4-2015

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Recommended Citation

Chanin, Joshua (2015) "Sinking into the Dark Abyss: Adolf Hitler's Final Years, February 1943–April 1945," *Armstrong Undergraduate Journal of History*. Vol. 5 : Iss. 1 , Article 4.
DOI: 10.20429/aujh.2015.050104
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/aujh/vol5/iss1/4>

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Sinking into the Dark Abyss:
Adolf Hitler's Final Years, February 1943–April 1945

Joshua Chanin

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Nazi Germany started with one man, and would end with one man: Adolf Hitler. At first, from the end of 1939 to the early months of 1943, World War II seemed to favor the Germans; under the direction of their dictator, Adolf Hitler, the Nazis had conquered most of Europe, including the regions of the Low Countries, the Balkans, Poland, Denmark, Norway and France. After the overwhelming success of the *Blitzkrieg* military strategy, the Nazis were soon spreading their hatred and anti-semitic views across the face of Europe. It had seemed that Hitler was unconquerable, and that the Allied powers had no chance in defeating this great monster. Adolf Hitler had rallied the people to his side proving his point that the German people needed to rebuild themselves, and expand their country outwards to provide “*lebensraum*” (living space) for the new Aryan race. By the year 1943 however, over four years into the war, his vision of a “thousand year Reich” was falling apart. German cities were being bombed by the British and Americans air forces, destroying civilian lives, wrecking important transportation depots and rail tracks, and breaking the spirit of the war at home. Hitler's main European ally, Italy, had surrendered to the Allied forces, opening up a new front for the German people to defend. German soldiers were dying on the Eastern front in rapid numbers, prompting Hitler to recruit younger and inexperienced boys to the war effort, as the Soviets pushed the Nazis

back furiously, and caused rage and devastation in the German heartland. The Normandy landings, which would happen in the summer of 1944, brought about panic in the eyes of the German people; they now had to endure the destruction of war on both sides. Along with the shrinking of his empire, Hitler would also be pulled down an uncontrollable hole himself. The overall health of a fit, loud, and impressive world leader, who at one time had conquered nearly all of Europe himself, would decline rapidly. His past grandeur ideas would disappear before him, as his enemies would speed up the destruction of his Nazi destiny. His trustworthy generals would eventually lose faith in him, and his decisions would be looked upon from all corners with suspicion and craziness. His mood would alter, tantrums would flare up, and the great, strong-willed courageous German leader of the past would be overtaken by tiredness and desperation. With defeat looming on the horizon, a frail Hitler would soon sink into a gloomy dark abyss during the final two years and five months of his “great war,” facing many periods of exhaustion, addictions to drugs, contracting illness, and many crushing blows, which would hurt his heart and faith, all due to the rapid decline of his empire; and as he lost his psychological mind, walked into the unknown, and gave random unexplained orders of attack, he unexpectedly pulled the innocent country he had grown to love and adore down with him.

In the last months of World War II, Hitler’s rash absolute orders and weak decisions in order to keep Germany alive were fueled by the mistakes he had made three years before. In the summer of 1941, the dictator decided to make the most important tactical move of the war, and invade the Soviet Union, in what would be called *Operation Barbarossa*. After his failure to capture Britain, Hitler began to follow his ambition in expanding his empire into the east. This was a prime opportunity; he believed that the

Soviets would succumb to the sharp pinching assaults of *Blitzkrieg*, and hand over another quick victory for the Nazis. Hitler knew that he would have to invade and march upon Moscow with rapid descent, before the dreaded Russian winter set in. His closest advisors, including Albert Speer and Otto Ernst Remer, warned Hitler about the impending future if the operation did not go to plan, due to the fact that he would be opening up another front, thus separating German supplies and soldiers, whom were now going to be needed on all corners of Europe. In his book, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*, historian Sir Alan Bullock elaborates on this ignorance saying that, “he (Hitler) was convinced that the war in the east would be over in two months, or three at most. He not only said this, but acted on it, refusing to make any preparations for a winter campaign.”¹ Hitler ignored everyone, and went along with his plan. During the operation, Hitler was being drugged up on vitamins, and many other assorted minerals and tablets, in order to keep his body in check. Many scientists have said that these drugs might have influenced the leader’s decisions. The famous Nazi, who was the only one from his party to say “sorry” to the victims of the mass genocide of the Holocaust, Albert Speer recalled Hitler’s oblivious decisions: “...afterwards, strong Soviet forces had broken through the positions of Rumanian divisions. Hitler tried at first to explain and belittle this disaster by making slurring remarks on the fighting qualities of his allies.... The Soviet troops soon began overwhelming German divisions as well....”² Hitler was very singled-minded when it came down to the *Barbarossa* plans; he made many excuses but did not put in the right effort in order to straighten out previous mistakes. The operation did not go accordingly to Hitler’s grand plan; the German soldiers soon found themselves stuck in

¹ Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study of Tyranny*, revised edition (New York: HarperCollins Publishing, 1961), 651.

² Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich* (London: The Macmillan Company, 2011), 247.

the snow, with little protection from the cold. Being repeatedly told by his generals that the German army could not advance any further in the winter of 1941, Hitler continually said that retreat was not an option. He was not listening to the advice of his generals anymore, which led to much confusion among the government officials on how the war should be run, and led to a chain of future defeats.

The Eastern Campaign continued under strain, and the German front began to crumble; in the early months of 1943, the Nazis and Hitler were handed a defeat at the Battle of Stalingrad. After 162 days of fighting, the Germans lost many experienced fighters, who froze in the cold and died of pneumonia, or were shot down by the Soviets. Hermann Göring, among some of Hitler's other closest generals, who were personally close to their leader at first, now criticized Hitler for the poor choices he had made during the operation. European historian, Ian Kershaw writes in his article that Hitler "was unbureaucratic in the extreme, remained aloof from the daily business of government and was uninterested in complex matters of detail."³ Under the internal pressure from his staff, and the external stress from the emotional public, who had thought that their leader was once unconquerable, Hitler did not focus on the finer details of his plans, which would cause him to lose the Eastern Campaign. Personal secretary to the Führer, Traudl Junge in a 2001 interview recalled how Stalingrad changed everything: "In February '43, after Stalingrad, things were really quite different.... The atmosphere in the Führer's headquarters was very oppressive..."⁴ Junge remembered that no one in the bunker was allowed to talk about the war with the Führer. The Battle of Stalingrad is considered by

³ Ian Kershaw, "'Working towards the Führer.' Reflections on the Nature of Hitler's Dictatorship," *Contemporary European History* 2, no. 1, (1993): 112.

⁴ "Traudl Junge Interview," YouTube, accessed November 2, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3I0pm14cRU>.

many historians as the turning point of the war; it led to a chain of events and many other defeats, all due to the wild, disillusioned plans Hitler had in order to hold onto all the pieces of his empire even when the situation seemed hopeless; and his country would slowly become crushed and fall into the hands of his enemies, leaving the dictator to descend into the depths of sadness and the cold darkness.

Hitler's Nazi empire was attacked by another huge wave of fighting in the summer of 1944, when Allied forces landed on the Normandy Beaches of France in a huge operation that would be called the *D-Day* invasions. Hitler had already planned and implemented the building of an extensive defensive network of gun outposts, and many deadly beach obstacles from the west coast of France all the way up to the shores of Norway. This "Atlantic Wall" was going to defend the new German empire from threats in the Atlantic Ocean Hitler once stated. Unfortunately this protective "wall" was breached, and the invasion could have been prevented if Hitler had been aware of his surroundings. Historian R.G.L. Waite writes that "throughout his life, Hitler flirted with failure and involved himself unnecessarily in situations that were fraught with danger to himself and his movement."⁵ If the dictator had focused more on the war effort, then this Allied campaign could have been stopped. Many scientists and historians today have predicted that the German leader could have had Parkinson's disease as early as 1943. Author and historian, Sebastian Haffner notes about Hitler's early warning signs of the disease, "his hand might shake, but the grip of that shaking hand was still, or again, sudden and deadly."⁶ This disease takes over the nervous system and cripples the brain. The tremors Hitler suffered on his left side, and the difficulty he had in walking suggests

⁵ R.G.L. Waite, "Adolf Hitler's Guilt Feelings: A Problem in History and Psychology," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 1, no. 8, (1971): 240.

⁶ Sebastian Haffner, *The Meaning of Hitler* (New York City: Thirteenth Printing, 2004), 151.

that these are signs that the dictator might have had Parkinson's in his lifetime.⁷

Parkinson's disease also makes a person unaware of what is actually happening, because the brain is too weak to function at maximum capacity. When the Allied forces stormed the beaches of Normandy, Hitler, already in this critical condition, merely saw the invasion as a small diversion to a future, much larger invasion waiting to happen. Speer recorded that Hitler had predicted that the enemies would strike the port city of Pas de Calais instead. Hitler had eight panzer tank divisions in reserve and on call on that fateful day in June 1944. In the end however, because he only believed in his theory and listened to no one else, he decided to keep all but two of his reserves in the countryside. The attack at Calais did not happen, and by the time Hitler had risen up from his sleep in the afternoon as his generals were not allowed to disturb him, the Allied forces had taken the beaches and were marching across the fields of France. Dr. Leonard Heston reinforces that, "...a symptomatic Parkinson syndrome secondary to the brain damage or some action of the myriad drugs Hitler was taking provides a plausible explanation of Hitler's Parkinsonian disorder."⁸ Parkinson's disease had kept the German leader from being aware that the *D-Day* invasions were as significant as they actually were; his faults and the mistake in letting the event pass by without any hesitation, or letting his generals call the defensive orders themselves led to the start of the end of Nazi Germany guided by a sick and oblivious-minded leader.

⁷ Recent evidence and findings about the disease from the *Parkinson's Disease Foundation* provides light to the myth that Hitler could have had Parkinson's by stating that, "... Parkinson's disease is a progressive disease... some people with Parkinson's only have symptoms on one side of the body for many years... many people experience tremor as their primary symptom." See "Parkinson's Disease Symptoms," Parkinson's Disease Foundation, last modified November, 2014, accessed December 2, 2014, <http://www.pdf.org/symptoms>.

⁸ Leonard L. Heston, "Nuremburg Project," *Rutgers Journal of Law and Religion* 12, no. 1, (2010): 138.

Embarrassed by the defeat on the Normandy beaches and the huge upset from the Russians at Stalingrad the year earlier, Hitler began seeing his closest generals less frequently. Speer noted that Hitler began to pull away from the outside world and reality. Instead of eating lunch and dinner with his advisors, the dictator refrained from talking about the war any further in his private life, and ate his meals with his secretaries in his private quarters. Junge recalls that Hitler was slowly isolating himself from his inner circle and spending more time alone, or only with his mistress, Eva Braun. She said in her interview that “the Führer rarely saw any of his military group outside of cabinet meetings after the Normandy landings of ’44.... We were not allowed to talk about the war with him during dinner or for a cup of evening tea.... All those operations were kept very secret and out of our view....”⁹ Hitler did not want people to talk about the harsh effects of the war in front of his face. According to Speer, he did not want people telling him about the mistakes he had made that had put Germany in the uncomfortable position of losing. Historian Andreas Dorpalen notes, “....in embittered isolation he (Hitler) began now in his mind to replan and reorder the world which had rejected him....”¹⁰ Hitler made fewer public appearances. As recalled by Rochus Misch, Joseph Goebbels, Hitler’s right-hand man once said that this was due to the fact that the presence of the old depleted Führer, whose country was being stripped from its bearings after defeats, would suggest the idea to the German people that their leader was incapable of winning the war for them after all. Waite writes, “thus it was Hitler who took the initiative of global war he could not conceivably win... in the end, as he had done so often in his life, he ran

⁹ YouTube, “Traudl Junge Interview.”

¹⁰ Andreas Dorpalen, “Hitler: Twelve Years after,” *The Review of Politics* 19, no. 1, (1957): 490.

away and hid, this time in his air-raid shelter in Berlin.”¹¹ As his health slowly turned for the worse, enabling Parkinson’s disease to take over the body, and impairing his judgment and leadership, Hitler’s poor choices influenced Germany’s downward path to demolition, as the dictator began to slowly pull away from those closest to him and the general public, keeping himself away from the sheer embarrassment and suspicion.

By the spring of 1945, Hitler’s physical health, concealed away from the public view, had declined rapidly. While he was still oblivious to the fact that his forces were losing on both fronts, and having imaginary plans for a fierce Nazi comeback, the war seemed to be looming to a decisive end. As the Nazi Empire was being crushed, Hitler himself was receiving the blows of mistakes, defeats, and stress, as his body slowly depleted, and drove itself into the grave. While he was stocking Hitler’s Berlin bunker with food in the final months, SS physician Ernst-Günther Schenck recalled that the fifty six year old dictator “was a living corpse, a dead soul. His spine was hunched, his shoulder blades protruded from his bent back, and he collapsed his shoulders like a turtle.... I was looking into the eyes of death.”¹² The once strong-willed, handsome leader had turned into the hunched-back devil. Hitler did not have the same outward expression he had portrayed when he was first appointed the German chancellor in 1933; his physical stance was considerably different and shocking. Robert Payne notes in his book, *The Life and Death of Adolf Hitler*, that Heinz Guderian, a German general who was successful in the Polish and Russian campaigns was, “visiting Hitler shortly after Stalingrad, and observed that he had lost his self-assurance, his speech had grown

¹¹ Waite, “Adolf Hitler’s Guilt Feelings,” 240-241.

¹² “Der Fartenführer: The Story of Hitler’s Illnesses,” Neatorama, last modified March 24, 2014, accessed November 6, 2014, <http://www.neatorama.com/2014/03/24/Der-Fartenfhrer-The-Story-of-Hitlers-Health/>.

hesitant, his walk had become an awkward shuffle, and his left hand trembled.”¹³ The dictator had problems walking; his knees were beginning to give up and cripple on him. Those closest to him, working in his bunker including Speer, noted that Hitler walked with a slow and halting shuffle, like a man many years older. The dictator even had problems catching his breath when he staggered along to events; he could not go a few steps without grabbing hold of a rail, a wall, or even another person for support. Hitler also had problems with tremors (probably due to the large amounts of stress befallen upon him), which caused much suspicion among his closest advisors, including SS officers, Heinrich Himmler and Hermann Fegelein, on how longer their leader could be in the ruling position of their beloved country. Dr. Theodor Morell, Hitler’s personal physician once noted in his diary that “patient A (Hitler) has been acting very strange these days from when I last saw him.... His left arm has succumbed to trembling, and his left hand jerks uncontrollably.....”¹⁴ These tremors progressively got worse over January 1945, in which Dr. Morell saw that Hitler had struggles lifting his food up to his mouth, and his uniform would get covered with stains. An aide would have to pull a chair out for Hitler at every meal, for his trembling hands made it impossible to do many daily tasks on his own. Hitler also struggled signing his name on important documents, and on many occasions, he had to use a rubber stamp to hash out his signature. When reading documents, it was noted by Karl Dönitz, one of Germany’s greatest naval commanders in the war that the dictator needed a magnifying glass to see small print, probably due to his eyesight weakening. Junge remembers that Hitler had trouble staying healthy due to his confinement in the chancellery bunker in the last months, and his inability to go outside

¹³ Robert Payne, *The Life and Death of Adolf Hitler* (New York: Dorset Press, 2011), 475.

¹⁴ “High Hitler,” YouTube, accessed November 8, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJ_1Acw5I3Y.

due to Soviet artillery bombardments; in her interview she said that “he had to cope with a very unhealthy life... far too little fresh air and far too little exercise...”¹⁵ Hitler’s refusal to do heavy exercise, in addition to his unhealthy diet of sugars and sweets (according to Winifred Wagner, the German chancellor had at least seven teaspoons of sugar in every cup of tea he drank) led to the spiral downfall of his physical health. In his last months of power, Adolf Hitler’s physical conditions rapidly declined, and the struggle to conduct daily routines within his offices, and the difficulty in gaining trust from his closest advisors who saw him merely as a shrunken figurehead under a cloud of suspicion, evolved into the final breaking point for the German national government and one of the greatest leaders of all time.

Influenced by the disastrous defeats Germany was having, Adolf Hitler’s psychological health also quickly became broken in disarray, as angry outbursts became common within the Fhrer’s headquarters. In the final two years, the dictator had too many burdens on his back to control. Albert Speer would state in his memoirs, that he noticed that Hitler wanted more control over his army as defeats were becoming more common. This proved to be disastrous. Speer puts “.... he regularly attended to an enormous daily mass of work. Whereas in the past he had been known to let others work for him, he now assumed more and more responsibility for details.”¹⁶ Hitler’s generals would sometimes go around their leader’s plans, because in a majority of the instances, Hitler did not know what he was talking about, and was oblivious to the actual situations. When the leader found out about these conspiracies, he would flare up into tantrums, which could’ve lasted for a few minutes to numerous hours at a time. Bullock writes in

¹⁵ YouTube, “Traudl Junge Interview.”

¹⁶ Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 293.

his biography, “the questioning of his (Hitler’s) assumptions or of his facts rattled him and threw him out of his stride....”¹⁷ These fits of screaming, uncontrollable rage happened more frequently as Nazi Germany reached its final days. Speer also mentioned about Hitler’s changing attitude: “...overwork and isolation led to a peculiar state of petrification and rigor. He suffered from spells of mental torpor and was permanently caustic and irritable. Earlier, he had made decisions with almost sportive ease; now, he had to force them out of his exhausted brain...”¹⁸ Many of Hitler’s closest circle, including Martin Bormann, the dictator’s private secretary, recalled that everyone would get panicky at the times of the anger outbursts because in a majority of times the tantrums would be followed by someone getting dismissed or executed. Just a few days before Germany’s surrender in late April 1945 and a few hours after Dr. Morell had been dismissed; Hitler, with no one to personally give the medications to him, finally announced that all hope was destroyed. After being told by his closest advisors that no German reinforcements were coming to aid Berlin, in the city’s last hopeless attacks against the Soviets, Hitler flew up into rage. He proclaimed that all of Germany was lost due to the stupid mistakes of his generals. Rochus Misch, Hitler’s bodyguard mentioned about the final days in his interview: “some people came to see Hitler. Hitler said, ‘you should’ve came earlier, the war is lost....’”¹⁹ This was the last straw, and upon realizing that he could do no more for his country, Hitler gave up, finally proclaiming for good to all of the people who still had faith in him, that fate had drawn its seldom line, and that Nazi Germany, along with its guide were *not* going to reemerge from the ashes. By

¹⁷ Bullock, *Hitler: A Study of Tyranny*, 372.

¹⁸ Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 294.

¹⁹ “Hitler’s Bodyguard Interview, Rochus Misch- The Last Survivor of Hitler’s Bunker,” YouTube, accessed October 20, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kA2xKJax5xY>.

having too much stress on his plate, Hitler was soon swamped with everything, and lost all hope in getting back on the tracks of victory. He found himself living in an imaginary world where everything had to be his way; and when every plan in the end did not go to his liking, his furious rage would not help lick the country's wounds he had already sown, but instead make the situation worse and more desperate.

From the very beginning of his reign as Chancellor of Nazi Germany, Adolf Hitler had begun to take many medications due to the complications his body had; these doses significantly increased after 1943, when stress built up and the image of defeat was hung in the atmosphere. Theodor Gilbert Morell was Hitler's most famous doctor, who stayed with the dictator at his side during the years 1936 to 1945. During Hitler's earlier years, in addition to having severe chronic eczema on his legs, he also had stomach cramps, and it was reported that he had problems controlling his excess bodily gases. As he did not wish to show these critical conditions in public, Hitler began taking medications Morell suspiciously delivered, that were "necessary" to fit his personal image. He once stated, "if I had not got my faithful Morell I should be absolutely knocked out..."²⁰ Morell not only cleared Hitler's eczema within the first year of his appointment, he also cleared the dictator's stomach cramps by giving him a combination of laxatives and pain killers. This method was eventually backfired, and Hitler would always be the subject of future stomach pains, as his gut proved to be in a vicious cycle (the laxatives would help clear his stomach, while the pain killers would cause his stomach to seize up, the two drugs reacted against each other). To control the stress and to juggle his emotions, Hitler continued to receive multiple injections and doses of medications from the doctor. When the war began to turn in favor of the Allied powers in

²⁰ D. Doyle, "Adolf Hitler's Medical Care," *Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh* 35, no. 5, (2005): 77.

1944, Hitler began to increase the number of injections he had to about twenty shots every day, once stating that injections were considered the “proper” medication for leaders. According to his diary, Dr. Morell strengthened the doses every time by giving his leader vitamins made up of human feces, pheasant ears, chopped up bull testicles, testosterone, cocaine, extracts from hearts and livers, methamphetamine toxics, plus many other deadly ingredients, which Hitler soon became very fond of and dependent on. The German chancellor was also given combinations of Mutaflor and Brom-nervesite drugs, with the former being used to cure his tiredness, while the latter liquid was injected into his body every night in order to put Hitler to sleep. Dr. Erwin Geesing, who was a close friend of Hitler's, once remarked, “...not that Hitler is not your common drug addict, but his neuropathic constitution led to his finding of several drugs pleasurable...”²¹ Over the course of the war, Hitler became fascinated with the vitamin injections and tablets he was taking, due to the fact that the chemicals inside of them made him feel alert and awake. Amounting with the stress from the idea of Nazi defeat, as well as the concealment of his own bodily problems, Hitler found pleasure in taking multiple drug combinations, but at the same time, was beginning to produce a line of addictions, which would take his body and mind in a completely new and disastrous journey.

The regular injections and dosages of medicines Adolf Hitler received brought about many addictions and after-effects. Even when the medicines seemed to help Hitler in the short-run, they would eventually kill the insides of his body. The American Military Intelligence published a 47-page wartime dossier stating that “...now, new research has revealed that Adolf Hitler was himself a regular user of the drug (crystal

²¹ Neatorama, “Der Fartenführer: The Story of Hitler's Illnesses.”

methamphetamines), now a Class A, prized among addicts for its feeling of euphoria but feared for its mental destructiveness.”²² According to Morell’s personal diary, the doctor gave Hitler nine large quantity injections of this “crystal meth” drug after February of 1945, after the chancellor began to realize that the Soviet Army was camped outside the gates of his capital city just a few hundred miles away. It was once reported that when the Czech state president, Dr. Emil Hácha fainted in 1938 due to the repeated bullying Hitler was giving him, in giving up Czechoslovakia to the Nazis, Dr. Morell was sent to treat the poor man. After giving Hácha one of Hitler’s “early morning” injections, the Czech leader immediately woke up and seemed wide awake. The chemicals put into these medications were rarely tested back then; some were considered inhumane to give to living organisms; the mixtures of these chemicals gave the dictator many long-term problems. According to the dossier, Hitler’s heart began to suffer, frequent headaches and dizziness were prominent, and his organs began to dehydrate, leading to digestion problems, all due to the drugs he was consuming. Hitler began to gain weight, and became very lethargic and lazy, which affected his will to move and act fast, as he had once done. Along with his contraction of Parkinson’s disease, Hitler’s body slowly crumbled in on itself. Historian David Irving writes, “... despite the agonizing pains, and despite hours of faintness and nausea of which he has never breathed a word to anyone even when they inquire, he (Hitler) has kept a stiff upper lip and fought it all back with iron determination and energy...”²³ The drugs that Hitler was receiving would only last for short amounts of time, and the substances slowly ruined his body to the point of

²² “Hitler was ‘a regular user of crystal meth’, American Military Intelligence dossier reveals,” The Independent, last modified October 12, 2014, accessed November 24, 2014, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/hitler-was-a-regular-user-of-crystal-meth-american-military-intelligence-dossier-reveals-9789711.html>.

²³ David Irving, *The Secret Diaries of Hitler’s Doctors* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, Ltd., 2005), 60.

death; Hitler would continue to work with Dr. Morell until the bitter end in April 1945. In his book, Payne also states that, "... reputable doctors regarded him (Dr. Morell) as wholly inept. Nevertheless, Hitler trusted him, confided in him, listened to his long explanations of the actions of drugs on the nervous system, and regarded him as the greatest of all German doctors."²⁴ Hitler would also continue to lead the nation, even when he was not in the top condition. Dr. Morell would pump more than sixty different combinations of drugs and different vitamins into the Führer's body over the course of his nine year tenure; he would test many of the drugs for the first time on Hitler. Hitler's addictions would not only become more prominent in his life as the war dragged on, but also had some harmful effects on his body, such as crippling his external features, and prompting him to decline faster than anyone would have expected, which in turn changed his attitude towards the war, and brought about the steady downfall of his beloved creation.

Adolf Hitler's vision to create a thousand-year empire was destroyed within a few years of horrible mistakes, bad judgment, declining health, and confusing orders. In order to look his very best at every single event, and wanting to represent the model of a Aryan man, Hitler engaged in illegal injections and daily doses of mixed drugs for several years, which fired his addictions, flared his tantrums and anger problems, and brought about a series of oblivious visions, in which the Führer could and would not see the destruction that was happening in his country; he still continued to fight the impossible future. Fueled by his drug addictions, the mistakes he had made during the Battle of Stalingrad and the *D-Day* invasions would come to haunt him later, as the citizens of the once unconquerable Germany soon found themselves homeless, being shot at, raped, dying of

²⁴ Payne, *The Life and Death of Hitler*, 531.

starvation and serve desperation, and being demolished by the overwhelming Allied forces. The dictator's generals would continue to look at their leader with suspicion and anger in the final two years, thinking that their outgoing dictator of the past had lost his intelligence, which would rapidly descend into Hitler's isolation from his closest friends and the public. Without public appearances from their beloved leader, all hope in Germany was suddenly lost, as many loyal Germans diminished faith in their cause, and gave up in every circle of life, promoting for a faster dissolution of the Nazi empire. Hitler's drug doses would soon cripple the middle-aged man, prompting him to think in a very single-minded way, in which huge mistakes were made, and the plot of Nazi Germany's story would be filled in with embarrassing defeats. His tantrums would cause uproar in the leader's close quarters, enabling splits within the leadership of Nazi Germany and causing the nation to recede into deep despair. Living in a long journey filled of depression, addictions, and exhaustion, which all progressively got worse during the final years of the war, Adolf Hitler crushed his *own* dream, and in time had no choice but to steer his country into the very bleak future he had created, only to have it end in total destruction with a bullet to his own head.

About the author

Joshua Chanin is a junior at Austin College in Sherman TX, pursuing a history and political science degree. He hopes to attend graduate school and become a history professor.