The warfare of black humor: anti-Nazi cartoons from the 1930s and 1940s

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Introduction

Have you ever wondered why it is possible to view bulks of Nazi filth on the WWW but so little well done, intelligent and humorous contemporary pictures kicking the butts of this scum? Well, we did. As a consequence, we browsed a collection of such material accessible to us and selected the cartoons we like best to do our own little anti-Nazi exhibition.
The warfare of these splendid artist did not start in 1939 but as early as 1933. They tried to draw the attention of their fellow countrymen to the infamy of the Nazi system and sometimes showed an astonishing far-sightedness about the future course of events. Thus they fought a war against a regime that was founded upon hatred and inhumanity long before politicians and soldiers did and later contributed to their countries spirit of resistance and steadfastness by putting a grim smile on the faces of their viewers.

Disclaimer: By displaying these cartoons we do not mean to violate anyone's copyright. As mentioned before our only intention in doing so is to put some positive visual counterbalance on the internet. Anyway, if some copyright owner honestly not known to us yet will show up opposing the presentation of one picture, we will remove it instantly. Also we discourage strongly downloading and distributing these graphic files.
Enjoy some stunning works of caricature!

March 2003
RIJO

An early cartoon by Collin Kirby. The original caption is bilingual: "The Pyromaniac (Der Brandstifter)".

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A Dutch cartoon published in June, 1933 entitled "De Compagnons" (the pals). The writing on the piece of paper the death is holding reads "Zelfmoord" (suicide), which as well as the hanged and shot men in the background is an allusion to the consequences of the Nazis' seizure of power in Germany.

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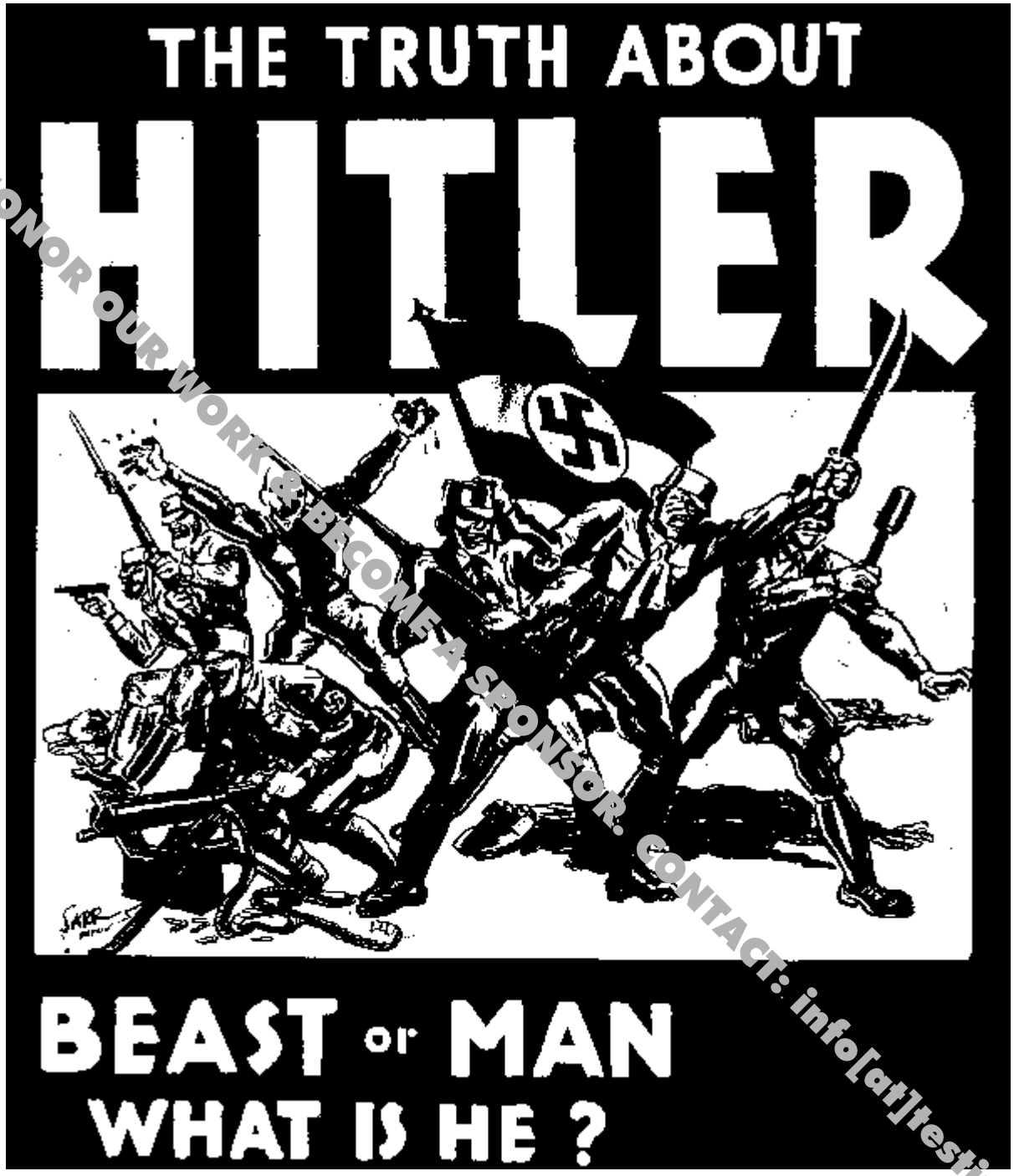
Hitler as the disguised death, the Swastika combined from bloody scythes, the Nazi Storm Troopers as an army of marching skeletons: The imagination of American artist Georges in April 1933.



The cover of a booklet by a cartoonist using the alias "Sarr Berlin".

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A picture from the booklet "The Truth About Hitler: Beast Or Man, What Is He?" by cartoonist "Sarr Berlin". The caption reads: "Barred Doors Do Not Keep Nazis From The Sanctity Of Jewish Homes. Maiming of Aged and Infirm and Assaulting Of Young Jewish Girls."

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DAS WAHRE GESICHT DES NATIONAL-SOZIALISMUS

The headline reads "The true face of Nazism." The cartoonist Burr (?) might have had a communist background, because the "Made in Wall Street" writing on the axe. The etching is nevertheless impressive.

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"Local Boy Makes Good": Hitler who actually was no paperhanger but a less than mediocre painter, 'papering' brutally his country of birth with Swastikas. Jerry Doyle's graphical allusion to the German occupation of Austria, March 1938.

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Dealing with domestic problems: The original headline of this cartoon by Jay Jackson is: "The Same Old Menace In A New Garb". It was published in March 1938.

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Orr's clear sighted vision in March 1939 of what was to come: Hitler is facing a phalanx of barrels and bayonets in his quest to expand the Reich to the East.

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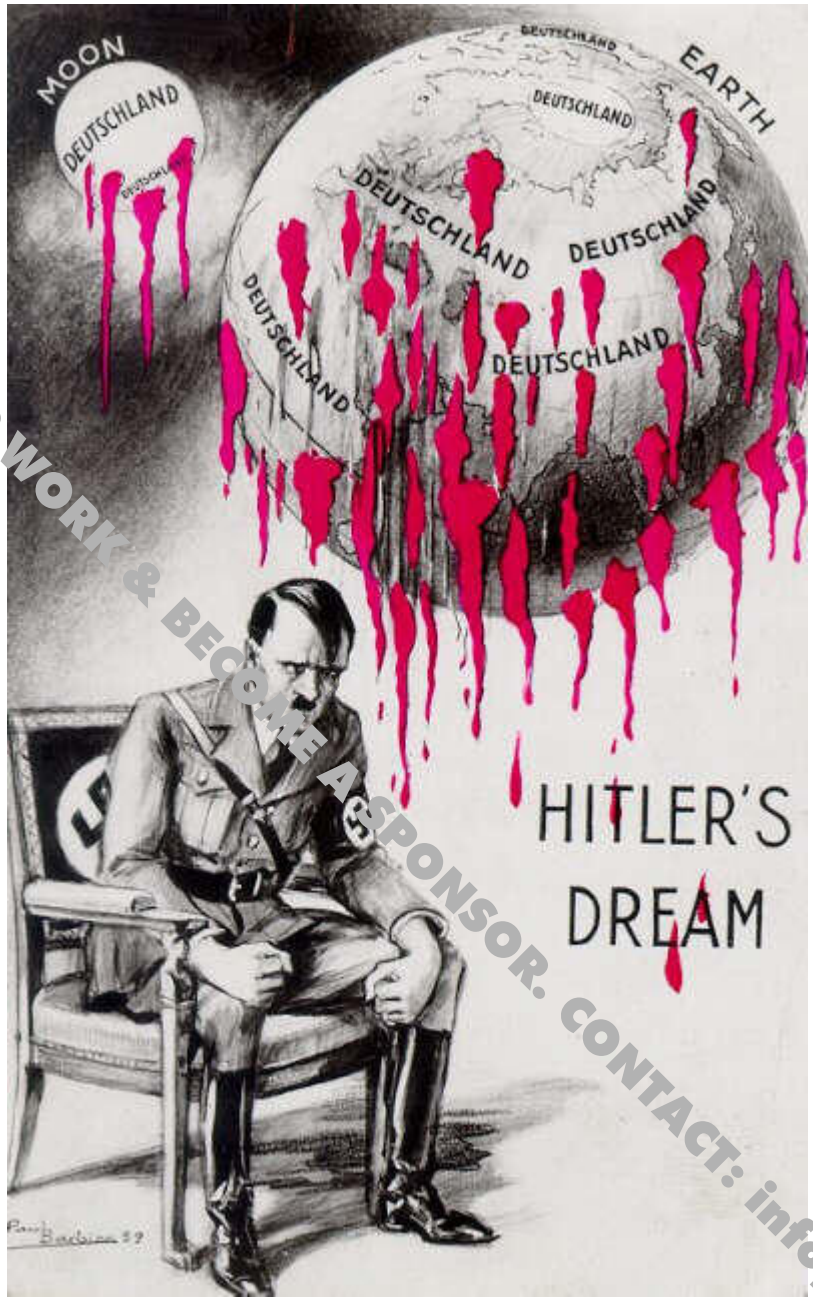

French propaganda postcard by Paul Barbier, 1939

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PREPARING FOR AN OPERATION

Another satirical prophecy from March 1940 by Daniel Bishop: The non-aggression pact between Germany and the Soviet Union was nothing but a prelude to the exterminatory war in the East.

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Tiny Japan in giant German tailored Blitz boots: Bruce Russell's summary of the situation in East Asia, August 1940.

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Published in November 1940. The caption of this cartoon by artist Thomas reads: "The new designer in Paris".

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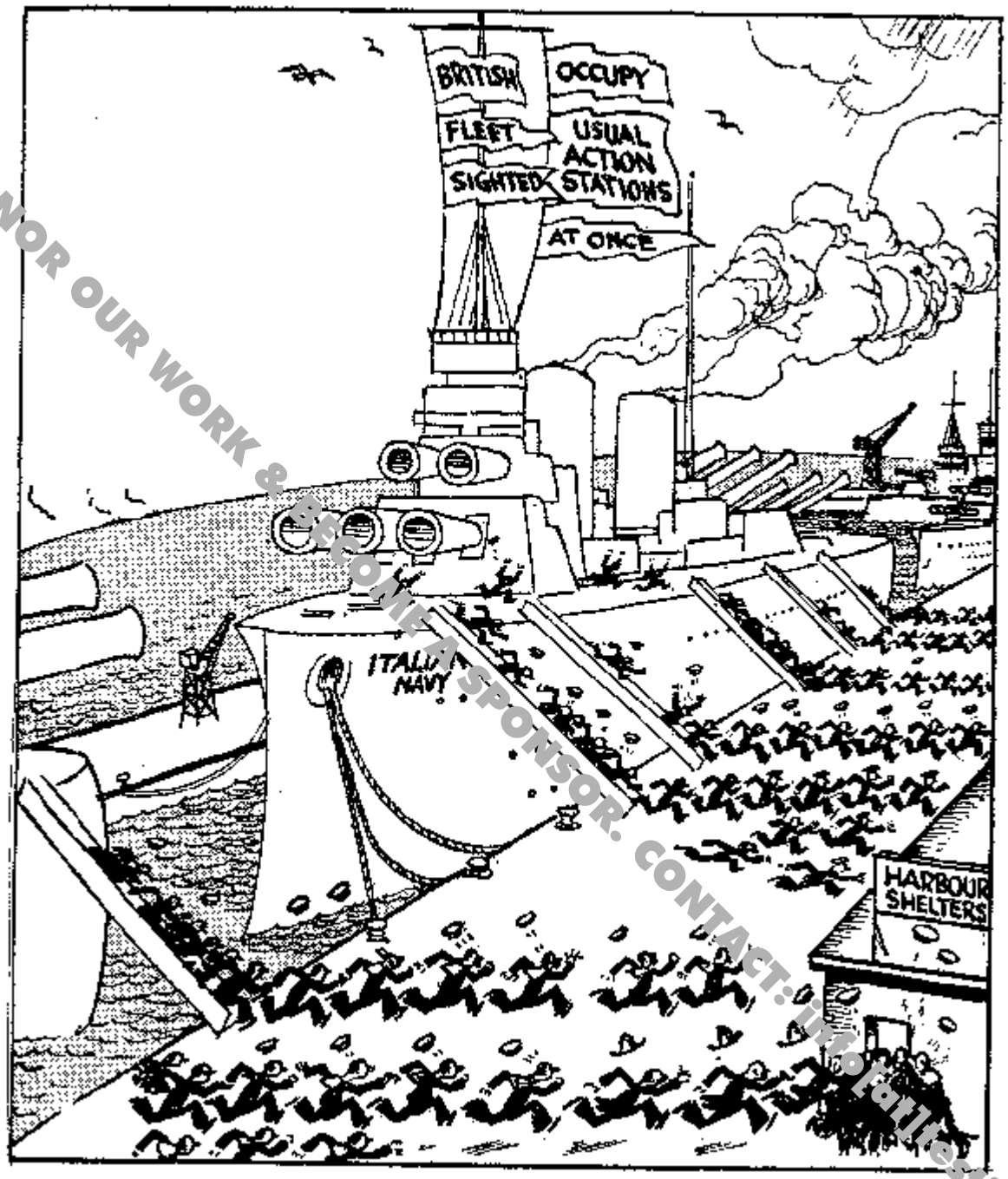

Supposed Italian naval bravery as captioned by an anonymous British cartoonist in November 1940

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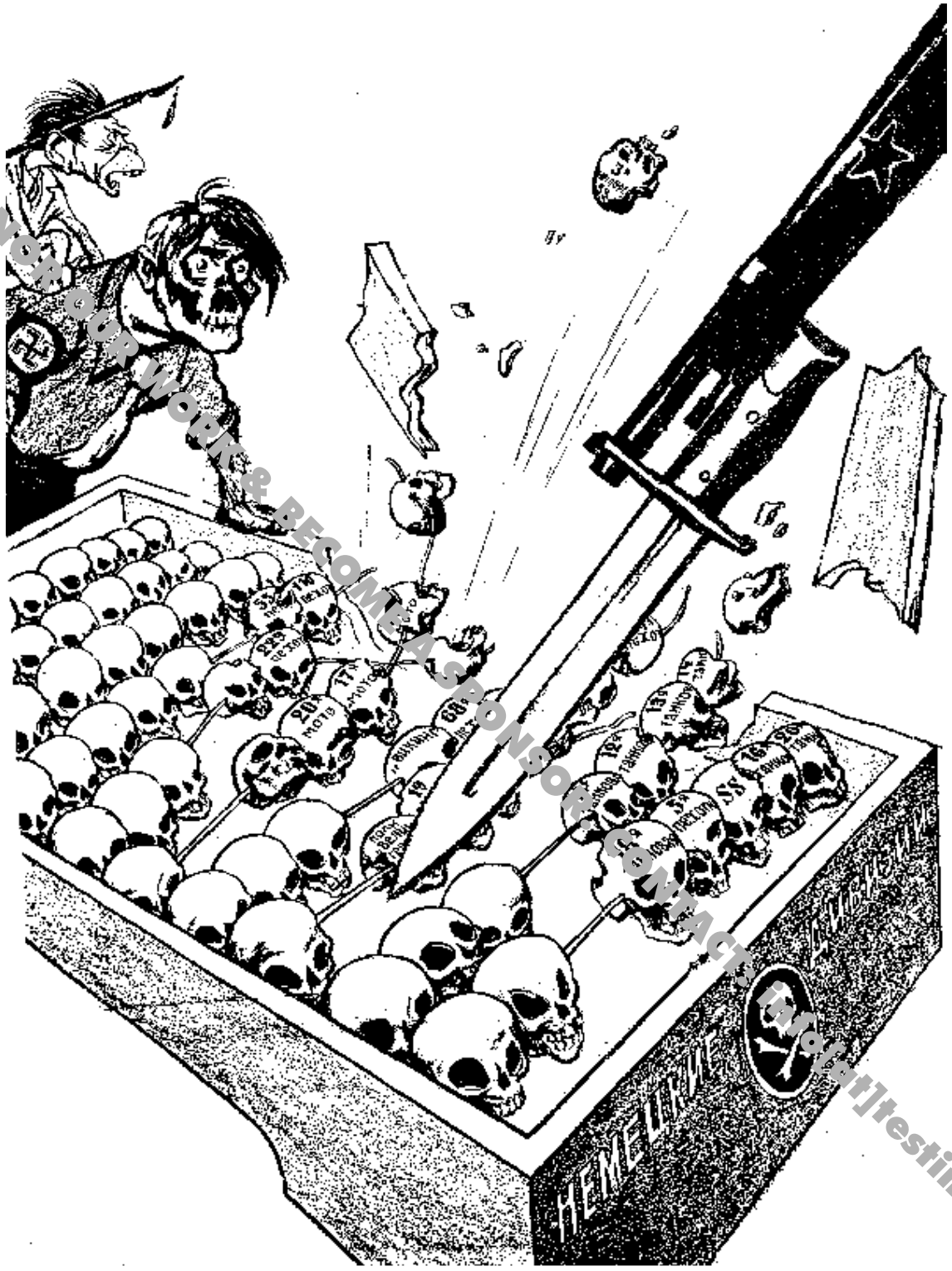

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Soviet artist I. Semenov's drastic allusion from the fall of 1941 to German losses on the eastern front: The skulls are marked with the names and numbers of German units, the inscription on the abacus of death means translated "German Divisions". The picture of German chief propagandist Goebbels as a crazy monkey on Hitler's back was a marvelous idea.