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proEVENING STANDARD LONDON
HYDE

NURNBERG, APRIL 2nd

The new Vice-President of the district of Hannover and one of the two German officials sent here as observers from the British zone, is a woman. Frau Dorothea Baehnisch, forty six, is the first and thus far the only female to hold a high governmental position in post Hitlerian Germany, just as, under the republic, she was the only one in the higher brackets of the Prussian administration. Though proud of her new office, the vivacious Vice-President seems even prouder of her activities under the Nazis. In 1933 she ^{ESTABLISHED} ~~opened~~ her Berlin Bureau ^{AND OPERATED IT} ~~and judged the very eyes of~~ ^{TO ASSIST} ~~for~~ the racially and politically persecuted ^{OPENLY UNDER THE EYES OF} ~~the Gestapo~~ ^{and} ~~until~~ March 1945.

"Early in the regime" she stated in an interview today, "there was nothing to prevent an administration lawyer ~~like~~ like myself from legally advising anyone. I saved the lives of dozens of Jews and protected the properties and positions of scores of half Jews by ^{CONVERTING} ~~turning~~ them into half and quarter Jews respectively."

To perform these minor miracles Frau Baehnisch had to prove that a client's mother or grandmother, while married to a Jew, had been on friendly terms with an "Aryan" and that this "Aryan" was the actual father or grandfather of the client in question.

~~Unshaken~~ Family archives had to be opened and prodigious amounts of ancient correspondence and faded photos had to be perused. Whenever suitable pictures could not be found ^{among} ~~in~~ Grandma's papers, they had somehow to be conjured up.

"Nor", said the petite magician, "could I have been satisfied with the image of just any nordic looking male. The gentleman whom I wished to proclaim my client's ancestor must be dressed historically correctly; he must have been in a position - geographically at least - to have met the lady; he must himself be of irrefutably Aryan extraction; and, finally, he must resemble my client. When I had found my man, I would inform the authorities and demand that my client be given what was called

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a racial biological test."

These tests, she added, were sheer ~~bullshit~~ ^{QUATSCH (baloney)}, but usually turned out in her clients' favour. As for the politically persecuted, they were less easily assisted.

"The Gestapo", she declared, "took a lot of handling. To betray fear was a fatal error. No matter how frightened you were, you had to appear unconcerned, determined and full of confidence. I usually displayed a mixture of provincial naïveté and womanly understanding. Allegedly I admired the brutality of the gangster in charge, but had full faith in his sense of justice. Surely he would not wish to punish an innocent aryan?"

More than once the courageous little ^{LADY -} lawyer was threatened with immediate arrest.

"On every such occasion", she said, "meekness would have meant the concentration camp, whereas boldness meant immunity and a chance to win."

Further debunking the dreaded Gestapo, she added that this statement applied not only to her case but was generally correct. By 1936 too many Germans had failed to grasp its significance for a lone exception like the Baernisch ^{bureau} ~~business~~ to be safe in Berlin. Business was carried on in hotel halls, waiting rooms etc. Officially ^{Frau} ~~Mrs~~ Baernisch moved to Cologne, but kept "visiting" with her Berlin friends and on their behalf molesting the Gestapo.

I asked whether in her turn the new Vicepresident had yet been molested. Had she been threatened by any of her countrymen?

She shrugged. "Some of them", she admitted "promised to hang me, as soon as the British have gone. Others - friends and acquaintances - are wont to express their amazement at my foolhardiness in accepting so precarious a position. But then, I've always stood up for my beliefs and I believe wholehearted German cooperation with the Allies to be one of the pre-requisites ^{FOR} ~~of~~ this country's recovery."

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ASKED FOR ^{opinion}
~~Regarding~~ her ~~impressions~~ of the Nurnberg trial, Frau Baehnisch

expressed admiration for the patience shown by the tribunal.

"Unfortunately", she went on, "few Germans understand what it is all about. When Goering is permitted to talk for seventeen hours, they take his harrangue to be a Nazi victory."

end article.

Frau Baehnsch