

a) Albert Speer was born into a ~~poor~~ wealthy, prestigious family, a background which surely helped on his rise to prominence in the Nazi regime. Although the young man wished to study mathematics, his father persuaded ~~him~~ him to study architecture as he and his own father had.

~~He~~ Because of inflation, Speer was forced to attend ~~at~~ a modest institute of technology but soon enough transferred to the Munich Institute of Technology and later the Institute at Berlin. It was here that he came under the

intellect of a Professor Tessenow and, on ~~his~~ finishing his studies ^{in 1927,} became Tessenow's assistant. Tessenow himself was not pro-Nazi, but a few of his students were and it was they who convinced Speer to attend a Nazi Party meeting. There Speer saw Hitler ~~and~~ ~~describes himself as son~~ Speer would later describe himself as being somewhat mesmerised by the Nazi leader, in particular his way with words.

Despite later attending and disliking a meeting held by ~~the~~ Joseph Goebbels,

Speer joined the Nazi Party without knowing that one day he would be one of its most prestigious members.

After doing a few small jobs, Speer was then assigned to redo Goebbels' offices. This garnered attention and soon enough Speer was working with the Reich's primary architect.

Adolf Hitler saw in Speer a kindred spirit, a fellow artist, as the tyrant himself had ~~artistic~~ artistic desires. This close relationship with the Führer served Speer well in his rise to prominence as he then became the

choreographer of Nazi Party rallies. His great achievements at the Nuremberg rally site including his infamous 'Cathedral of Light' instilled a sense of grandeur and triumph in a country still suffering from the great humiliation of defeat in World War one and the Treaty of Versailles.

"It was a kind of subtle propaganda," one historian quotes, and this is inherently true. The work Speer did for Hitler culminated in the creation of 'Germania,' which would be the greatest city in the world. Plans were in their beginning stages when

World War Two broke out and
the Speers time could no
longer be spent on
architecture. ¶

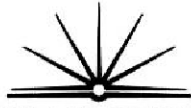
Instead, Speers great
organisational skills ~~were~~
found a new outlet in the
form of a new project.
Hitler had made Speer
his Minister for Armaments
and Ammunitions, a position
in which he excelled greatly.
Indeed, one documentary
entitled 'Speer: the Architect'
credits the man with
prolonging the war for at
least a year, if not
more.

Here, Speer had reached

the zenith of his career and the pinnacle of his rise to prominence.

b) In a discussion of how history presents Albert Speer, one must take into account the changing and eternal quality of history when new information or interpretations so frequently appear with each new generation of historians and scholars. This is no different for Albert Speer who has alternately been labelled a heartless Nazi killer and a man in too deep for his own good.

Many historians have been quick to judge Albert Speer



on the basis of his involvement with the Nazi Party, automatically rendering him - to some - an extremist and a murderer. But we must remember the extreme ~~the~~ Nazi hype during the 1930s that was stired up by Propaganda Minister Goebbels, hype which ensnared many innocent individuals, perhaps Albert Speer.

Yet indeed it is hard to forget that Speer was directly involved in the displacement of many Jews from their homes to concentration camps, the deployment of workers in concentration ~~as~~ and labour

Camps in his munitions factories and the fact that, according to many secondary sources, such as the documentary "Speer: The Architect," Speer was responsible for prolonging the war - and subsequently thousands of deaths - for a year if not more. This historical information certainly renders Speer in a negative light

And yet, one must remember that Albert Speer for undermining much of Hitler's 'Scorched Earth' policy, which would have rendered Germany economically handicapped at the conclusion of the war. By his own

virtue, Speer recognised what disastrous results this wartime policy would have and so at risk to his own life undercut Hitler's instructions.

Different assessments of Albert Speer's character and the nature of his remorse apropos of the genocide he helped commit can also be addressed when discussing historians' interpretation of the man. While many historians have been ~~de~~ understandingly dubious towards his apology, many have come to the conclusion that Speer was not acting in a malicious racist or vindictive manner, simply an amoral one.

It is here that the most balanced view is found. Speer was not an evil Nazi murderer and nor was he an 'avenging angel' in his undermining of Hitler's Scorched Earth policy. Instead, Speer was simply pragmatic, a technocratic artist who didn't allow politics to get in the way of his art. Blinded to the genocide and horrific actions around him, Speer's crime becomes not one of hate, but indifference.

In conclusion, it is often difficult to achieve any sort of balanced interpretation of any event or personality ~~as~~ in

history as new information or interpretations can be revealed at any time. Thus, it is somewhat safe to suggest that at this moment, a ~~tentative~~ tentative balance has been found for Albert Speer, although the balance may shift at any moment.