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TYCOONS and TYRANT

*German Industry from
Hitler to Adenauer*



HENRY REGNERY COMPANY
Chicago 1954

can easily be offset by the equally important names of Krupp von Bohlen, Paul Reusch and son Hermann, Peter Klöckner, Ernst Poensgen, Heinrich Bierwes, director-general of Mannesmann, and Ludwig Kastl, none of whom helped place Hitler in power. In industry, as everywhere else, the situation cannot be described in the simple terms of black and white; there were many shades in between.

Very little authentic information, for instance, is available concerning the thousands of little industrial concerns that flourished in Germany. Their importance today is seen from the fact that in the present Federal German Republic roughly one-half of the industrial workers are employed in small-sized individual plants and factories and only the other half in the heavy industries centering in Westphalia and the Rhineland. The Western Allied governments were apparently so determined about breaking up the large German coal, iron, steel, and chemical combines, and to prove that their leaders were criminals, that little attention was paid to the smaller concerns.

To what extent the "little fellows" paid money into Nazi coffers will in all likelihood never become known. Nor has the story been authentically told as to the extent of foreign aid given the movement. In an open letter published in Rudolf Pechel's monthly magazine, *Deutsche Rundschau*, in July 1947 Former Chancellor Heinrich Brüning made the following statement:

One of the chief factors which determined the rise of Hitler . . . was the fact that he received large sums of money from abroad in 1923 and later.

It is generally believed that Sir Henry Deterding, the Dutch oil king, who owned an estate in Mecklenburg and supported all anticommunist movements, helped

Hitler in a big way. It is alleged he gave as much as ten million marks in the course of the years. I have been unable to find concrete evidence to prove this point.¹⁰ While I was AP correspondent in Berlin it was further rumored that Lord Rothermere helped Hitler's foreign press chief, Ernst F. S. ("Putzi") Hanfstaengl, financially, apparently to build up his public relations section. But here, again, proof is lacking.

Dr. Brüning declined to elaborate on his 1947 statement, as he does not desire at this stage of international negotiations to introduce a further controversial element. It is known, however, that he expects within another year to finish his memoirs. His revelations concerning the sources of Hitler's income before 1933, on which he as the then chief of the German government can speak more authoritatively perhaps than any other living being, may well prove sensational. For, in addition to making the charge of foreign aid to Hitler, he also said in his Open Letter:

The financing of the Nazi Party, partly by persons of whom one would least have expected that they would support it, is a chapter in itself. I have never spoken publicly about it, but in the interests of Germany it may become necessary to do so.

Certain bankers, especially, according to Brüning, helped Hitler. Referring to a group of influential people who wanted Hindenburg to include the Hitlerites in the government in 1932, Brüning wrote:

This latter group included a number of bankers who exerted a special influence upon the president. . . . At least one of them, it was known, had since October 1928 lavishly

10. Walter Görlitz and Herbert A. Quint in their *Adolf Hitler—eine Biographie* (Stuttgart, Steingrüben Verlag, 1952), p. 279, merely refer to Deterding as one of a number of financial backers.