

What People Are Saying About *Carnival of Lies*

The background detail of *A Carnival of Lies*, much of it from hitherto untapped sources, of the complex development in Nazi Germany between 1939 and 1945, is so insightful that no one interested in the subject can fail to profit. Totalitarianism has never seemed more subtle, insidious and in the end more terrifying. This is **an outstanding book, beautifully written and absorbing.**

J.K. TAPLIN

A most unusual and compelling book: the author, by the device of the fictional autobiography of an undercover agent in Nationalist Socialist Germany in the years from 1933, portrays with unembellished clarity the horrors of the Nazi machine operating at the national and individual level, with the contrast of those whose faith in humankind—even when they perish—outlasts those terrible years. **Highly recommended.**

ALAN SCOTT, CVO, CBE, lately Governor of the Cayman Islands

Vernon Anley's nightmarish narrative about a nation led into infamy gallops on at a pace and style guaranteed to hold the reader's attention from the start. A romance set against the backdrop of the Holocaust grips the imagination with horror and compassion. From the moment the first page is turned we are witness to a chronicle of man's inhumanity to man, based throughout on carefully researched historic facts. **A powerful story of human survival against all odds and a triumph of hope over despair.**

RAYMOND ZALA

**A
CARNIVAL
OF
LIES**

**A
CARNIVAL
OF
LIES**

VERNON L. ANLEY

Wipf and Stock Publishers
199 W 8th Ave, Suite 3
Eugene, OR 97401

A Carnival of Lies
By Anley, Vernon L
Copyright © 2010 by Anley, Vernon L All rights reserved.
Softcover ISBN-13: 978-1-7252-6466-3
Hardcover ISBN-13: 978-1-7252-6467-0
eBook ISBN-13: 978-1-7252-6468-7
Publication date 2/12/2020
Previously published by OakTara, 2010

OTHER TITLES
by
DR. VERNON ANLEY

An Unholy Love

A Divided Universe

It Happened in Hanoi

The Orange Tree and Other Stories

The Last Song

for more information visit:

www.vernonanley.co.uk

Know, my son, with how little wisdom
the world is governed.

COUNT AXEL OXENSTIERNA



Occasionally words must serve to veil the facts.
But this must happen in such a way
that no one becomes aware of it;
or, if it should be noticed, excuses must be at hand
to be produced immediately.

MACHIAVELLI



If a way to the better there be,
it lies in taking a look at the worst.

THOMAS HARDY



A Carnival of Lies is based on
one of the most tumultuous and horrific times
in human history—the Holocaust—
and is, as a result, **graphic in content**
in its portrayal of stories of man's inhumanity to man.

Foreword

When writing an autobiography the “times” are for the most part a subordinate clarification of the “life,” but in times of great upheaval the perspective is reversed and one is called to write not a “life” but a “life and times.” Although the book carries much historical detail, I have not included a bibliography or listed the archives and documents that provided the background for the complex developments in Germany between 1939 and 1945. My intention from the beginning was not to write another history but to uncover what hitherto had been experienced but not properly known.

The book carries a graphic and detailed reconstruction of life in Dachau and Auschwitz. One of the more pervasive myths of our era is the absolute authority given to first-person testimony of survivors of concentration camps. Primo Levi was haunted by the sense that his own account of Auschwitz was that of an “anomalous minority.” Since one of the Nazi mechanisms for controlling prisoners depended on isolating each of them as much and for as long as possible to keep them ignorant of the full scale of their predicament, the testimony of any single survivor is both partial and unrepresentative and in need of supplementation from other sources and narratives.

Although Russian, Polish, and German archives have revealed many little-known facts about Hitler’s Germany and his network of camps, this book does not claim to be an original piece of historical research. In literary terms the book is concerned with the drama of life, with what results through the characters, their decisions, their actions, and not only because of them but also because of their defects, their oversights and failures to act.

1

The *Geheime Staatspolizei*amt (Secret State Police or Gestapo) arrested my father in the Adlon Hotel in Berlin in the summer of 1933. When he asked why, he was told, “We do not give reasons.” Even then Hitler was sufficiently powerful for the Gestapo to act with impunity.

My father was taken to Gestapo Headquarters in *Prinz-Albrecht-Strasse*, where he was interrogated. Hanging on the wall in front of him was a map of *Russia and the Neighboring States*. It showed the still independent countries in central and Eastern Europe incorporated into the Third Reich. That map, so brazen in its presumption, confirmed my father’s belief that Hitler intended to wage a war of conquest.

A Section Chief in the Security Service told my father that he had been overheard speaking disparagingly of Hitler. He was guilty of *unerhörte Verleumdungen* (unheard-of-calumnies) that he would be listed as *Deutschfeindlich* (an enemy of Germany) and that he was to leave the country immediately. The interrogating officer was unaware that Otto Wagener, Head of the Nazi Party’s Economic Section, had invited my father to Germany and that he was a guest of the Reich Corporation of German Industries. My father, who had listened to these accusations in silence, finally rose from his chair. He was a big man, used to authority, and in faultless German suggested that before more was said that the *Sturmabführer* (Major) telephone Herr Wagener, who immediately ordered my father’s release.

The man who spoke against my father was Herr Nagel’s chauffeur. Herr Nagel was a close personal friend and the director of a heavy machinery company. The chauffeur had overheard the two men talking and reported that my father had criticized Hitler for letting a “punishment expedition” of SA run riot in Ockrilla, a large engineering plant in Dresden. The episode is noteworthy only in so far as my

father's release and the chauffeur's dismissal would have been unthinkable a few years later when Himmler became Chief of the German Police.



I first went to Germany in 1937 when I was eighteen. I stayed with the Nagels, who had a large property west of München near Utting on the Starnberger See. Alex, the Nagel's younger son, and I were the same age and quickly became good friends. At that time Nazi coercion was undertaken by simple injunctions or by subtle means of social reinforcement. Commands were given not to listen to Radio Moscow, to give the Hitler salute, and to be a good citizen by attending NSDAP meetings. No one foresaw the consequences of voting for Hitler or for the introduction of the Third Reich—until it was too late, by which time a great many Germans had learned to temper their love of militarism on the cold steppes of Russia.

By 1937 people had a good idea of Hitler's intentions. He had torn up the Treaty of Versailles and began to rearm as he had prophesized in *Mein Kampf*: "*Wir wollen wieder Waffen!*"—We will have arms again! Despite the supra-patriotism in the pre-Nazi years, people were apprehensive about the scale of Hitler's rearmament program. German industry was turning into a war machine. Hitler's appeal to the mystical community of the *Volk* was his argument for anything he wanted to undertake (a claim he expressed in the messianic formula: "As I am yours, so you are mine. "). The endlessly reiterated slogan, "*Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer,*" became a call to arms.

The *Volk* was scattered beyond Germany's existing boundaries—wherever, in fact, German-speaking settlers had established themselves. Hitler's self-proclaimed mission was to gather all these far-flung *Volksgenossen* into the one Reich and to provide the *Lebensraum* which this vastly increased population would need. He did not mince words explaining how this additional territory would be secured.

"The military exploitation of our resources cannot be undertaken soon enough or on too large a scale. If we do not succeed, in the

shortest possible time in turning the German army into the world's finest army, Germany will be lost. All other considerations therefore will have to be subordinated to this mission."

When Rudolph Hess, Hitler's inseparable secretary, asked the rhetorical question, "Why don't you (the Nazis) reduce your population instead of demanding more room? Why, on the contrary, is the new Reich taking steps to increase its birth rate?" Hitler answered, "Because we do not understand why one of the most valuable peoples in the world should go under; a people to whom man owes his greatest cultural benefits and progress, the most glorious contributions to his literature, to music, to the graphic arts!"

Hitler's warmongering was background noise for Alex and myself. We heard the stomping of Nazi boots, the metallic rumbling of heavy vehicles, and saw cavalry riding well-fed horses, but neither of us grasped what was happening. In fact, very few people saw the consequences of voting in the Third Reich. There was no real comprehension of what Hitler actually stood for and no real understanding of what Nazism was.



I returned to Australia in time for my first term at university. One of the set tasks for students of German was to read German newspapers and periodicals. They made depressing reading. In the eighteen months between my first and second visit to Germany Hitler invaded Austria, undermined the Czech Republic, and secured Mussolini's signature on the Anti-Comintern Pact, which bound both parties not to sign a treaty with Russia. On the domestic front the Jews were being forcibly emigrated and harassed. "*Wenn's Judenblut vom Messer spritzt,*" sang the Stormtroopers, "*dann geht's noch mal so gut*" (when Jewish blood spurts from the knife, things will go better still).

The poet Heinrich Heine predicted a hundred years earlier that revolutionary forces in Germany were biding their time to break out and fill the world with terror: "When ye hear the trampling of feet and the clashing of arms, ye neighbors' children, be on your guard..."

German thunder is of true German character: it is not very nimble and rumbles along somewhat slowly. But come it will, and when ye hear a crashing such as never before has been heard in the world's history, then know that at last the German thunderbolt has fallen." All the signs were that Hitler had lifted the thunderbolt and was about to hurl it.



In July the following year I returned to Germany and was immediately struck by the number of people in uniform. The uniforms were an ugly shade of brown, a color personally chosen by Hitler. In München, as in all other cities of Germany, every billboard and shop window carried posters of Hitler, with captions such as, *Volk will zoo Volk, und Blut zu Blut, dem Führer dein Ja* (People to people, and blood to blood, Yes for the Führer) and *Weltmacht oder Niedergang* (World power or ruin). Buses, trams and taxis carried placards saying that the driver was for Adolph Hitler. At the station loudspeakers carried slogans about "honor" and "freedom." Nazi propaganda was everywhere. Even tubes of toothpaste and children's toys were decorated with swastikas and eagles. Invisibly, like the static electricity growing in the air that presages as summer storm, the atmosphere of oppression and violence was growing.

Alongside images of Hitler were inflammatory pictures of Jews. Anti-Jewish signs with messages such as "Jews Not Wanted Here" and "Entry Forbidden to Jews" and "*Juda Verreckt*" (Jewry Perish, literally, "Croak") were commonplace in restaurants and hotels. SA men bared the way in to Jewish shops. Placards on the highways leading to towns all over Germany declared: "Jews Enter This Place at Their Own Risk" and "Jews Strictly Forbidden in This Town." Dangerous bends carried the warning notice: "Drive carefully. Sharp curve—Jews 75 mph!" It was the start of that ineluctable process that ended five years later in the gas chambers of Auschwitz.

The Nagels' estate ran down to the Isar River. The house was built by Crown Prince Fredric of Prussia in the eighteenth century as a hunting lodge. It had been much enlarged, and little of the original

building remained. The Nagels were proud to be German, proud of their culture, and regarded Hitler a dangerous upstart who would lead Germany to ruin if given half the chance. In spite of their deep-rooted dislike for the Nazis the family was careful not to criticize the government. A neighbor had involuntarily said “Shame!” while looking at a Nazi slogan chalked on the walls of a building and had been arrested for “spreading false and agitational political rumors.” Herr Nagel continued to greet people in a courtly manner by tipping his hat, thus circumventing the “German greeting” (i.e., “Heil Hitler” and the submissive one-armed salute), although this worried his wife. The Gestapo was everywhere. To express oneself against the system was to invite persecution. Each time someone cautioned his neighbor or friend he was strengthening the general atmosphere of fear.

An example of how efficient the Gestapo became by reason of rumor and fear was a doggerel whispered by quite ordinary people:

*Lieber Gott mach mich stumm
Dass ich nicht nach. kumm*
(Dear God make me dumb,
So I don't have to go to Dachau.)

Dachau is a beautiful old town set in the rolling hills north of München. Alex and I often walked up the cobblestone streets past cross-beamed houses to the onion-dome tower of St. Jacob's and the remains of the Renaissance Palace. The southwest wing overlooks Dachau and the north face of the Bavarian Alps a hundred kilometers to the south. Neither of us wanted to go the neighboring village of Prittlbach to see the concentration camp. Little did I know that several years later I would see Dachau from the inside when I would be taken into “protective custody” in Dachau before being transferred to Auschwitz.

As long as we stayed on the estate we could ignore the mass meetings and slogans, the Gestapo, and their terror tactics. Theatres showed only newsreels of militarized masses at Party Rallies and children in the *Jungvolk* throwing hand-grenades and firing machine guns. The Hitler *Jugend* gave Hitler an inexhaustible reservoir of ardent young fighters. Every German boy belonged to a branch of Hitler

Youth from the time he was five until he was eighteen and every girl until she was twenty-one. Hitler said he wanted “a violently active, dominating brutal youth” whose education and training “must be directed towards giving them a conviction that they are superior to others.” The schools obliged. They gave Hitler his “new species of man.”

But that summer was memorable not just for the anti-Semitism and general breakdown of trust and social communication. I met Alex’s cousin, Marian Adel, the most beautiful girl I had ever seen. I had seen pictures of her at home. Our mothers had been childhood friends in Bavaria and wrote to each other from time to time. Marian’s dark eyes and long hair had not changed, but she was now eighteen, a young woman. We were inseparable. By the time I left Germany we had fallen in love.

Marian left Berlin to live with the Nagels after the universities introduced the so-called “Aryan paragraph,” excluding anyone with Jewish blood from lectures and student organizations. Her father, a doctor, had been struck off the medical registers earlier that year and imprisoned on the trumped-up charge of boycotting German pharmaceutical preparations. Because Marian’s mother was Aryan, they were allowed to keep their home, although she was hounded by the police and endured repeated house searches.

During my last week with the Nagels, Alex’s older brother, Karl, had a young SS officer to stay. Claus Buchheim was tall, blond, and blue-eyed. He was a graduate of the Hitler *Jugend* and had commanded one of the Hitler Youth Patrols. Now, aged twenty-three, Claus was a dedicated SS man. From the moment he saw Marian he could not stop looking at her.

Physically Claus and I were much alike. At a distance we might have been mistaken for brothers. I had had my nose broken in a boxing match, which gave a slight cast to my face, but otherwise we had much the same coloring, features, and build. Boxing was the only sport I was any good at, but I often wondered, sitting with gloves on, waiting for the fight before mine to end, why on earth I did it. But once in the ring I enjoyed facing up to an opponent. I was never conscious of pain, even with a torn ear, a broken nose, and split lips.

Claus, on the other hand, was not someone who would take kindly

to being put down, physically or verbally, and would avenge himself when you dropped your guard. He never stopped talking about the superiority of blood over brain, the glory of war, and the mystical connection between *Volk* and the *Führer*. No one found these topics the least bit interesting, but being a friend of Karl's we listened politely. Later on I met a lot of SS like Claus. Almost without exception they were conceited and arrogant, without imagination, and with a blind trust in Hitler.

Because the SS was at Hitler's sole disposal he did not have to account to anyone for the use to which the SS was put. One of its first tasks was the persecution of the Jews. Claus's own anti-Semitism did not surface until one evening when he joined Marian and I in the garden. It was a lovely evening, the twilight air shimmering in the afterglow of the sun. The adage of three being a crowd was apt, but we accepted his presence without comment. Claus immediately began talking about Hitler. "The *Führer* is building a new Germany and a new World. He has rebuilt the army in order to make the Fatherland strong. Today it is the warriors who rule. We Germans have a special mission for all other nations. One day those who oppose us will recognize the enemy within. They will join us to bring down the Jews. The Jews are the lice of civilized humanity. All of us, and not just the *Führer*, are Jew-haters."

I looked at Claus. He was one of those people whose lips become moist when they talk, with the humidity collecting in the corners and bursting there in tiny bubbles. Catchwords that carried the Nazis to power had assumed for Claus the status of unquestionable truths. Like millions of others, he had been seduced into identifying with Hitler's purpose: world domination, beginning with the elimination of those whose bloodline was a threat to the purity of the master race. Committed to the illusion that only ideas backed up by force can be successful, Claus was ready to open the gates to violence and terrorism, torture and concentration camps.

"And what," I asked, "will this supra-world state of yours be like?"

"Ah," he said, "nothing less than a single world empire. We are experimenting, but experimenting on a scale never dreamt of before. For the first time we are attacking the biological structure of the human

race. We have started to breed a new species of *homo sapiens*. We are eliminating the undesirable strains. We have begun the task of exterminating the gypsies; the Jews will be next. Parallel to the work of elimination we are building up a new racial aristocracy. Our Elite Guards (by which Claus meant the SS) will only be allowed to marry subject to strict eugenic criteria; the bloodline of both partners will be analyzed and submitted to a special board for approval. The next step will be the compiling of a card index for the whole nation..."

Claus must have seen me smile.

"You may smile. But not until every family is registered and its heredity known can we weed out the Jews."

Marian stopped. We all stopped. She looked at Claus and, for a moment, I thought she was going to slap his face. Then she said quietly, "I am a Jew."

Claus looked stunned. His mouth opened and then closed again. For a moment I thought he was going to apologize. But then he stiffened, gave a curt bow, and walked off. He did not speak to either of us again.

The next time I saw Claus was at Friedrichshafen, when Marian and I were escorted off the train at the German Swiss border.

2

On 1 October 1938 Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia. Marian had told me a few weeks earlier that Karl's regiment, the SS-Deutschland, had moved to the Czech border, so I knew something was afoot. Hitler justified the invasion by saying it was necessary to protect the Sudeten Germans, a German minority of less than 3 million occupying the outer rim of the Czech Republic. He had used the same argument a year earlier to arouse public support for the Anschluss. Although Hitler told the Reichstag that "Germany neither intends nor wishes to interfere in the internal affairs of Austria," he demanded that the Austrian Government lift the ban on the Austrian Nazi party and for good measure sent several armoured divisions to the Austrian border on the pretext of coming to the defense of the nationally-minded Germans in Austria.

To shore up his government von Schuschnigg called for a plebiscite to decide whether the country was in favor of an Anschluss (as Hitler declared) or a free and independent Austria. Hitler called for Schuschnigg's resignation and demanded the plebiscite be called off or he would send in the army.

Schuschnigg, in his farewell speech over radio Vienna, made a desperate attempt to set the record straight. In a voice breaking with emotion he said that German stories of disorder in Austria were lies "from A to Z" and that he had been forced to nominate Seyss-Inquart as chancellor. He ended his address with these words: "President Miklas of Austria has asked me to tell you that he has yielded to force. Because we are unwilling even in this terrible situation to permit at any price the shedding of streams of blood, we have ordered Austria's armed forces to withdraw without resistance in the event of an invasion.... And so I take leave of Austria with words of farewell which I offer from the depth of my heart—God protect Austria."

But as he spoke, motorized columns of German infantry were crossing the border.

Whatever the Germans thought about Hitler's methods, they were jubilant in the hope of seeing the old dream of a united Germany and Austria fulfilled without bloodshed. In the euphoria accompanying the annexation there was an orgy of sadism and killing. Crowds gathered to enjoy what was known as "scrubbing parties," in which Austrian Jews, forced to put on their best clothes, were made to scrub the streets with small brushes and water mixed with sulphuric acid. In Währing, one of Vienna's wealthier districts, women were made to scrub the pavements in their fur coats while Nazis stood over them and urinated on their heads.

Carl Zuckmayer, the German playwright, who was in Vienna at the time, noted in his diary that "the underworld has opened its gates and let loose its lowest, most revolting, most impure spirits. The city was transformed into a nightmare painting by Hieronymous Bosch, the air filled with the incessant, savage, hysterical screeching from male and female throats...in wild, hate-filled triumph."

Jews who could not prove their Aryan descent for eight generations were rounded up, sent to Dachau, or shot. Wives whose husbands were arrested received one of two printed slips. The first read: *The relative of...is informed herewith that he died today at Dachau Concentration Camp.* The second slip attached to a small parcel read: *To pay 150 marks for the cremation of your husband—ashes enclosed from Dachau.*

Hitler took Austria without losing a soldier. Germany not only acquired an additional 6,500,000 people and Austria's iron and timber resources, it now sat at the gateway to the Balkans, controlling the transportation and communications hub of south-eastern Europe. As an added bonus, Germany hemmed in its next victim, Czechoslovakia, on three sides.

The annexation of Austria was a warning that councils of prudence reinforce the designs of dictators unless backed up by force. It was a warning, even as Hitler aimed his guns at Prague, that was ignored. All that summer we listened to Hitler haranguing the Czechs for their supposed mistreatment of the Sudetens. He brought the crisis to a head

by calling for the cession of Sudetenland. "My patience is now at an end. Peace or war. Either Herr Benes will give the Germans their freedom, or we will go and fetch this freedom for ourselves.... We are determined! Now let Herr Benes make his choice."

Chamberlain was so alarmed by the prospect of war that he flew to Germany the next day to see Hitler. Thinking he had struck a deal, he returned to London and after talking to the French, agreed that those areas where the German population was more than 50 percent should be ceded to Germany, a decision the Czechs were forced to accept by an Anglo-French ultimatum.

On hearing that the Czechs had accepted Chamberlain's proposal, Hitler wasted no time in demanding German occupation of the entire Sudetenland. The British cabinet decided that it couldn't accept Hitler's terms and informed France that if she went to war with Germany as a result of fulfilling her treaty obligations, Britain would stand beside her. But lulled by a speech made by Hitler in which he said that after solving the Sudeten question, Germany had no more territorial demands in Europe, Chamberlain and Daladier (without any Czech representative being present) agreed that Germany should take over the Sudeten German areas. Two days later the Munich Agreement was signed without Russian agreement. As a result Russia was irretrievably alienated, giving Hitler everything he wanted.

The pact of Munich is signed, wrote General Jodel in his diary. Czechoslovakia as a power is out...The genius of the Führer and his determination not to shun even a world war have again won victory.

In just three days, without firing a shot, Hitler had acquired 11,000 square miles of territory and a network of fortifications, eight million subjects, the Skoda works (whose production of munitions surpassed the total output of British arms factories) and the gold and currency reserves of the Czech National Bank.

On their return from Munich Chamberlain and Daladier were greeted with rapture. It was left to Churchill to utter a warning. "You were given the choice between war and dishonor. You chose dishonor and you will have war." An unhappy truth confirmed by Field Marshal Keitel at Nuremberg. When asked if Hitler would have attacked Czechoslovakia if the Western Powers had stood by Prague, Keitel

replied, “Certainly not. We were not strong enough militarily. The purpose of München was to gain time and to complete the German armaments.”

Australian newspapers reported these events, but Europe was far away and the memory of Word War 1 was still very alive. It seemed impossible that just 20 years later we would go to war again. But anyone with ears to listen could hear the drums of war beating in the background.

3

When Hitler became Chancellor in 1933 his appointment created a surge of optimism for the future. The seemingly endless squabbles of national politics in Germany were over; at last something was happening. But there was more. Democracy was finished; from now on dictatorship would rule. To emphasize the point the Nazis organized a huge rally in Nuremburg. Half a million party members and 60,000 boys selected from the Hitler *Jugend* attended to hear Hitler speak. Each boy had a knapsack and a blanket roll on his shoulder and carried a knife in a sheath with the inscription *Blut und Ehre* (Blood and Honor). War prefers its victims young, and it would not be disappointed. As the flags swept by, the staffs wreathed with the green oak leaves of victory, everyone shouted wildly “*Seig Heil! Seig Heil!*” Young Germany was on the march, and young Germany looked very strong.

These were the halcyon days of the Third Reich, when it seemed as though Hitler might actually be making good his promise to create a new German utopia. The six million unemployed had found jobs in the armaments industry; the humiliating Versailles treaty had been torn up; and the German army, once a mere shadow of its former self, was again the most dangerous war machine in Europe.

With virtual control over the administration the Nazis undertook their first and most important task: Aryanizing and removing from the Jews their means for survival by taking over their businesses and appropriating their bank accounts. In Australia we were scarcely aware of German anti-Semitism until the SS unleashed *Kristal Nacht* (the Night of Broken Glass). In cities and towns all over Germany people were awakened by the noise of shattering glass and the cries of men and women being beaten to death. Organized to look like a spontaneous outburst of rage in response to the assassination of a German diplomat