

- 6 his work as a monstrous travesty of the truth because it allegedly failed to do justice to their prominent role in the resistance movement. With more justification it can be argued that in his portrayal of the Dutch Nazi Party he has insufficiently broken with the caricatured image of this political movement that was current in the Netherlands before and during the war.

On the whole, however, he has presented a finely balanced judgment amply supported by evidence. His primary objective is, moreover, not so much to pass judgment on the actors and victims of Nazi tyranny as to make a contribution to our understanding of their behaviour. He realizes that a historian should beware of the wisdom of hindsight and make an effort to consider the way both the Germans and the Dutch looked at the world situation during the war itself. This approach is effectively applied in his tersely written chapters describing and analysing the step-by-step measures by which the Germans carried out their plan to deport and exterminate the Jewish population of the Netherlands. This is not the first time that this horrifying story has been told. It has been described in even more detail and with less suppressed emotion in J. Presser's justly famous work on the subject. But Dr. de Jong's account has the advantage in not only arousing the reader's sense of pity but also partly satisfying his need for understanding. For example, he criticizes but also explains the fateful decision made by leading members of the Jewish community not to refuse their assistance to the German authorities in charge of the extermination of Dutch Jews. He makes it clear that no one fully realized the horrible fate which was awaiting the Jews in Eastern Europe and also points out that in this instance the German tactics of terror and misrepresentation were frighteningly effective not only among the Jews, but also among the non-Jewish population of the Netherlands, who with few notable exceptions showed little solidarity with their Jewish fellow-citizens in their supreme hour of trial.

The submissive attitude initially taken by most members of the Dutch establishment towards many of the arbitrary measures of the German authorities is one of the leading themes in Dr. de Jong's Volumes dealing with the Occupation. But he also points out that the Occupation, however oppressive and seemingly efficiently organized, none the less offered many possibilities for effective resistance which were sooner or later discovered by various groups. In a number of richly documented chapters he sketches the growing spirit of opposition among doctors, men of letters, and leaders of trade unions, churches and the teaching profession. He also shows that in a number of instances this opposition to the policy of Nazification was so strong that the Germans decided to give up any attempt to enforce their unpopular measures. As a matter of fact all the new Nazi institutions remained artificial creations supported by only a handful of Dutch collaborators. According to Dr. de Jong, the growth in the spirit of resistance was only partially related to the setbacks which the Germans suffered in their military operations, for the Germans were already losing their battle for the mind of the Dutch nation as early as the spring of 1941.