

Book Review: Albert Speer: Within the Third Reich (1969)

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Abstract:

The book teaches that in fact a whole group of people, including industrialists, intellectuals and professors, gathered around a dictatorial and tyrannical leader who was able to carry a whole flock of admirers and indeed an entire people whom he adored almost unquestioned

It is possible to learn about the connection between technology and a corruption and dangerous regime by rereading the book "Inside the Third Reich," in which the architect of the Reich, Albert Speer, presents his memoirs as one who designed many buildings, including the German chancellery, and the Nuremberg stadium during World War II, after which he was placed behind bars in the famous Spandau prison, but not executed by the International Court of law in the Nuremberg trials, which apparently took into account that he had not dealt directly with the plan to exterminate the Jews and tried to assassinate Hitler.

The book shows that a diverse group of people, including industrialists, intellectuals, professors, gathered around a dictatorial and tyrannical leader who was able to carry a whole flock of admirers and, in fact, an entire people whom he adored almost without question. Even the futile attempts to assassinate that damned tyrant were only in the last stages of the campaign, and they failed.

The book describes the tyrant as having phenomenal memory for numbers, small details, the ability to understand structural drawings, the construction of large projects, and the ability to make decisions rapidly. At the same time, the tyrant is described as a man who sometimes lives the life of a bohemian, as an artist, without a completely organized agenda, but as someone who rises only in the late hours of the night.

In fact, the decision-making process was very strange. According to Speer, some of the advisors were waiting for hours, until late in the day for consultations with Hitler. The group of aides, advisers, ministers, senior officials is revealed in all its misery, as a group of people who want to gain from the sit in power, and the pleasure that the intoxication of power gives.

This group, which surrounded Hitler like Goering and others, quickly turned out to be completely corrupt. They began to confiscate pictures and artistic treasures of Jews and of the conquered countries, each of which accumulated a fortune. Speer notes that he did not deal with this and showed modesty in this matter.

The architect of the Reich notes that in fact he was not interested in politics, but he understood that he had great influence, alongside the leader who would enable him to carry out his grandiose ideas in planning and building Germany.

Hitler is described as a person that logic was not always the strong point in his thinking, for example when he insisted on concentrating many forces in the Battle of Stalingrad, which in fact focused on German progress in other areas. (P. 269). He is also seen as a fickle figure: "Hitler, used to sit for hours and carefully examine numerical data down to the last detail. "(P. 270). In some cases, he did not even check data, when the sin of arrogance stuck to him.

The book notes that Germany was very close to producing a nuclear bomb, it was expected the she will have it within two years, that is, until 1947. If Hitler had not interfered with his whims, they would have been more successful in planning long-range missiles. In fact, Speer describes himself as a kind of "bureaucrat" who acts as a clerk in the realm of an omnipotent tyrant.

It should be noted that his responsibility is no less than the other criminals of the Third Reich, since in his actions he extended the German army's survival ability. It is important to note that Hitler worked with the German economic forces and committed them to the "preservation of the principle of private property" (p. 367), when they feared "nationalization."

Speer notes that "the total confusion of my feelings towards him was expressed in the fact that although his personality had been revealed to me in all its evil immorality, I could not suppress a certain sense of sorrow in the inevitable collapse of this extraordinary person whose secret success lay mainly in his own strong belief of Strange and inconceivable, and in personal charm that injected and was incomprehensible " (P.437).

In conclusion, Speer notes that the country's leadership has shown great selfishness and has not even thought about the future of the German people. Speer notes that he tried with all his might to prevent the "scorched earth" policy, namely, Hitler's orders to destroy all infrastructure and industry, which of course would make it difficult for Germany to recover after the war.

"Hitler's dictatorship was the first dictatorship of an industrialized country in the age of modern technology, a dictatorship that knew how to make full use of technological achievements to take over and impose authority on its people." (P.522)

This tyrannical regime created the type of commander which will carry out orders "at all levels, which is defined as a small screw and as such will blindly and indiscriminately execute any order" even when he know that the order is a crime (p. 522).

The book draws attention to the conduct of a tyrannical, corrupt and technocratic regime, a duty for anyone interested to study the theory of regimes and the characterization of leadership and forms of government.

As technology advances, will it become more technocratic and bureaucratic, will technology also allow time to be devoted to human ethics, ethics, and values?