

## REDEDICATION IN GERMANY

The first victims of Nazi anti-semitism were Jews or persons of Jewish descent in official positions, for example at Universities. Barring a small class of exceptions, they were ordered to be dismissed by a decree issued within 6 weeks of Hitler's final accession to power. The great chemist Fritz Haber, Director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute für Physikalische Chemie in Berlin-Dahlem though by birth a Jew, did not himself fall under the decree, but a number of his junior staff did. Haber decided to resign from his post and a few months later ( in the summer 1939) he left his country. In his absence false accusations were levelled against him which rendered a return dangerous. He became an exile and died in exile on January 29th, 1934.

Haber had been virtually the founder in 1912 of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institut of Physikalische Chemie which he directed for 22 years. He also acted during this time as chief adviser to the President of the Kaiser Wilhelm Gesellschaft in the choice of candidates for senior appointments throughout the Research Institutes of the Society. Moreover, locally in Dahlem, the Institut under his direction was for a number of years the main centre of scientific discussions among the group of Research Institutes situated there. Haber's position was unsurpassed in Germany as a leader of scientific thought and organiser of scientific life. He had in fact hardly a rival in this manner of activity.

Paying tribute to Haber's services the Kaiser Wilhelm Gesellschaft and Haber's friends and pupils had planted a lime-tree in front of the main entrance of his Institute which was named the Haber Linde. On the encircling stone parapet was engraved an inscription dedicating the tree to Fritz Haber. On Haber's departure a Nazi' director took over the Institute and completely renewed its personnel. No ascertainable trace of Haber's activities was allowed to survive; though the lime tree in the courtyard was left standing, the inscription marking its origin was carefully chiselled away.

Dahlem is situated in the American Sector of Berlin. Soon after the arrival there of the American occupational forces, news came through that Haber's Institute was still standing but entirely empty. The Nazi occupants had been eliminated but all equipment had vanished too. A little later it became known that the physicist Professor Hartmut Kallmann, a former pupil and close collaborator of Haber for many years, had taken possession of the empty shell. Kallmann, who had himself narrowly escaped racial liquidation by the Nazis, had returned after eleven years of interruption of his work in science with the intention of re-starting once more if possible the

great centre of physical chemistry in Dahlem.

Haber's memory was restored to honour. On 2nd February last year the Haber Linde was solemnly re-dedicated; its inscription renewed.

The chief speaker on the occasion was Professor Kallmann, other addresses included those by the Ober-Burgermeister of Berlin, the Burgermeister of Dahlem and the Director of the People's University Berlin. Of Haber's closer colleagues there were present Professor K.F. Bonhoffer and Professor Otto Warburg.

Dr. Kallmann recalled that 11 years earlier on 29th January, 1936, Haber had been honoured on the anniversary of his death by a gathering of his friends who had remained in Germany under Hitler. Members of university staffs - who in Germany are state officials - were forbidden attendance by express order of the government. Yet the large room was packed - "all had come", said Kallmann. It certainly had been a noteworthy manifestation of independence in Germany scientific circles.

Dr. Kallmann's recollections reveal it that in 1936 he (with many others) had still thought of the Nazi regime as a passing phenomenon. The "unspeakable horrors which were beyond all human imagination" which were to follow, had not been expected. Outside observers may regard this error as throwing a serious responsibility on German academic circles.

Of this responsibility Dr. Kallmann is by no means heedless. He urges the resumption of every effort to advance scientific knowledge and to cultivate the arts of peace. This - he says - may perhaps be a modest contribution to the necessary reparation of the measureless disaster which has been brought upon the world from this country". "Perhaps - he continues - this could also form a contribution to the reconciliation of peoples. Perhaps the people beyond the frontiers of this country would then cease to think only of its evils, but remember also that from this country works have come forward which belong to the noblest creations of the human mind\*"

In a letter recently received from Dr. Kallmann, I find the same burning enthusiasm for science which pervades his speech. Work, work, honest work - he indicates - are the only possible way to the moral salvation of Germany. And then - to my intense surprise - I find him expressing the confident hope to be soon granted a "licence for research" (Forschungserlaubnis).

The values of science and humanity restored to Germany by Allied victory, are damaged if people like Dr. Kallmann are still left waiting for permission to resume their work. Such delays seem to me of one piece with the slowness of Western scientists in approaching and welcoming once more those of their German fellow scientists who have resisted Nazism at great risks to themselves. They may have lacked political wisdom; but this does not diminish our duty to pay

respect to their integrity and to uphold with them freely and openly the fellowship of science.