monumental buildings which were to glorify the "One Thousand Year Reich". From 1933 to 1942 Albert Speer designed grandiose structures for the Nazi government such as the Reich Chancellery and the stadium at Nuremberg. Speer was also given the task of redesigning Berlin. He and Hitler would spend long periods discussing the project and inspecting the plans and models which were prepared for the project. During this time Speer and Hitler became very close. Speer was soon an established, if not the favourite member of Hitler's inner circle of advisors.

When Fritz Todt died in a plane crash in 1942 Hitler asked Speer to take over as Reichsminister for Armaments. It was clearly a shrewd decision on Hitler's part as Speer was an organiser of extraordinary talent and efficiently. Speer's administrative acumen and dedication to work resulted in a dramatic boost in Germany's production levels. This is illustrated by the fact that armament production reached its' peak in 1944 despite heavy allied bombing. It is estimated that Speer's efforts allowed the Germans to prolong the war by at least a year. Even though Speer realised as early as 1943 that the war was inevitably lost he continued to rally industry. As a consequence the war was protracted and the Nazis had more time to pursue their policies of mass murder and genocide.

¹ Speer speaks of the humiliation of the Versailles Treaty, the crippling reparations and the shame of the 'War Guilt' clause. Many intellectuals were seduced by the National Socialist message. Indeed, Martin Heidegger was one of the many prominent German philosophers who enthusiastically threw his support behind the Nazis. This fact is well documented. Hans Sluga describes this period authoritatively in his book *Heidegger's Crisis: Philosophy and Politics in Nazi Germany*.

As the Allies closed in around Germany, Hitler gave an apocalyptic order for the Reich to be razed so that the victors would gain no benefit from German industry. Speer realised that this order, if it was carried out, would devastate any chance of recovery for the German people after the war. In the final months of the war Speer expended a huge effort in seeking to countermand Hitler's order. He unquestionably put his life on the line in seeking to thwart Hitler's scorched-earth policy and was reasonably successful in protecting industry and infrastructure within the country.

After the war Speer was captured and summoned to appear at the Nuremberg trial. It was largely because of his ministry's use of slave labour that Speer was sentenced to 20 years in prison by the court in 1946. During the trial it became apparent that Speer was one of the most able and least corrupt of Hitler's court. He was unique in being the only prominent Nazi to admit responsibility as a member of the Reich's government for the crimes of the regime. Speer, however, claimed that he had no knowledge of the fate of the Jews until after the war. The question of the extent of Speer's knowledge of the Nazi horrors has been hotly debated ever since Nuremberg.

While serving his prison sentence Speer penned some 1,200 pages of personal memoirs frequently writing on toilet paper and cigarette papers. These became the basis of his books 'Inside the Third Reich' and 'Spandau: The Secret Diaries'. Speer's reconstruction of the past in these books is compelling moral philosophy. After serving his sentence to the day, Speer was released from Spandau in 1966.

After his release Speer became a best selling author. He worked hard at being penitent. He presented himself as someone who could have, should have, but did not know of the Holocaust while it was being carried out.

Albert Speer died in a London hospital in 1981.

Speer's Unique Relationship with Hitler

"For the commission to do a great building, I would have sold my soul like Faust. Now I had found my Mephistopheles. He seemed no less engaging than Goethe's." Albert Speer²

To understand Albert Speer and his actions during the period of the Third Reich, and indeed beyond it, we must consider his relationship with Hitler. Once this is completed we can deal better with the philosophical issues at stake.

Few men could have been closer to Hitler than Speer.³ Speer claims he was probably one of the nearest things that Hitler had to a friend. They cultivated a kind of intellectual courtship. Speer says that: "Hitler... hinted that he wanted only a talented young architect still enough of a 'tabula rasa' so that he could form him. Probably I fitted that specification."⁴ The relationship was certainly mutually beneficial. Eventually they were, in a sense, interdependent. Hitler needed Speer's work, both as an architect and an organiser and Speer needed to continue to be in Hitler's favour if he was not to descend after his meteoric rise. To quote Speer: "After all, I was entirely dependent on Hitler's whim for achieving my ambitions."⁵ Speer was set to be the world's greatest architect who would design the greatest city that the planet had ever seen. The task Speer had been given – the rebuilding of Berlin – exceeded anything until then

² Albert Speer *Inside the Third Reich*, p.65-66,

³ Gitta Sereny *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.168

⁴ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.263

⁵ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.140

imagined in city-planning.⁶ He owed this opportunity to Hitler who had plucked him from obscurity.

Speer indubitably came under Hitler's spell. "I am ashamed of it now," said Speer, "but at the time, I found him deeply exciting."⁷ His allegiance was blind (or perhaps blinded) at least until 1944. He followed his leader down a path of darkness. Can we believe that Speer had such tunnel vision as he claimed to have? Speer often speaks of the power of Hitler's personality. It was a personality by which Hitler could dominate the people around him. While in Spandau Speer wrote: "I recently read in Oscar Wilde: 'To influence a person is to give him one's own soul. He does not think his natural thoughts or burn with his natural passions. His virtues are not real to him. His sins, if there are such things, are borrowed.'"⁸ Is Speer claiming that he lost his autonomy as an individual because of Hitler's influence? At Nuremberg he had accepted responsibility for the actions of the government of the Third Reich. Did he change his mind? The answer most likely is that this notion of Wilde's appealed to Speer because it offered an escape from the guilt he felt. While in prison he indulged in make-believes such as his walk around the world, in order to survive the monotony and dullness of prison existence. This was another escapist fantasy. The thought that he had been propelled, not by himself, but by Hitler gave Speer comfort.

As I have said, their relationship was mutually beneficial. Speer had much to offer Hitler, but Speer's 'greatest' achievement was also his worst. His work as armaments minister had prolonged World War Two greatly. If it had not been for Speer, Hitler would have to have given up at least a year before he did. How many people died in that year?⁹ If we follow through a train of consequences we can see that Speer's devotion to National Socialism harmed more people than slave labourers. "And in fact it does seem to me as though the Himmlers, Bormanns, Streichers, and their ilk cannot explain Hitler's success with the German people. Hitler was sustained by the idealism and devotion of people like myself."¹⁰

Ethics & Speer

"The world has achieved brilliance without wisdom, power without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants"
Omar Bradley¹¹

The ethical points raised in a philosophical diagnosis of Speer are profound and wide reaching. Speer was highly intelligent, well-educated and deep-thinking individual. He was by no means an aggressive brute; in fact he was of a subtle, generous and even gentle disposition. Throughout his book *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* Speer speaks of his self-perceived romanticism and love of the arts. How did such a man become so intimately involved in the Nazi movement? How did he become so morally blind as to be a key minister in a government of brutality, profound inhumanity and genocide? Why did he serve such a monstrous leader? How did it come about that Speer was for many years the preferred companion of one Adolf Hitler?

"To try to discover how a man of Speer's talent and immense intelligence could have been convinced by the arguments of National Socialism and became – as far as was possible –

⁶ Rudolf Wolters as quoted in Gitta Sereny's *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.27

⁷ Quoted from Gitta Sereny's *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.98

⁸ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.140

⁹ Gitta Sereny *The German Trauma* p.266-267

¹⁰ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.8

¹¹ Speech on Armistice Day, 1948, in *Collected Writings* (1967) vol.1, p.589

Hitler's friend... and probably through his efforts prolonged the war by a considerable period"¹² is difficult. Speer was a complex and brilliant individual who confronted issues of good and evil on a scale that most of us would be hard pressed to imagine. What we are considering is a likeable man, a man of thoughtfulness and conscience who played a considerable role in an evil empire. Speer, speaking of his actions and decisions of the period said: "... I had to admit that I confused right and wrong, but I felt I had never acted disloyally."¹³ His disloyalty was towards morality.

As I have said in the brief biography above, Speer worked against Hitler's wishes when it became apparent that Hitler intended to drag the entire country into the inferno with him. Hitler's egocentricity had clearly taken the form of disappointed hatred of his own people. Speer took a deadly risk by working openly against Hitler's plans.¹⁴ By withdrawing his loyalty, Speer had dented Hitler's 'unshakeable will'. Without the support of the group of individuals around him, a dictator is powerless. The loyalty of a dedicated band of followers is enough to empower and sustain the leader. The 'sheepish' masses may be swayed by a relatively small group if the group is energetic, action orientated and convincingly promises solutions. Loyalty is clearly open to abuse. It follows that a person must choose his allegiance carefully. Speer, in a brilliant line in his *Spandau: The Secret Diaries*, says that: "I am beginning to grasp that there is only one type of valid loyalty: toward morality."¹⁵ If one is loyal toward morality then immoral orders given to one by a 'superior' will not be carried out. If loyalty is towards morality, then it is not misplaced.¹⁶

Speer realised that "loyalty always presupposed a certain ethical blindness on the part of the loyal person."¹⁷ But the point is that if someone really knew the difference between good and evil was then loyalty would be undermined. Speer, responding to this objection, claims that: "I make no progress against this type of logic. It takes the ground from under my feet."¹⁸ Robert Jay Lifton has written very convincingly that a human being who cannot face a terrible truth will try to 'block' it.¹⁹ Does Speer shut out this thought because his conscience cannot bear it? To quote him again: "I sometimes think that Hess's amnesia is merely the most convenient way to turn a deaf ear to the world. I too feel rather the same way, although with me it doesn't take so blunt a form."²⁰ This seems to be an admission that while he attempts to confront his past actions, he cannot bear the full weight of them.

The Corrupting Effects of Power and Ambition

"I put for a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death."
Thomas Hobbes²¹

Unfettered determination and ambition drove Speer to the pinnacle of Nazi power. Did ambition eclipse his sense of right and wrong? Speer says of himself that: "I have never for a minute denied that I became intoxicated with power..."²² It is clear that things can own us rather than us owning them. This is simply a type of depersonalisation. Speer's ambition was

¹² Gitta Sereny, *The German Trauma*, p.269

¹³ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.191

¹⁴ Joachim Fest *The Face of the Third Reich* p.206

¹⁵ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.192

¹⁶ Of course this prompts the question: "What exactly is morality?"

¹⁷ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.191

¹⁸ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.191

¹⁹ Quoted from Gitta Sereny's *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.706

²⁰ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.331

²¹ Thomas Hobbes *Leviathan* (1651) pt.1, ch. 11

²² Quoted from Gitta Sereny's *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.89

impervious to humanistic consideration. Other people were largely the means to an end. Speer came to adore power. To quote Speer: "I remember when Hitler gave me the assignment to build the Atlantic Wall, a system of fortifications from the North Cape to the Pyrenees, what feelings of exultation filled me when my signature could mean the expenditure of billions of marks and direct hundreds of thousands to construction sites. Only in retrospect do I become aware that as an architect at Hitler's side I was also seeking the pleasures of power."²³ He would not give up this power willingly. To sustain his position, Speer would willingly disregard what is commonly perceived as 'good'. To quote Speer again: "... the power his (Hitler's) favour conferred upon me, all this was quite simply overwhelming and had become so indispensable to me that to hang on to it I would probably have swallowed anything... I have learned to understand that unfettered ambition can destroy one's innate awareness of ethical principles."²⁴

Excessive ambition can lead to a lack of concern for the effects of one's action upon others. This state of affairs can be accentuated by the extent of the power which a person holds. An individual in position such as Speer's, if he becomes 'conscience-less', can inflict suffering on millions of fellow humans. Speer closed his eyes to what he saw as the unpalatable elements of the world around him and the result was horrible.

The Immorality of the Technocrat

"In dreams begins responsibility."
W. B. Yeats²⁵

It is probably fair to say that the most significant faith of the modern world is the belief that all the major problems of life can be solved by technical experts. Armed with their arsenals of technical skills these experts 'scientifically' consider humanistic questions and dilemmas. They are a breed of creature which has destroyed much of what was once good about the human race. Speer is a prime example of a technocrat. We can see in his actions the immorality of the technocrat. In his book, *The Face of the Third Reich*, Joachim Fest says: "As almost no-one else under the Third Reich, Albert Speer, Hitler's architect and later Minister of Armaments, represented this type of the narrow specialist and his technocratic amorality, until both met their refutation in him."²⁶

Is it correct to take a scientific or even a utilitarian moral position? If we were pre-programmed machines perhaps it would be. As the world becomes more and more impersonal should we obey authorities that leave no place for human warmth? To quote Fest again: "Not only technology itself but all technological work came to be held exempt from value-judgements, and just as there were supposed to be no 'evil' discoveries or inventions, so the technological genius remained untouched by the moral aspect of any relationship in which it might be involved... Having long outgrown its original function as a tool, it is no longer an instrument of power but the bearer of power."²⁷

For Speer, during the war, people were means to an end. They existed as a piece of machinery exists. They were to be utilised without consideration of their feelings or indeed, their humanity. "I'm not happy to face it," he (Speer) added, "but in the context of my life then, these workers' only significance was what they could produce towards our war effort; I didn't see them as human beings, as individuals."²⁸ Furthermore, he says that: "I certainly can't claim

²³ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.406

²⁴ Quoted from Gitta Sereny's *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.636

²⁵ *Responsibilities* (1914) epigraph

²⁶ Joachim Fest *The Face of the Third Reich*, p.199

²⁷ Joachim Fest *The Face of the Third Reich*, p.198

²⁸ Quoted from Gitta Sereny's *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth*, p.338

to have been a humanist... My objection to maltreatment was because it could not increase efficiency; it was not a moral issue for me. Now I can't conceive of such conditions, or of feeling or reacting as I did then"²⁹

While in Spandau, Speer became a kind of 'technophobe'. He came to fear the power of technology and its' alienation of ethical considerations. Speer perceived the dangers which the power of technical and scientific progress inevitable bring. "But Hitler, with his technologically based dictatorship and his assembly-line extermination of Jews, shocked me so deeply that I can never again be naive about technology. Every advance nowadays only frightens me. News like this account of the first satellite makes me think of new possibilities for annihilation, and arouses fear. If they fly to the moon tomorrow, my fear will be all the greater."³⁰

Totalitarianism, Depersonalisation, Unreality

"All that is needed for the forces of evil to win is for enough good people to do nothing."
Edwin Arlington Robinson

In a totalitarian regime the individual is dwarfed by the structures which are put into place to control him. The individual's will becomes almost insignificant. It is suicide to struggle against these structures which are virtually invulnerable. One cannot push back the tide. Sadly, history provides us with numerous examples of the destruction and devastation which can come from one man holding unrestricted power. We can easily perceive this in both the extreme right wing and left wing movements of the twentieth century. As Speer says: "You simply cannot understand what it is like to live in a dictatorship; you can't understand the game of danger, but above all you cannot understand the fear on which the whole thing is based. Nor, I suppose, have you any concept of the charisma of a man such as Hitler."³¹

Totalitarianism frequently, if not necessarily, entails depersonalisation. In this case 'society' is not man written large as Plato said, in fact, with totalitarianism, man and society are written very small. Abstract notions such as 'Aryan Supremacy' and 'The Cult of the Leader' are manifestations of depersonalisation from above. The population's sense of individuality is stolen. A mass of people simply becomes a statistic of labour availability rather than a living, breathing, unique collection of autonomous individuals. The leader makes the decisions the masses follow these dictums. In the Third Reich, decisions of paramount importance affecting millions of people could be made at Hitler's momentary whim. The nation was relieved of the need to choose, to think, or to decide. Hitler became, virtually, the sole moral agent in the country. "Even in the management of a company, every individual is responsible for the conduct of business... It is shaming, but in fact we did not even act like the management of a company. Rather, relieved of all need for thinking, we left everything to the chief executive officer."³²

A kind of unreality seemed to prevail at the highest levels of German National Socialism. Quoting Speer: "The departure from reality, which was visibly spreading like a contagion, was no peculiarity to the National Socialist regime. But in normal circumstances people who turn their backs on reality are soon set straight by the mockery and criticism of those around them, which makes them aware they have lost their credibility. In the Third Reich there were no such correctives, especially for those who belonged to the upper stratum."³³ Furthermore, Speer says: "Certainly part of the reason was that we lived in a tightly shut world of delusion isolated from

²⁹ Quoted from Gitta Sereny's *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth*, p.590

³⁰ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries*, p.317

³¹ Quoted from Gitta Sereny's *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.553

³² Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.25

³³ Albert Speer *Inside the Third Reich* p.291

the outside world (and perhaps from our respectable selves).”³⁴ Speer, in his book, *Spandau: The Secret Diaries*, sums up this atmosphere of unreality: “For a brief second it seemed to me that all this was nothing but a grandiose game with building blocks.”³⁵

The Notion of Speer as an ‘Outsider’

“There was this wall between him and others... and he accepted it. He made do, I think, because he didn’t know how to do anything else.”

*Annemarie Kempf*³⁶

If there is one thing all psychologists now agree on, it is that the denial of love in childhood almost invariably leads to a damaged adult. Speer certainly bore the scars of an emotionally deprived childhood.³⁷ Both Speer’s parents were aloof. His brothers bullied him. Speaking of his family he says: “Father and I never talked about our feelings. That was his way, and I have inherited from him.”³⁸ Both Speer’s parents preferred all their other children to Albert and they made it obvious. So from an early age Speer was essentially ostracised.

He always seemed a stranger, as though he had wandered in by mistake among all these Machiavellian or booty-hungry petty bourgeois, and even his appearance showed how far he was from the type that embodied the National Socialist movement at all levels.³⁹ Yet Speer found some kind of belonging within the movement. At Hitler’s side he found something close to happiness.⁴⁰ In an interview with Patrick Watson Speer describes his time as the major National Socialist architect as the best period of his life.⁴¹ In *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* Speer says that: “... perhaps it is only the matter of a loner’s temperament. I have never quite belonged fully anywhere.”⁴² I feel it is fair to say that the closest he came to belonging somewhere was at Hitler’s side. During his incarceration, Speer grew comfortable in Spandau, finding that the ‘monastic’ way of life suited his nature.

The story of Speer’s life demonstrates what is possible when a man disregards the humanity of his fellows. Speer thought in terms of production figures, efficiency, and deadlines. There was always a kind of barrier between him and others. Concealed behind this wall Speer failed to consider the feelings of others. It is clear from his actions during the war that Speer was missing a dimension of humanity. Pity, compassion, empathy, sympathy were lacking in a profound way. I am not saying that he could not feel these emotions. In fact I believe he could feel deeply but not directly. He felt through music, through architecture, through the arts, and such pursuits.

Speer’s Guilt and Sense of Responsibility

“But what still troubles me most to this day is my participation in so much overall injustice.”

*Albert Speer*⁴³

³⁴ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.29

³⁵ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.171

³⁶ Gitta Sereny *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.149

³⁷ Gitta Sereny *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.39

³⁸ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.55

³⁹ Joachim Fest *The Face of the Third Reich* p.200

⁴⁰ What we can perceive here is the scope of Hitler’s appeal to the Germans of the time. Numerous industrialists, businessmen, war veterans, thugs, and individuals of the upper and middle classes all found reasons to admire and support Hitler. His message held appeal for a wide range of people.

⁴¹ *Albert Speer: The Last Nazi*. A video interview of Speer by Patrick Watson

⁴² Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.244

⁴³ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.187

Speer killed no one himself. He could not see the blood that was on his hands because of his actions as Minister for Armaments. The sad truth is that he didn't care about the fate of the Jews, any more than he would later care about the millions of slave labourers who slaved for him. When he needed something, he went after it, irrespective of human cost.⁴⁴

The historian, Hugh Trevor-Roper, has called Speer 'the real criminal of Nazi Germany, for he, more than any other, represented that fatal philosophy which has made havoc of Germany and nearly shipwrecked the world. For ten years he sat at the centre of power and did nothing'.⁴⁵ As Joachim Fest rightly points out, this judgement is mistaken. It is not true that he sat at the centre of political power since he was primarily Hitler's architect until 1942. Furthermore, it is not true that Speer "did nothing". We have mentioned that he risked his personal safety by working against Hitler's scorched-earth policy. "But he did represent a type which neither the National Socialist movement nor any other variety of modern totalitarianism could have succeeded." This is the person who will work tirelessly for the advantage of an unworthy benefactor. Speer indulged in no acts of violence, nor arrested anyone and so remained from a technological legal point of view free from tangible guilt⁴⁶. "Every day I learn anew how inhuman we really were... The absolute dominion of utilitarian ends, such as I pursued as minister of armaments, is nothing but a form of inhumanity."⁴⁷

Over the years, the 'Speer Ministry', as it was called, ended up employing 28 million workers, 6 million of them foreign, and about 60,000 of them concentration camp prisoners.⁴⁸ The treatment and conditions many of the foreign workers had to endure was horrifying. Speer visited one of the work camps and was shaken by what he saw. It was not enough, however, to persuade him to cease his work for the Nazis. It was later that Speer began to discover that the economic power at his disposal brought with it political and ethical responsibility.⁴⁹ In typical move, Speer makes an admission and jumps back to his high ground by shifting the focus: "Deportation of labour is unquestionably an international crime. I do not reject my sentence, even though other nations are now doing the same thing."⁵⁰ While in prison Speer would have plenty of time to ask questions of himself. His struggle with his guilt and his responsibility would be his shadow for the rest of his life.

Speer as a Prisoner

"The prisoner is always an outcast from society; I am an outcast among prisoners." Albert Speer⁵¹

Speer served twenty years in prison in Spandau. His imprisonment was not simply a physical one. He was mentally and metaphorically a prisoner also. Speer was a prisoner of his past. This incarceration, unlike his term in Spandau, was a life sentence.

From the vantage point of his prison cell, Speer would often wonder at his recklessness in assuming responsibility for the whole policy of the regime in which he was a minister. This was his attempt to make a decisive break with the spirit of the past. Speaking of an aspect of his relationship with Hitler, Speer says that: "The subject no longer had the least attraction. A secret

⁴⁴ Gitta Sereny *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.223

⁴⁵ Joachim Fest, *The Face of the Third Reich* p.207

⁴⁶ Joachim Fest, *The Face of the Third Reich*, p.208

⁴⁷ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.24-25

⁴⁸ Albert Speer quoted in Gitta Sereny's *The German Trauma*, p.280

⁴⁹ Joachim Fest, *The Face of the Third Reich* p.205

⁵⁰ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.50

⁵¹ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.244

hope: that this will happen with the entire past.”⁵² Beyond a doubt Speer grew as a person during his years of confinement in prison. Miriam Pollard explores his spiritual development in her book, *The Other Face of Love*, explaining how Speer, in terms of repent and conversion, Speer is “an incomparable instructor”.⁵³

While in prison, Albert Speer, wanting to become a ‘new man’ enlisted the help of Georges Casalis. Casalis was the Spandau prison chaplain for the first three years of Speer’s sentence. “When I met Speer,” he (Casalis) told Gitta Sereny, “he was the most tortured man I had ever met. By the time I left Spandau, I saw him as the most repentant.”⁵⁴ Speer had plenty of time to reflect whilst in Spandau prison and certainly did search for redemption. In the final analysis, the most intense relationship he would ever have was with Casalis.⁵⁵ This is not apparent from a reading of ‘Spandau: The Secret Diaries’ in which Speer only gives Casalis a few short mentions. It is certainly true that Casalis helped Speer to discover the missing dimension of humanity he searched for.

As Speer says: “Spandau eventually was not so much a prison for me, as a refuge.”⁵⁶ It was a place where he had the opportunity to learn and evolve as a person. Casalis had recommended certain reading to Speer and Speer’s spiritual growth was as intense as his earlier dedication to less commendable pursuits had been. Albert Speer realised that his life had been that of the immoral (or perhaps amoral) technocrat. He says that: “There is no such thing as lost time. In the course of my daily reading I observe how meagre is the basic knowledge of a person trained in technology. How little he really knows or perceives... I am reading books on art and cultural history, but also contemporary sources, chronicles, poems, and philosophical treatises.”⁵⁷ The possibility of redemption and betterment of the person is a great lesson to be learned from a study of this gifted but flawed individual.

Truth and the Writing of Albert Speer

“Today I read as sentence by Karl Jaspers stating that there cannot be any such thing as objective truth. Not even for the historian who undertakes to set down historical events dispassionately.”
Albert Speer⁵⁸

Speer lied, there is no question about that fact. If he told the truth at his trial he would, most likely, have hanged. Speaking of his appearance at the Nuremberg trials he says: “How could I tell them that?” His striving for honesty was tempered by his need to present himself in the best light possible. If one wanted to gain a real understanding of Speer, one had to realise that almost everything he did – though not quite everything - had a purpose, generally directed towards his own benefit.⁵⁹ He could admit much, but the burden of the full truth would have broken him.

In Speer’s books there are untruths. He wrote so much that some errors of fact are forgivable. Indeed they are probably inevitable. But some things are so important, monumental that error is not possible. It is human nature that Speer was creative with history. He was constantly seeking to present himself in the best manner possible. While in Spandau Speer

⁵² Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.86

⁵³ Miriam Pollard *The Other Face of Love* p.10. Pollard’s assessment of Speer is perhaps overgenerous.

⁵⁴ Quoted from Gitta Sereny’s *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.13

⁵⁵ Gitta Sereny *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.21

⁵⁶ Albert Speer quoted in Gitta Sereny’s *The German Trauma* p.274

⁵⁷ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.99-100

⁵⁸ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.240

⁵⁹ Gitta Sereny *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.50

writes: "It is disturbing to think that however much we want to be honest, our memory may play us false, depending on the situation."⁶⁰ For Speer the situation is a difficult one. The full truth is not one which he can come to terms with.

There is no such thing as true objectivity in writing. Each writer inevitably and quite naturally and inescapably brings something of himself to his writing. There is not always an obvious goal towards which a writer aims. In Speer's case, typically, things are complex. He wants to convey the history of his life and time accurately, yet there is always the undercurrent in which he seeks to absolve himself of the guilt which plagues him. He attempts to rehabilitate himself by presenting an idealised version of events. It must be said that Speer quite successfully cultivated the myth of himself as the "Good Nazi". To quote Speer: "If only I write down my experiences with sufficient exactness and honesty, I'll have made my contribution."⁶¹ How honest or objective his recounting of events is, continues to be a matter of debate.

'The Lessons' and The Importance of a Liberal Education

"The aim of education is the knowledge not of facts but of values."
William Ralph Inge⁶²

There are many lessons to be learned from the life of Albert Speer. We must understand and educate our leaders and followers. Education is the key. Unfortunately, mankind seems to need to repeat these mistakes again and again. Sadly there are too many examples of history repeating itself. We need only look at the conflict and genocide in Yugoslavia, Cambodia or Iraq to realise the contemporary applications for a critical study of the National Socialist era.

If Hitler is made out to be non-person or a kind of devil⁶³ then there is no lesson for history. We must understand that while he was certainly an evil-doer, he was also a living breathing human. It is important that we as humans understand our capacity for destruction and brutality. We must seek to promote tolerance and temperance.

A further lesson is that one man holding unlimited power is unhealthy. I have discussed earlier how Hitler's whims could become law. I have also discussed how a sycophantic group emerges close to a dictator and how a divorce from reality occurs in a situation like that. A separation from reality means that the ruler has no concept of the needs and feelings of his subjects. Inevitably, the people suffer.

Speer, in his interview with Patrick Watson, stressed that freedom of public opinion should not be suppressed. It is vital that the public have an outlet to voice the dissatisfaction they may feel. In Nazi Germany there was no such forum. The concerns of the public were not expressed or heeded. If any individual spoke up against the regime he was quickly and brutally silenced. This is a profoundly unhealthy situation for the population of any country.

When considering individuals, it must be within the context of the fallibilities and frailties of their lives. Recognising that human beings and their actions cannot exist or be judged in isolation from the environment which nurtures them is our first and only safeguard.⁶⁴ All things must be viewed in context.

⁶⁰ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.27

⁶¹ Albert Speer *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* p.90

⁶² *The Training of the Reason* in A. C. Benson (ed) *Cambridge Essays on Education (1917) ch.2*

⁶³ Presenting Hitler as a kind of 'devil' is a move towards absolving him and his followers of their responsibility for their own actions. It is as if they were compelled by a supernatural force to take the actions which they did. This is an excuse, and Speer realises that fact.

⁶⁴ Gitta Sereny *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* p.169

There comes a time when we cannot ignore what is going on around us. We cannot suppress our knowledge of the wrongs which are happening. If one is not part of the solution then one is part of the problem. One's complicity can be in one's tacit acceptance of the current state of affairs.

The case of Speer presents a powerful reason why a philosophical, and in particular an ethical education is vital. We, in Ireland, currently live in a society where students are required to regurgitate information in examinations. Technical narrowness in education is dangerous. Many teachers feed the youngsters information in manner which is analogous to a computer programmer composing a program. The student is expected to 'echo' rather than think. Speer when speaking of his own education describes it as lopsided and claims that it facilitated his later mistakes. If people ask: "What is the 'practical' purpose of studying philosophy?", they need to be reminded of the danger of neglecting such disciplines. With the erosion of the popularity of the traditional guidance of the Church are we led in a Nietzschean state in which all is permissible? I think not. The study of ethical philosophies such as Kant's deontological theory will essentially lead one to the maxim: 'Love your neighbour as yourself'.

A note on my 'Albert Speer' website:

First and foremost I shall give the address: <http://albertspeer.tripod.com/> Or it can be found by searching in any major search engine.

My reason for undertaking to produce an Albert Speer website was quite simple. As I browsed the internet looking for information or resources on Speer I quickly discovered that there was an acute lack of sites with much information on this fascinating individual. With the exception of one site which focuses almost entirely on his architecture, the address is as follows:

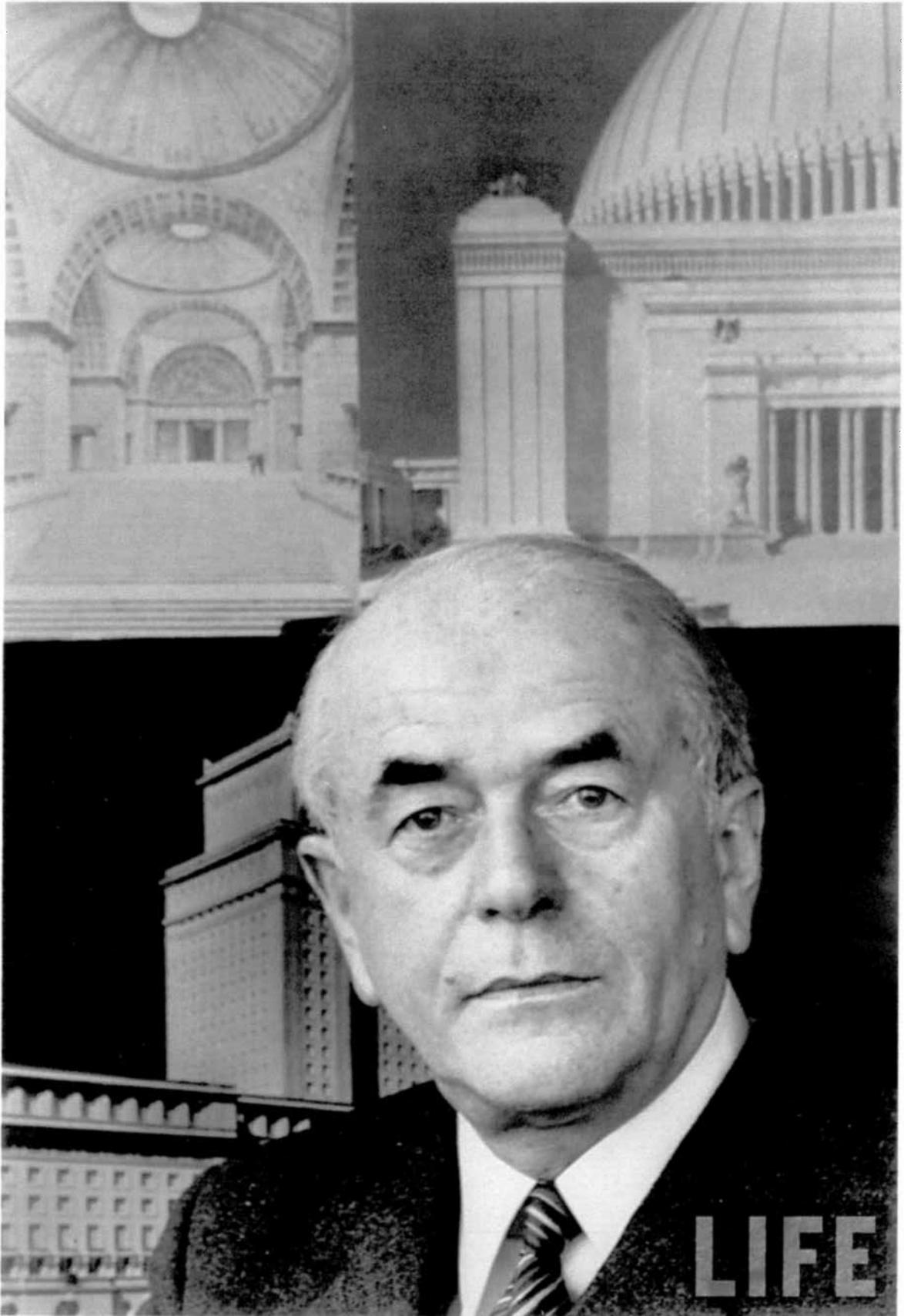
<http://www.dataphone.se/~ms/speer/welcom2.htm>

I could find no website dedicated to a study of Speer.

Over the course of trawling through numerous search engine results I had amassed quite a number of articles related to my subject. It then occurred to me that it would be worthwhile to collect these articles, along with my original work, within a single website. Additionally, I have included other features including a picture gallery, a collection of short biographies, a links page, details of my essay and a comprehensive reading list on Speer and related subjects.

My website is a work in progress and will continue to be. I feel however that it is not unrealistic to say that it is (admittedly by default) the most comprehensive site on Albert Speer on the World Wide Web.

My homepage is: <http://members.eircom.net/~petecassidy/>



LIFE