Blonde Aviatrix Arranged Suicide Plane Project for German Victory

Hanna Reitsch's Plan Still Incomplete When Nazi Defeat Ended World War II

By PAULINE FREDERICK

NUERNBERG, GERMANY. — Never before in history has so much of how a war began and how it was fought come to light so quickly after that war's end as is happening today in Germany. There is not since the incredible tale that is unfolding in the green-curtained courtroom here in Nuernberg. But a thousand other chapters are being revealed all over this torn country that will eventually complete the piece.

One of those is the story of how the Germans toyed with the idea of developing suicide planes to repel an invasion that in 1943 stirred their dreams of world conquest had come to an end in Russia. This tale has just come to light in intelligence reports released at Frankfort, and the star of the piece is a blonde aviatrix named Hanna Reitsch.

Boss in the Story.

By 1943 a lot of people in Germany, including Reitsch, had become convinced that only extraordinary measures could bring the war to a successful end for Germany. They decided that if any plan for invasion of the continent could be destroyed at the beginning, Germany could then be safe enough in its continental fortress so that the Allies would be ready to make peace. Therefore, a small group of men banded together — a "suicide squadron" who were willing to give their lives in some kind of a ship-propelled flying bomb that would destroy and sink at a ratio of one vessel per flying bomb, all the larger naval craft that were so important in protecting and covering an invasion force. Reitsch, from the beginning, was to be the chief test pilot for such a craft.

In the death of a thousand of their number the squadron hoped to save the lives of many thousands.

But plans had not progressed very far when responsible characters were remembered. First, Reitsch went to Luftwaffe authorities and there was not with the impression that the idea was fantastic and the result of hallucinations of people tired of life who were looking for a martyr's end in the pages of German history. She had no better success at the air ministry. Then she took the matter to the unsympathetic ears of Himmler. After the experts examined the idea, they decided it was feasible. The plan was to install a 1,000 pound bomb-torpedo in the nose of a plane, which would be steered into the water at a certain angle. The impact with the water would kill the pilot instantly and allow the bomb to tear loose from the plane and continue under the keel of the vessel where it would explode with a time fuse that would be set—the motive upon impact with the water.

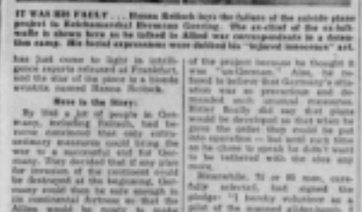
Hitler Lukewarm to Plan.

Then on February 26, 1944, Reitsch had a three-hour conference with Hitler at Berchtesgaden in southern Germany, that he should accept the plan and name the proper leadership. The aviatrix had long been convinced, undoubtedly for personal as well as professional reasons, that Goering was not the man for his job, to say nothing of his one. Hitler didn't like the self-sacrificing idea of the project because he thought it was "un-German." Also, he listened to better than Germany's situation was so precarious and demanded such unusual measures. Finally he did say that plans would be developed so that pilots might be given the order they could be put into operation — but until such time as he chose to order it he didn't want to be bothered with the idea any more.

Meanwhile, 31 or 32 men, carefully selected, had signed the pledge: "I hereby volunteer as a pilot of the manned glider-bomb. I am convinced that this action will end with my death."



IT WAS HIS FAULT . . . Hanna Reitsch lays the failure of the suicide plane project to Reichsmarshal Hermann Goering. She at—chief of the ex-luftwaffe is shown here as he is lifted in Allied war correspondents in a dozen-ton sump. His facial expressions were dubbed his "injured innocence" act.



Hanna Reitsch

Hanna Reitsch describes herself as follows: Five feet, 4½ inches tall, weighs about 108 pounds, has blonde hair with a "permanent," blue eyes, white teeth and a small round face with a scar down the center of her nose, a well-proportioned figure, is 32 years old, and not considered beautiful.

She was a test pilot of German military aircraft and flew the V-1 "buzz bomb" planes. She holds records by flying gliders and other types of planes. But more than that, she was in the bunker under the Reichschancellery with Hitler and his entourage during the last days of Berlin and was asked to be a participant in the mass suicide plan worked out by Hitler to be put into effect when the Russians reached the bunker.

However, in the early morning hours of April 30, 1945, the Fuehrer ordered her and Lt. Gen. Ritter von Greim, who had succeeded Goering as head of the Luftwaffe, to leave to accomplish two missions. One was to get Luftwaffe help to Berlin. The other was to prevent Heinrich Himmler, whom Hitler had just learned had contacted the Allies to make peace terms, from succeeding him as Fuehrer. Reitsch was Von Greim's personal pilot.

As far as is known at this time, Hanna Reitsch flew the last plane that left Berlin before it capitulated. Because of the conditions of the besieged city at the time, she says it is fantastic for anyone to believe that another plane would have safely spirited Hitler out so that he might be living today.



ISN'T LIKE IT . . . Adolf Hitler didn't like Hanna Reitsch's idea for "suicide planes." He thought it was "un-German" but finally consented to have the plane developed.

Himmler Plotted to Kill Hitler and Trade his Body To Allies for Personal Safety, Colonel Testifies

During the last days of the Nazi regime, when chief armies were closing in on Berlin from all sides, the treacherous members of the high command tried to save themselves by sacrificing their associates, Heinrich Himmler, grim chief of the Gestapo, sought to murder Adolf Hitler and sell his body to the Allies as the price of peace and personal safety, according to new information disclosed by British intelligence experts.

The British advise that Colonel von Buelow's story remains unconfirmed from other sources.

According to Colonel von Buelow, Himmler and his SS officers in the Reichschancellery bunker during the last days before Berlin's fall had plotted Hitler's murder, but it is not known whether any attempt was made to carry it out.

Colonel von Buelow said that Himmler's negotiations with the Allies had been discovered definitely on April 28, and that it had been days then Hitler had suspected Herr Fegelein was connected with the plot.

A Gestapo SS officer was sent out to search for him. He was found in his flat and brought back to the bunker by the SS officer. Finally, on Hitler's orders, he was taken out and privately executed, Colonel von Buelow said.

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Tests on a Messerschmitt 328, to be launched from the back of a German 217 in flight were completed in April, 1944. When it became apparent, however, that production in any quantity could not begin for months, it was decided that the V-1 "buzz bomb" should be altered sufficiently to take care of the project.

Perilous Test Flights.

A pilot's compartment was installed in the V-1, and other small modifications made, and then it was tested. There was a high fatality rate among the test pilots, but Reitsch came through and was convinced that this was the weapon that could be used. The particular danger in testing these planes was in landing them, whether as gliders or with a power unit, because of the speed and angle at which they came in. Ship targets were simulated by colored smoke bombs on the ground and dives and approaches were made to test angles and necessary speeds. An intricate aiming device was developed. The most important thing that had to be done carefully and accurately was to determine the distance from the ship that the V-1 was supposed to enter the water. The size and weight of the ship had to be judged exactly. By a sliding scale on the apparatus before him, the pilot was able to select his proper angle and maintain it correctly until the plane entered the water. The dive toward the water at a speed probably greater than 525 miles an hour was to disintegrate the V-1 and give the necessary impetus to the torpedo to continue on through the water until it reached a certain position, when the time fuse would automatically set off.

But the Nazi suicide squad never got into action. Even the technical development was not fully complete when the war ended, to say nothing of production that would have put the weapon into action.

Reitsch lays the failure to get the project into operation, as well as all other failures of German air power, to Goering. She says "that the spirit with which Goering had imbued the Luftwaffe was cultivated to such a degree that it proved to be of no help to all of us. We needed strong leadership, tempered with an idealism that marked our foes. Most of all we needed a leader who saw the present military situation (March, 1945) in the same degree of preparedness as we ourselves saw it."

Star Dust

STAGE SCREEN RADIO

By VIRGINIA VALE

RAYMOND MASSEY is setting up an all-time record for other performers to shoot at; so far no one else has appeared in all four branches of the Thespian art. To begin with, there's his regular weekly stint on the radio, as "The Harvest of Years," on NBC. He's also appearing currently on the Broadway stage in "Foreman," with Gertrude Lawrence.



RAYMOND MASSEY

Just recently he did two television shows for CBS. And in April he returns to Hollywood to make "One Secret," with Joan Crawford. She's covering the field!

Rudy Lamarr and Gene Lockhart are right back where they started, on Stage 3 on the Culver's lot. They both got their first big screen breaks in "Cagney," which was filmed there. Now they're back for the first time, for "The Strange Woman."

James Stewart's back in Hollywood, after resting in Washington and New York—where even night-club audiences look at him with interest. His first postwar picture will be "It's a Wonderful Life," made for Liberty Films and released by RKO. It is a Frank Capra production. That's under way now. His next film will be "The Magic City," a Robert Ruttin production, for RKO.

Got a baseball team you want to sell? Anne Baxter's interested. She's been a baseball fan since she was in high school, now, the Hollywood Stars, and she wants to own a piece of one, at least. Incidentally, the Charles B. Hughes partnership in which she has a leading role is also known as "Angel on My Shoulder" again; exhibitors who were afraid that title better than "Mr and Mrs. Satan."

Michael Holmes has ordered from the screen, after appearing in "A Scandal in Paris" for 32 seconds as the infant Voltaire. Mike's father is Gustav, best never seen him, as Mrs. Barrows in Mr. aged three months, play the part.

Jean Ferguson, star of "Great Moments in Music," will take a chance on any young singer she believes in. She's presented many of them on her radio program; discovered Marie Lenzo, who subsidized for Jan Pearce when Pearce was on the Coast.

Constance Moore was called for makeup and wardrobe at 5 a. m. one morning, because of the skating costumes she was to wear that day in "In Old Sacramento." Four hours later she was ready, stepped on the sound stage, and new emcee-man rain falling like mad. "And now, Miss Moore," said Producer-Director Joseph Kane, "if you'll lie down on your face in the mud—you're just fallen out of a stagecoach!"

Jack Occupanty's children know he was "Mr. Mudd" on that gorgeous stunt on "Truth or Consequences"; he phoned them after the third week and often they said they'd heard him on the radio he never they hadn't; couldn't admit the truth, because no-onebody could know it was his voice that was painting rainstreams.

Ed Wynn has been held over as guest star on the program headed by Jimmy Durante and Andrews Sisters, Dinah Shore, Originally Wynn was signed for only four weeks, but the public has been so enthusiastic about him that he remains a while longer.

The time of "Strangers in Love," Fredric Goddard's next for Paramount, is 1845, on the old Santa Fe trail. We're trying to figure out what fashions will be current next year.

ODDS AND ENDS—The day she left for "Adventure" appeared in New York columns, 5,000 additional cops had to be printed, to replace those swiped by fans who wanted Clark Gable's picture. . . . During his three years in the service Macdonald Carey says otherwise shocks to his wife, who saved them for a glass partition on a Hollywood home. . . . Friday night is going to be CBS night in a lot of homes—Durante and Moore at 7:30, Danny Kaye at 8, Red Skelton at 10:30, EST. . . . Orson Welles, featured with Gilbert Roland in Somerset's "The Fan Canadian," took his name from the private journalistic nom of Drew Pearson and Robert Allen.

SEWING CIRCLE PATTERNS

Home Frock for Long-Day Charm A Trio of Blouses for Your Suit





Slimming Home Dress

A SIMPLE side-button home dress with slimming lines and a neat, efficient air. Novel scalloped pockets add a decorative touch. Make it in bright cottons for morning wear, in rayon crepe, spun rayon or chambray for afternoon.

Pattern No. 8928 comes to you in sizes 14, 16, 18, 20, 40, 42, 44, 46, 48 and 50. Size 16 requires 4¼ yards of 39 inch fabric.

Three Lovely Blouses

THREE pretty blouses to add a touch of glamour to your wardrobe. You can have a youthful round neck with gathered or cap sleeves, or a flattering V-neck with dickey or convertible collar. All button down the back. Choose the gayest fabrics you can find and finish with ruffling or your favorite jewelry.

Chauncey Believed There Was a Time for All Things

The late Chauncey Mitchell Depew, who was a U. S. senator from New York and a genius for after-dinner speaking which was universally acknowledged and admired, was once asked to speak at a banquet and as a result he was called upon to eat everywhere and with every manner of organization.

"Chauncey," remarked a friend, "I don't see how you can stand it. I should think it would give you dyspepsia. I suppose you can eat anything?"

"No," replied Depew, "there are two things I always positively refuse to eat for dessert."

"And what are they?"

"Breakfast and supper," he replied.

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Make a thick syrup by stirring 2 cups of granulated sugar and one cup of water a few moments, until it is dissolved. (If you like, not more syrup.) Put 2½ ounces of Pinex (from your druggist) into a pint bottle, and fill up with your syrup. Shake well. Take a teaspoonful every hour or two as needed. Children love it. It's pleasant to take. You've never seen anything better. It keeps right in the refrigerator. Tastes fine. Never spoils. Children love it. Money refunded if it doesn't please you in every way.—Adv.

NR TO-NIGHT



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MONEY BACK—IF SORETONE DOESN'T SATISFY

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