



~~Speer was~~ After satisfactorily completing these renovations to Goebbels ministry, Speer was brought to the attention of Hitler. Hence, in 1932, when the Berlin Chancellery was renovated Speer was entrusted w/  
~~respons~~ supervising the work even though the commission had been given to Hitler's architect Paul Troost.

When Troost died in January 1934, Speer was appointed first architect of the Third Reich. <sup>In this capacity created "Cathedral of Ice"</sup>

In 1937, Speer ~~designed~~ was made Generalbauinspektor, and was entrusted with supervising making Hitler's dream of a new Berlin, to be named Germania, a reality. It was in this capacity that Speer was responsible for the relocation of 23 000 Jewish families and eventual resettlement of 75 000 people in Berlin.

In January 1938, Hitler entrusted Speer w/ creating a new Berlin Chancellery, and wanted it completed within the year. Speer succeeded, creating a new neo Classical building w/ 48 hours to spare.

In <sup>Feb</sup> 1942, Fritz Todt died in an aeroplane accident, and Speer was subsequently made Minister for



Armaments and Munitions, as well as head of the 800 000 strong Organisation Todt which supervised production in Germany + her territories.

Speer supposedly increased production by 300% by 1944 in this capacity.

In May 1945, Speer was arrested by advancing Allied troops after the end of WWII.

He was tried at the Nuremberg War Tribunal, but was unique in his acceptance of collective responsibility for the atrocities of the regime, and his ostensible show of repentance.

Speer was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment in Spandau prison. Upon his release<sup>in 1966</sup>, Speer began revising the memoirs he began whilst incarcerated, which he had smuggled out on pieces of paper.

Speer enjoyed a successful career as an author, and died in Sept 1981 whilst on a trip to London to promote his latest literary offering.

13b) Albert Speer was long perceived to be the penitent Nazi - the apolitical technocrat, dazzlingly efficient in his job and ignorant of the atrocities of the Nazi regime. However, the emergence of the unexpurgated *Walters Chronicle* in 1983 proved this self made image to be false. History has presented a deluded interpretation of Albert Speer to a considerable extent.

At the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal, Speer presented a remorseful face to the world, pleading ignorance. His efficiency was rarely questioned, with many believing he increased production by 300% between 1941 and 1944.

Early Speer historians endorsed this view. ~~with~~ Historians such as Wilhelm Flausner and Joachim Fest authored sympathetic biographies, utilising Speer as a source of information. Indeed, Speer had made himself readily available for interviews following his release from Spandau in 1966, and even enlisted the help of Fest in the revision of his + editing of his own memoirs.

However, as time passed, cracks began to appear in Speers story. It surfaced that the source of ~~the~~ statistics revealing Speers efficiency was in fact Speers own January 1945 report. His ignorance of the genocide of the Jews was brought into question when Erich Goldhagen uncovered transcripts of the 1943 Posen Conference in 1971. Speer claimed that he was not present when Himmler outlined the final solution to the Jewish problem - however, a transcript of Himmlers speech revealed a direct reference to Speer though the explicit nature of the pronouncement, and through records of Speers complaints of the drunken behaviour of Gauleiters late that evening.

Historian Citta Sereny spent a considerable amount of time living with Speer to access his psychological core - her biography revealed a charming, ~~yet~~ intelligent ~~stenting~~ man, who compartmentalised knowledge in order to deny its existence. Sereny claims Speer "looked away" - yet how is this approach



possible when it is known that Speer was in charge of rail ~~by~~<sup>from</sup> 1942 onwards, and would hence know of the transportation of the Jewish people to concentration camps? Further incongruities between Speer's approach and reality are apparent in the photographic evidence available of Speer with <sup>emaciated</sup> POWs at both Mauthausen and Dora - apparently, conditions at Mauthausen were too comfortable for Speer's liking, yet the conditions at Dora affected the productivity of his workers. This surely cannot be considered "looking away."

Perhaps the most scathing <sup>appraisal</sup> appraisal of Speer was from Matthias Schmidt. Schmidt released his biography in 1984, utilising both the *Wolters Chronik* and the farcical opening of Speer's own memoirs in an attempt to understand the motive behind Speer's self-created myth.

A historian who took a similar tack was Dan Var Der Vat. Var Der Vat believed that the few flats were the first in a line of evidence which proved Speer's penitence was false, and that

Speer's highly calculated word choice was very revealing.

Van Der Vat, however, does concede that Speer ~~was~~ <sup>did</sup> possess the same *ausstrahlung* (charm) as Hitler, and that Jeremy was correct in identifying his ability to compartmentalise knowledge.

Albert Speer has been both praised and attacked for his role + actions within the Nazi regime. History has presented a balanced view of Speer - his earlier shows of repentance have been examined, with historians such as Fest defending, and those such as Schmidt, abhorring his actions.

Albert Speer succeeded in his quest to become a great historical figure - the myth of the Penitent Nazi has endured long after his death.