Correspondence


Author's Response

Sir:

Thank you for the comments regarding my article: “The Hypnosis of Adolf Hitler” (JFS, Nov 1998). If I understand the comments correctly, the central message concerns the use of one quotation that I utilized (on p. 1131 of my article) as taken directly from a declassified US Office of Strategic Services Report (a.k.a. The Langer Report). This individual quotation deals with a description of Hitler’s sleep patterns.

This quotation in no way deals with any of the central aspects of my article, which focuses on: Hitler’s experiences at The Pasewalk Military Hospital; his psychiatric treatment there; and my research to better clarify the historical record regarding the “paper trail” which leads from the hospital and includes the book: The Eyewitness.

I do appreciate the comments regarding your concerns about this one quotation, which I utilized simply to provide another example of the traumatic effects that combat exposure had on Hitler, but the fact that Hitler suffered physical and emotional symptoms secondary to combat while serving on the Belgian front is little disputed even from his own self reports.

On another level, I suspect that I should point out that my paper is not a psychoanalysis of Hitler (as your letter suggests). As a forensic psychiatrist, I should know something about that. Before I even decided to investigate Hitler’s Pasewalk hospitalization, the historical record was confusing to begin with. I did not go back “in time and space” trying to add to that confusion. Rather, as historians Binion and Toland have both told me, they appreciated my research efforts, which they believe have helped to clarify the historical record better.

I hope others will review my research “When Viewed as a Whole.” Yet, I guess we must each interpret the data for ourselves and draw our own conclusions. That’s what this is all about. Nonetheless, the comments “When Viewed as a Whole” were helpful to me.

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