

Hitlerian Psychology No Secret With Arnie

by Scott Thompson and Nancy Spannaus

When selected quotes from Arnold Schwarzenegger's 1997 interview with George Butler, the producer of "Pumping Iron," came out in the first days of October, the Schwarzenegger for Governor campaign rushed to declare that they would release the entire 33-page transcript to the media, to show that the quotes—the most lurid of which are shown in the leaflet pictured on page 61—were "taken out of context." Within days, the campaign had decided *not* to release the transcript. Apparently, Arnie's backers decided that its circulation wouldn't help them after all.

For example, how to explain away the following excerpt from the Butler interview, which was published in the Oct. 4 *New York Times*?

"Yes, in Germany they used power and authority but it was used in the wrong way. If you want to create a strong nation and a strong country, you cannot let everybody be an individual, because everyone has his own opinion and you can't just stick together as a strong nation. Then you have to tell people what to do. . . ."

Did Admire Hitler

But, even without the Butler interview, Arnie's record was already established in the 1990 book, *An Unauthorized Biography: Arnold*, by Wendy Leigh, (Chicago: Congdon & Weed, 1990).

Leigh wrote: "Arnold personified Aryan supremacy and Germanic strength of will. To top that, his father had been a member of the Nazi Party. Both his heritage and his image were inescapable. Inescapable, but not ineradicable. Yet, Arnold, far from underplaying his roots, embraced and advertised them. . . . Arnold must have known that the Nazi aura surrounding him did not displease his admirers. After all, the goal of many bodybuilders is to carve for themselves bodies befitting a master race, and to the end, power and dominance are valued above all. . . . All in all, allegations of Arnold's veneer of Nazism probably didn't hurt him in the unique arena that is bodybuilding."

Another excerpt from the same book says that, having arrived in the United States under the patronage of the body builder Joe Weider, "Arnold immediately took posing lessons from Dick Tyler. Tyler, deciding that Arnold merited 'heroic' music, picked for his posing routine Richard Strauss's *Thus*

Spake Zarathustra.

Years later, Tyler commented that if Hitler had wanted to advertise the Aryan ideal, Arnold would have been its perfect representative.

"Tyler's remarks may sound a trifle barbed; however, since 1977, rumors have circulated in the bodybuilding world that during the filming of "Pumping Iron," the pseudo-documentary film that transformed him into a legend, Arnold said he admired Hitler.

"When contacted for a newspaper article in 1988, George Butler, the producer and director of the film and still a close friend of Arnold's today, admitted that during the filming of "Pumping Iron," Arnold definitely did say he admired Hitler. Butler then conceded that the remark was cut from the final version of the film, adding that Arnold expressed his admiration of 'Hitler and Kennedy in almost the same breath, as people who were leaders.'

"When asked why Arnold admired Hitler, Butler replied that the context in the film was that Arnold was saying he had 'always wanted to be remembered like the most famous people in history, like Jesus and so on. And I think his admiration is for people who were so striking that they would be remembered always.' . . .

"Manfred Thellig, who worked with Arnold in Munich, offers a similar interpretation. According to Thellig, Arnold 'definitely admires the Teutonic period of the Third Reich. He just loved those leftover relics of the Third Reich in Munich—those Teutonic statues.' He added that Arnold would say, 'If I had lived at that time, I would have been one of those "Teutonic breeders," ' but explains, 'Whenever he opened his mouth and it sounded like "Oh, there is a neo-Nazi," this was just playing Tarzan. It wasn't serious.'

'I Will Exterminate'

"Arnold responded to this issue during a 1989 *Penthouse* interview with journalist Sharon Churcher. According to Churcher, a former associate of Arnold's during the seventies had heard from a mutual acquaintance that Arnold had Nazi paraphernalia all over his apartment. According to the associate, Arnold's reaction was to claim, through 'Pumping Iron' producer George Butler, that his interest 'was only that of a student.' Butler, professing to have forgotten the above exchange, says he had never seen any Nazi paraphernalia at Arnold's house. . . .

"There is yet another possibility. As one bodybuilder who observed Arnold in America doing the 'Sieg Heil' salute commented, 'It was expected of him.' "

Of course, the Simon Wiesenthal center, which has received over \$1 million from Arnie, and "cleared" him of anti-semitism, denies Schwarzenegger's Hitlerian bent. But only a blind man, or deluded fool, listening to him in the course of the recent campaign—"I will exterminate. . ."—could deny that Arnie's "will to power" reflects his adulation of Hitler's "Beast-Man" style, still today.