Bonhoeffer vs. Nazi and Progressive Book Burning

Author : Ellis Washington

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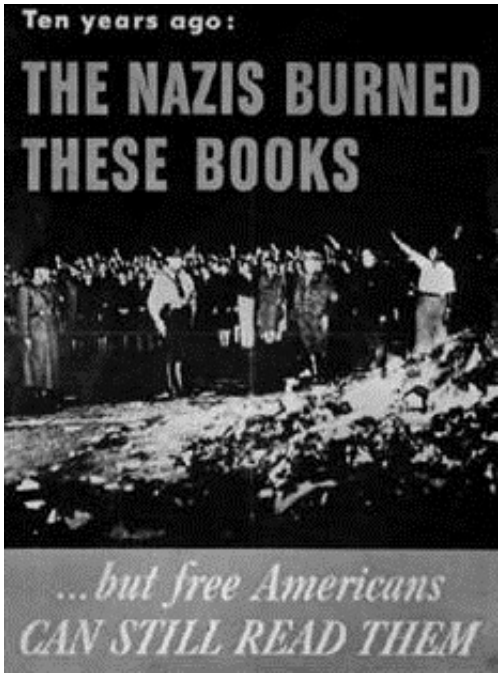

(Where books are

“Dort, wo man Bucher verbrennt, verbrennt man am Ende auch Menschen.”

burned, they will, in the end burn people, too)

–Heinrich Heine (1797-1856), German Poet

Eric Metaxas in chapter 10 of his celebrated book, “Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy,”

in a subsection called “Where Books Are Burned . . .” in dramatic fashion chronicles the rise of

Nazi book burning in early Nazi history just four months after Hitler assumed power on January

30, 1933. In May 1933, the Nazification of the German people continued in full force using two

established Nazi tactics—*Gleichschaltung* (e.g., forcing into line) which was a much discussed

idea Goring referenced at the German Christians' conference in Berlin the previous month. It

preordained that everything in German society must fall in line with the Nazi worldview

(*Weltanschauung*). This included the world of books and ideas being forced into a Nazi

worldview, or if incompatible with Nazification, then systematically destroyed.

Metaxas demonstrated the collective angst all Germans of good faith had like Bonhoeffer over

the growing Nazi menace after Hitler came to power in 1933:

Young and hitherto wholly unknown medical trainees came, as representatives of the Party, to

suggest to the heads of hospitals that they immediately dismiss the Jewish doctors. Some

allowed themselves to be persuaded. Any suggestions that such matters came under the

jurisdiction of the Ministry and not of the Party were met with threats. The Dean tried to

persuade faculty members to join the Party collectively. His attempt was foiled by individual

refusals. Nor did the Ministry at first make any move to meet the demand for the dismissal of

Jewish assistants. But doctors in individual hospitals were constantly spied upon to discover

their attitude towards the Party.

Doesn’t that above-passage have a ring of familiarity within American culture and society in the

Age of Obama (2009 – present), particularly the spying aspects and how Obama is hell bent on

infusing a militant progressive worldview throughout America? Early in Hitler’s rise to power it

was the college students who were the most zealous Hitlerites, mindless fanatics whom an

earlier fascist tyrant (Lenin) would call “useful idiots.” It was young, German college students

who gleefully organized and participated in book burnings in cities and towns across Germany.

Compare these anti-intellectual dupes to today’s youth who voted for Obama in numbers higher

than almost every other demographic which is why Obama speaks on college campuses almost

on a weekly basis. Think of the chaos caused by the so-called “99-Percenters” movement in

New York where in Sept. 2011 when they shutdown parts of the city around Wall Street

protesting free market capitalism while wearing and using all of the products of modern society

from designer clothes, tents, toothpaste, soap, toilets, to cars, trucks, laptops, cell phones,

iPhones, Facebook, Twitter, etc…, all inventions only made possible within a free market

capitalist system.

Long before the rise of Hitler and the Nazis, anti-Semitism had occurred for decades amid

German universities led by legions of impressionable, racist, fanatical students, but now they

expressed it officially. That spring on May 10, 1933 the German Students Association

organized a celebration called an “Action against the un-German Spirit” where thousands of

students gathered in every university town across Germany. From Heidelberg to Tubingen to

Freiburg to Gottingen, they marched in torchlight parades and were then stirred into frenzied

passion as Nazi officials ranted and raved about the glories of what the courageous young men

and women of Germany were engaged in. At midnight the whole thing thundered to

ostentatious effect in a great *Sauberung* (cleansing) where massive bonfires were lit and into

which the students threw thousands of books including those by such “un-German”

authors” as Franz Werfel, Max Brod, Stefan Zweig,Helen Keller, Jack London, H.G. Wells,

Albert Einstein, Thomas Mann, Heinrich Heine, Sigmund Freud, the latter who echoed Heine’s

warning of German fascism 100 years earlier—“Only our books? In earlier times they would

have burned us with them.”

In Berlin the torchlight procession conducted by Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's Reich Minister of

Propaganda, began at the Hegelplatz behind Berlin University, to burn the "anti-German" books

and as Goebbels stood before the smoldering mountain of books burning he ranted and raved

to the thirty thousand enraged German students; his diabolical words echoed into the darkness:

“German men and women! The age of arrogant Jewish intellectualism is now at an end! . . .

You are doing the right thing at this midnight hour—to consign to the flames the unclean spirit of

the past. This is a great, powerful, and symbolic act. . . . Out of these ashes the phoenix of a

new age will arise. . . . O Century! O Science! It is a joy to be alive!”

Metaxas explained the intoxicating imagery behind Nazi book burning ceremonies: “As with so much else in the Third Reich, the scene had an undeniably macabre aspect to it: the midnight bonfire feeding like a succubus on the noble thoughts and words of great man and women.

Goebbels, the propagandist, well knew that to stage a torchlight parade, followed by a bonfire

and invoked the gods of the German *Volk* (people), who represented strength and in any sense;

indeed it was very much meant to be anti-Christian, though it wouldn’t do to say so, since most

of those present might have balked to hear such a thing, though they well felt it. The torches

and the drums and the procession were meant to create an atmosphere of ominousness and

fortunes of the Christian faith, but stood in fundamental opposition to them and to the

monotheistic religion of the despised Jews.”

I quoted Heinrich Heine’s famous words about the book burnings in the epigram above which

today is inscribed at the Opernplatz as a memorial of this horrific ritual against freedom of ideas

and thought. However, another passage from Heine's works is possibly more uncannily

prophetic of what would take place in Germany 100 years later. They are the concluding words

of this 1834 book, *Religion and Philosophy in Germany*.

Christianity—and that is its greatest merit—has somewhat mitigated that brutal German love of

war, but it could not destroy it. Should that subduing talisman, the cross, be shattered, the

frenzied madness of the ancient warriors, that insane Berserk rage of which Nordic bards have

spoken and sung so often, will once more burst into flame. This talisman is fragile, and the day

will come when it will collapse miserably. Then the ancient stony gods will rise from the

forgotten debris and rub the dust of a thousand years from their eyes, and finally Thor with his

giant hammer will jump up and smash the Gothic cathedrals. . . . Thought precedes action as

lightning precedes thunder. . . . [W]hen you hear a crashing such as never before has been

heard in the world’s history, then you know that the German thunderbolt has fallen at last. At

that uproar the eagles of the air will drop dead, and lions in the remotest deserts of Africa will

hide in their royal dens. A play will be performed in Germany which will make the French

Revolution look like an innocent idyll.

Heine was equally prescient to compare the French Revolution to what would be a future

unknown German fascist regime, spewing nationalist and neo-paganism hatred that would rise

up 100 years later—we know them now as Hitler and the Nazis. This tells me that history

(including Hitler, the Nazis, the Holocaust, and book burnings) doesn’t happen in a vacuum.

For example, history has repeatedly demonstrated that it was the French Revolution

(1789-99), which was the first totalitarian revolution, the genesis of modern totalitarianism and

indeed the spiritual foundation for the Russian Communist, Italian Fascist and German Nazi

revolutions which all are derivative from Leftist politics, a worldview based on humanism and

evolution atheism.

Nazification was Hitler and the Nazis successful attempt to make all of Germany a Nazi State

(forcing into line)

and every German citizen a Nazi by using proven tactics like *Gleichschaltung*

and *Weltanschauung* (Nazi worldview). Similarly under today's Progressive Revolution since

the 1850s the Democrat Socialist Party has totally embraced Machiavelli's "the end justify the

means," "Might makes right" or as Lord Acton wrote of Machiavelli, "State [and federal] power

is not bound by moral law" which can only be achieved through the progressive lie: Separation

of Church and State.

Book burnings then, Obamacare now, were simply dramatic means to achieve these socialist

ends.

The picture in the caption above was perhaps written around 1943 and says that, “Ten years

ago the Nazis burned these books… but in America we can still read them.” Although this

statement tried to distinguish America from Nazi Germany, it is only partially true today. Why?

Because while in a *de jure* (legal) sense America today doesn't burn books? however, in a *de facto* (unofficial) sense through our book publishing industry, our literary agent industry, our media, our education system, our politics, our legal system and throughout culture and society, there exists an existential, *de facto* book burning *Zeitgeist* which happens on a much greater

scale by the Democrat Socialist Party today which the Nationalist Socialist Party could only

dream of achieving 80 years ago under Hitler and the Nazis. In modern times todays' Leftists

creates this book burning atmosphere by deconstructing, perverting and destroying

conservative ideas particularly those out of the Judeo-Christian tradition of intellectual thought…

without lighting one match or igniting one torch. Hitler would be pleased!

Only in such an anti-God, anti-intellectual society as America has devolved into during the Age

of Progressivism (1860 - present) and now in the Age of Obama (2009 - present) are Heine's

prophetic words tantamount to those of Moses, Isaiah and St. Paul when he wrote, "Where

books (ideas) are burned, they will, in the end burn people, too.”