



“I could pick the bastard off from here as easy as winking”

HITLER TAKES THE SALUTE AT THE PARADE HELD IN BERLIN TO MARK HIS 50TH BIRTHDAY, THE EVENT AT WHICH BRITISH ATTACHÉ NOEL MASON-MACFARLANE HAD PROPOSED TO ASSASSINATE THE NAZI LEADER POLISH NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Hitler in the *Crosshairs*

The majority of the myriad efforts to assassinate the Führer were undertaken by Germans, but, as **John Grehan** reveals, the British also contemplated engineering Herr Hitler's removal

His name was Noel Mason-Macfarlane. He was the British Military Attaché to Berlin – and he wanted to kill Hitler.

But there was a significant problem: the date on which Mason-Macfarlane wanted to shoot the Führer was in early 1939 and no such action could then be sanctioned by the British authorities.

Hitler was the target of dozens of plots intended to bring about his hasty and permanent demise. Some were more serious or went further than others, almost all were rumbled by the layers of security and intelligence tripwires that fed into the increasingly larger – and paranoid – mechanisms to guard him. Conspirators who survived to see trial faced the guillotine, or a firing squad in the case of military personnel.

Yet it all did little to deter those few who were most serious in their intent. Attempts to kill the Nazi leader go back to at least 1934, but, as is known, all that were attempted failed – albeit that death missed the Führer by inches (or moments) on multiple occasions.

Back in 1939, Mason-Macfarlane had calculated that during the celebratory parade for Hitler's 50th birthday on April 20, the German leader would be on a raised dais and within easy rifle shot of the attaché's drawing room window. Mason-Macfarlane detailed some of his assassination plans to Ewen Butler, *The Times* correspondent in Germany.

"He discussed the plan with me in the summer of 1938," recalled Butler, "as I sat looking out of the window of his Berlin flat – the window from which his

SIR NOEL MASON-MACFARLANE, WHEN BRITISH MILITARY ATTACHÉ IN BERLIN, HAD AMBITIONS TO SET HIS SIGHTS ON HITLER
ULLSTEINBILD/
TOPFOTO



rifleman would, if the Colonel (as he then was) had had his way, have fired the shot which would have ended Hitler's career. Mason-Mac believed then, as I did and still do, that the Führer's death at that time would have brought about the collapse of the National Socialist regime... Mason-Mac told me that he had put the plan up to London but without the slightest hope that it would be accepted. If by any wild chance it were approved,



he said, he himself would be the rifleman if necessary.

“I protested that the murder of the Chancellor by the British Military Attaché would create a really formidable diplomatic incident. He agreed but added that nobody in Germany would go to war on that account, whereas while Hitler lived war was certain.”

Noel Mason-Macfarlane went on to tell Butler that he could “pick the bastard off from here as easy as winking. There’d be hell to pay, of course, and I’d be finished in every sense of the word. Still... with that lunatic out of the way we might be able to get some sense into things.”

British Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, was unmoved by Mason-Macfarlane’s proposal. He said: “We have not reached that stage... when we have to use assassination

THE SWASTIKA FLIES AT THE BERGHOF JUST BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF WAR IN 1939. IT WAS THIS ALPINE LOCATION IN BAVARIA WHERE SOE THOUGHT HITLER WAS MOST VULNERABLE HISTORIC MILITARY PRESS

LEFT: HITLER CONVERSES WITH ANOTHER VISITOR TO THE MOOSLAHNERKOPF TEEHAUS. CLEARLY, HE WAS RELAXED - AND EXPOSED - AT THIS LOCATION. RIGHT: THAT SAME VIEW TODAY, ALTHOUGH THE TEEHAUS WAS DEMOLISHED IN 1951 AND ITS REMAINS CLEARED IN 2006. ONLY THIS VIEWING PLATFORM REMAINS NARA/AUTHOR

as a substitution for diplomacy.” It was a decision that not just Britain, but the whole world, would live to regret.

The Macedonian Plan

While numerous senior civilian and military figures in Germany had sought Britain’s help in removing Hitler from power both before and during the war – even using the Pope as an intermediary, it was not until the summer of 1944 that Britain, in the form of Special Operations Executive, undertook a serious investigation into the practicalities of assassinating Hitler.

SOE had, in fact, been approached in 1941 by a Macedonian – referred to only by his cover name of ‘Vilmar’ – who offered to kill Hitler. Vilmar, who had a record of violent crime, claimed to be a ‘crack shot’,

but, according to historian Denis Rigden, he was also ‘fat, middle-aged and often drunk’.

Vilmar also stated that he was terminally ill with cancer and, therefore, sought no financial reward other than the necessary expenses involved and the promise of a posthumous gallantry award if he lost his life as his plot unfolded.

Nevertheless, he was evidently taken seriously by SOE, and was given forged documents portraying him as a Bulgarian businessman. These enabled him to be infiltrated into Portugal and from there to Switzerland, where he was able to monitor German newspapers and radio broadcasts regarding Hitler’s public appearances.

Upon learning that Hitler was to visit Vienna, Vilmar travelled through Germany and into Austria.



He made his way to the Bulgarian embassy two days before Hitler's visit, where he asked if could be granted an audience with the Führer or be presented to him at a function. The consul was able to promise to allow Vilmar to accompany him at a diplomatic function which Hitler was due to attend.

Unfortunately, the night before the function, Vilmar went out on the town. At a nightclub he began drinking heavily and started showing off. To a group of women, he rolled up his trouser leg to proudly reveal the scar of a gunshot wound from his shady past and let them see the pistol he was carrying – the one, no doubt, with which he intended to kill Hitler. This was too much for one; she called the police. He was arrested and deported to Bulgaria a few days later.

The Vilmar episode apart, SOE did not officially contemplate an attack upon the closely guarded German leader in the intervening years. But, by 1944, Hitler's successes were a distant memory and while it was impossible to gauge the level of support for his regime across Germany, that it had waned was a certainty.

Alpine assassination

On June 27, 1944, a meeting was held at SOE's Baker Street HQ to discuss the question "of a deliberate



and continuous effort to try and liquidate Hitler". Over the course of the next four months a vast amount of information was compiled under the codename Operation Foxley by an agent known as LB/X – an individual subsequently identified as one Major H B Court.

The prospects of assassinating Hitler in Berlin were so slight that this was never even contemplated. The most favoured plan was to carry out such an act where Hitler felt relaxed and secure: his mountain retreat at Berchtesgaden, the Berghof.

The information gathered by SOE on Hitler, his habits and

his movements, was surprisingly detailed. The positioning and number of all the SS picquets was known and most of the buildings inside the Berghof estate had been identified. Planners even knew where their agents could stay in Berchtesgaden, which types of persons lived, worked and convalesced there, and even where they could hide immediately before the operation.

When he was at the Berghof, Hitler maintained a predictable routine. Almost every day between 10am and 11am, he took a morning stroll to the Mooslahnerkopf Teehaus for a

THE AUTHOR ON THE SO-CALLED 'TEAHOUSE PATH' AT BERCHTESGADEN, LOOKING TOWARDS WHERE THE MOOSLAHNERKOPF TEEHAUS ONCE STOOD IN THE TREES ACROSS WHAT IS NOW A GOLF COURSE. HITLER USED THIS PATH EACH DAY HISTORIC MILITARY PRESS

TAKEN FROM EVA BRAUN'S PERSONAL ALBUMS. THIS PICTURE SHOWS HITLER ALONG THE PATH FROM THE BERGHOF TO THE MOOSLAHNERKOPF TEEHAUS. THE ROUTE TOOK HIM CLOSE TO THE TREES AND WELL WITHIN RIFLE RANGE NARA

"It was the only time Hitler could relax as an ordinary man, strolling through Bavarian countryside untroubled by the war of his doing"



light breakfast. The Teehaus had been built in 1937 on the orders of Martin Bormann, one of Hitler's closest assistants, and was located a roughly 20-minute walk through the valley from the Berghof.

Hitler valued these morning walks immensely and insisted on walking without a close bodyguard, often alone or with a friend or colleague. This was the only time he could relax as an ordinary man, strolling through Bavarian countryside untroubled by the war of his doing that raged across Europe, to enjoy the simple pleasure of a glass of milk and a slice of toast at the Teehaus.

Though SS guards watched him throughout most of his walk, they did so from afar. Therefore, it was only at this time that Hitler was virtually unguarded. If a sniper

could get within range, the chances of killing him were very good.

Fortunately, the trees through which Hitler walked were part of a dense forest that continued beyond the perimeter of the estate to the River Larosbach. While sentries and dog teams patrolled the fence, the wood beyond the perimeter was not patrolled or guarded. Moreover, as these trees were mainly non-deciduous, they still held their leaves throughout the year and would provide excellent cover both in the approach to the perimeter, and when the sniper waited for the arrival of the target. At the selected point in the woods, the sniper would only be about 100-200 yards from the path taken by the Führer.

It was one thing dreaming up such a scheme, but it was another to find a man (or men) with the credentials and courage to attempt such a complex and dangerous task. Guaranteed reprisals dissuaded would-be assassins from occupied countries, and it was not until January 1945 that an officer in the Military Research Section of the British Defence Attaché in Washington, a Captain Edmund Hilary Bennett, came to the attention of SOE's X (German) Section as a likely, willing candidate.

The 25-year-old intelligence officer was not told the exact nature of the operation, only that it would require him to lie low in Germany for a considerable period while

CAPTAIN BENNETT AND HIS ASSISTANT WERE TO BE EQUIPPED WITH GERMAN WEAPONS: A SCOPED KAR 98K RIFLE AND A LUGER P.08 PISTOL WITH BRITISH-MADE SUPPRESSOR. THE PISTOL SHOWN WAS EARMARKED FOR THE OPERATION AND IS TODAY IN THE COLLECTION OF THE COMBINED MILITARY SERVICES MUSEUM IN ESSEX



DESIGNED TO KNOCK-OUT GERMAN TANKS, THE EFFECTIVE (IF AWKWARD) PIAT WAS TO BE AN UNLIKELY WEAPON OF ASSASSINATION RAMA



SOE ALSO PLANNED TO KILL HITLER BY BLOWING UP HIS TRAIN AS IT WAITED IN A STATION. SECURITY AT MOST HALTS WAS MUCH LIGHTER THAN IT WAS AT THIS STOP DURING A STATE VISIT TO ITALY, BUT THE GUARD WOULD BE HEAVY EVEN AT BRIEF, UNANNOUNCED STOPS

THE FÜHRERSONDERZUG

The Führersonderzug was used by Hitler as a mobile HQ until late 1940, and was a preferred method of wartime transport. Its layout varied but usually comprised ten to sixteen wagons and two locomotives, commonly Kriegslök-type steam engines.

Hitler's personal accommodations were in the Führerwagen, with rooms for four guards, the Führer, guests and an opulent lounge. The nerve centre was the Befehlswagen, a conference room and communications suite with rooms for a teleprinter, telephone exchange and an Enigma machine. A short-wave radio was used when the train was moving.

Other carriages included the Begleitkommandowagen, which accommodated a detachment of Reichssicherheitsdienst guards, and the Pressewagen for Reich press officials. There were also cars for luggage, guests, bathing and dining.

The train would have been tough to attack, especially from the ground. There were decoys, details of its movements were strictly need-to-know, its arrival often unannounced and its locomotives were swapped rather than replenished to ensure necessary stoppages were brief.



Defences comprised two Flakwagens, one at each end, usually with a pair of four-barrel 2cm Flakvierling 38 anti-aircraft guns. Typical complement was around 200, including Luftwaffe gun crews and Hitler's protection detail. Many of the remaining staff would have been Wehrmacht or SS personnel.

At least 12 sonderzüge were used, mostly by ministers and the chiefs of Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht, des Heeres, der Marine and der Luftwaffe

– this included those used by Hermann Göring, Joachim von Ribbentrop and Heinrich Himmler. Each was named, including the Führersonderzug, which was first called 'Amerika' but later changed to 'Brandenburg'.

The SS destroyed the Führerwagen in May 1945. The rest of the train was divided by western Allies. Some elements were re-used, including by West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, and parts are now in museums.

HITLER WITH JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP BESIDE THE FÜHRERSONDERZUG, THE NAZI LEADER'S PERSONAL TRAIN
CORBIS/GETTY

“Attempts by the Polish resistance to derail Hitler’s train had been made without success, but the Foxley papers state that derauling a train in Germany would be far from impossible”

gathering the necessary intelligence to enable him to do the job. If Bennett failed to kill Hitler on his walk, then an alternative plan called for a two-man team to attack the Führer's car from the woods with a PIAT anti-tank weapon as he returned to the Berghof.

Another option was considered: aerial assault. It was suggested that if advanced notification of Hitler's arrival at the Berghof could be obtained, it would be possible to mount a combined operation, which would see the RAF bomb the estate – including the SS barracks – followed by the dropping of a parachute battalion or the SAS into the Berchtesgaden area. This option, much like the famous '20 July'/'von Stauffenberg' plot, would have had the added effect of eliminating whatever echelons of the Nazi, SS and Wehrmacht leadership that happened to be at the Berghof that day.

A battalion of 800 men would overwhelm the 300 or so German

troops stationed in and immediately around the estate. The garrison at the Berghof, except for those committed to anti-aircraft duties, would make their way to the large air raid shelters dug into the hillside when the bombing began, so the parachutists would theoretically face little opposition. Nor would it have been possible for the garrisons at Salzburg or Bad Reichenhall to reach Berchtesgaden in time.

Jumping track

If an assassination attempt proved too difficult to mount at the Berghof, the possibility of killing Hitler as he travelled between Berlin and Berchtesgaden was also given consideration. The usual mode of transportation was in his special train, the Führersonderzug.

Attempts by the Polish resistance to derail the Führersonderzug had already been made without success, but the Operation Foxley papers do state that derauling a train in Germany would be far from

impossible, as the railways there were lightly guarded compared with those in occupied territories.

However, if any action was to be taken against the Führersonderzug, it was suggested that it should occur in Austria where the guarding of the trains was considered even 'slacker' than elsewhere in the Reich. The favoured spot was in a tunnel, where "a sabotage party," the Foxley report continued, "disguised as Bahnpolizei with one member in mufti (as Gestapo men), or as Landeschützen [second line troops] would not arouse the suspicion of the guards, and should be able to 'take over', lay their charges and destroy the train in the tunnel".

Another suggestion was to derail the train by switching the points so that the Führersonderzug, rushing along at 75mph, would be diverted into a siding where it would crash. A further possibility was to strike while the train was passing through a station, at which point an agent

could throw a suitcase packed with explosive under it. For this to be practical, the Führersonderzug would have to be on the track adjacent to the platform where the agent stood. It was thought that a suitable individual for this task could be recruited from disaffected German POWs.

At any station where the train was to stop, Bahnpolizei armed with pistols and sometimes long-arms, together with Gestapo detachments (some in plain clothes) protected the platform – though the station was not cleared of civilians. At longer stops, where Hitler left the train, men of the SS-Begleitkommando des Führers (the SS-Begleit-Kommando) also alighted the train to form a bodyguard, never leaving the Führer's side. Members of the separate Reichssicherheitsdienst were also likely nearby.

Such was the security around the movements of Hitler's train, however, that there was little chance of discovering such information. This was the main reason not much attention was given by SOE to this form of action. It was also highly unspecific, in that there could be no guarantee that Hitler would be among those who might be killed in the 'accident'.

Stationary sabotage

Attention, therefore, turned to conducting some form of sabotage for when the train was in sidings. When Hitler was in Berlin, the Führersonderzug was usually stationed at a maintenance depot at Tempelhof and shunted to the chosen departure station, usually taking two hours.

In Austria, however, the Führersonderzug was normally serviced, cleaned and provisioned at sidings by the Schloss Klessheim, a Baroque palace two miles west of Salzburg. There the work was generally carried out by Begleit-Kommando personnel. With the train so heavily guarded, and its movements difficult to glean in advance, it was suggested that it might be more practical to attack Hitler as he was being driven to the train when it was at the Schloss Klessheim sidings.

If an agent was based in Salzburg, he would be able to watch for the arrival of the train at Schloss Klessheim. With Hitler's presence being so badly needed in Berlin or at the Eastern Front, the agent

THE SITE WHERE ANOTHER ATTEMPT ON HITLER'S LIFE WAS REPORTEDLY MADE IN THE OBERALSALZBERG. THIS BEND IN THE ROAD FROM BERCHTESGADEN TO THE BERGHOF IS SAID TO BE WHERE OTTO STRASSER CLAIMED SA MAN HEINRICH GRUNOW KILLED HITLER'S DRIVER JULIUS SCHRECK IN A FAILED BID IN 1935. SCHRECK (RIGHT, FOREGROUND, WITH HITLER) LOOKED LIKE THE FÜHRER, BUT CONTRARY TO THE CLAIMS, APPEARS TO HAVE SUCCEMDED TO MENINGITIS IN 1936
AUTHOR



would know he did not have long to wait in his chosen spot with his sniper rifle before Hitler returned to the schloss.

Hitler's cavalcade always followed the same route between the Berghof and the schloss which, almost as far as the autobahn beyond Grödig, is heavily wooded with the tree line very close to the roadside. This, it was again noted, provided excellent cover for a sniper. This route was

known to be guarded, but this is a distance of almost 15 miles, and it would have been impossible to provide anything other than a token presence with large gaps between the defenders.

However, attacking Hitler's heavily armoured car while travelling at speed was hardly an easy proposition and could not be regarded as a certain method of killing him.

HOW HITLER TOOK HIS TEA

The incredible detail collated by Operation Foxley is perhaps best shown in files concerning the poisoning of Hitler, as released by The National Archives. They stated: "Hitler is a tea addict. He always drinks it with milk. [He] is said to be extremely fond of apple juice".

"The reports that he drinks enormous quantities of black coffee [as reported in the press] are denied by 'P/W' [a former attendant] although a dining car attendant from von Ribbentrop's train declares this is not so and that he personally served the Führer with coffee and milk at the Berghof.

"Apart from such table waters as Pachinger and Apolarinaris the only other beverage Hitler takes is his 'near beer'... said to be a special product of the Holzkirchen brewery, Munich, whose lorry makes a delivery once a month to the Berghof. It is difficult to see how this beer could be treated outside the brewery, ie, before bottling."

Unsurprisingly the considerations given to 'Substance 1', a "tasteless and odourless" poison with a lethal dose of 2g to 2½ pints, were thorough. It was noted that "neither hard nor soft water is visibly affected by one lethal dose", black coffee treated with '1' "indicates no perceptible change in appearance" and that adding of milk did not make "any immediate difference in the appearance of the beverage".

Tea with milk showed, it said, "no detectable change, but without milk it immediately becomes opalescent". This was perhaps considered the preferred method of delivery, as it was noted that when Hitler took tea, "the milk is poured first into the cup [so] it is unlikely the tea's opalescence would be noticed from the teapot".

"The use of '1' in food preparation – specifically apples, prunes and cabbage – was also considered, while a lethal dose to beer was said to cause "no alteration whatever in appearance" though wines and spirits became "turbid at once".

As a result, consideration was given to shooting him as he stepped out of the vehicle – when he would be fully exposed and most vulnerable. The alternative to a rifle would be for the assassin to use a PIAT to blast Hitler as his car drew to a stop.

Poison in the tank

There were occasions, it was noted, when the Führersonderzug was



THE RAILWAY SIDINGS NEAR SCHLOSS KLESSEHEIM WHERE THE FÜHRERSONDERZUG WAS KEPT WHEN HITLER USED IT TO TRAVEL TO THE BERGHOF. THIS WAS A POSSIBLE LOCATION FOR THE PROPOSED POISONING OF HITLER'S WATER SUPPLY HISTORIC MILITARY PRESS

left in the sidings at Salzburg, which offered another possibility contemplated by SOE – poisoning the train's water supply.

When the Führersonderzug was in the sidings, the outside was washed by a team of six French female workers. According to the Foxley report, these women were "apparently approachable".

It was known that they were often to be found in the evenings, after 5pm, at local cafés – particularly the Café Funfhaus and Café Pitter. Though they had to be back at their work camp by between 10

and 11pm, they were known to be "dateable" and could be identified by their black, buttoned, knee-length overalls.

The idea of contacting these women was in the hope that one of them would be willing and able to 'doctor' the water in the tank above the kitchen of the Führersonderzug's dining car. Into this 120-gallon tank would be dropped approximately 768g of the chosen poison in the form of a strong solution. The movement of the train as it chugged along would distribute the poison evenly. This

HITLER DIED BY HIS OWN HAND ON APRIL 30, 1945 IN THE FÜHRERBUNKER IN BERLIN. IT RENDERED ANY FURTHER ATTEMPT ON HIS LIFE MOOT, BUT BRITISH PLANNERS HAD ALREADY SUSPENDED THEIR EFFORTS BELIEVING HIS SURVIVAL WAS MORE DAMAGING TO THE NAZI WAR EFFORT THAN HIS DEATH MAURICE SAVAGE/ALAMY

NO. 15,288 ONE PENNY

Daily Mail

FOR KING AND EMPIRE

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, 1945

LAIE WAH NEWS

Sleeping health / The two tablets of GENASPRIN at bedtime

HITLER DEAD, GERMAN RADIO TELLS WORLD

Admiral Doenitz is new Führer: 'The battle goes on'

ADOLF HITLER is dead. Grand Admiral Doenitz, Commander-in-Chief of the German Navy, has been appointed his successor. The German radio gave this news to the world at 10.25 last night in the following words: "It is reported from the Führer's headquarters that our Führer, Adolf Hitler, has fallen this afternoon in his command post in the Reich Chancellery fighting to his last breath against Bolshevism."

"On April 30 (Monday) the Führer appointed Grand Admiral Doenitz as his successor. The Grand Admiral will now speak to the German people."

Admiral Doenitz, who immediately came on the air, said: "My task is to save the German people from annihilation at the hands of Bolshevism. We shall have to fight on against the British and Americans as far as they hinder our aim."

The naming of the admiral as the new Führer comes as a complete surprise.

It suggests that what remains of Germany has been split into two camps—those who wish to fight on, led by Doenitz, and those who want to surrender, led by Himmler.

"It is significant that no reference was made in the announcement to Himmler, who has already offered unconditional surrender to Britain and the United States, and is expected to comply with the Allied demand that capitulation must be made only to Russia.

Doenitz said: "German men and women, soldiers of the German Army, our Führer, Adolf Hitler, has fallen. The German people are bowed in sorrow and reverence.

"Our Führer had recommended every soldier to

NO NEWS FROM HIMMLER, BUT Surrender begins on three fronts

REPORTS received in London late last night indicated that, while no fresh offer of capitulation has been received from Himmler, large German forces on widely separated fronts have begun to surrender piecemeal to the Allies with or without his authority.

(Here is the latest position):

DENMARK—German occupation forces were reported from Stockholm to be evacuating the country with all speed.

NORWAY—Negotiations are said to be going on for the German garrisons to lay down their arms at the Swedish frontier.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA: A delegation of German and Czech industrialists was reported by Luxembourg radio to have left Prague to meet Allied representatives and hand over the territories of Bohemia and Moravia.

ITALY: Marshal Graziani and General Pennar, German Chief of Staff of the Italian Fascist Legion Army, late night announced the surrender of that army and ordered all troops to lay down their arms.

Count Bernadotte, on arriving back in Stockholm yesterday, told a Press conference that he had seen Himmler during his second visit to Denmark and had brought a fresh message from the German hierarchy.

German army scurries

Nazi radio kept world in suspense

Wagner build-up

The full official plans

The news was not made public until 10.25 last night. It was reported from the Führer's headquarters that our Führer, Adolf Hitler, has fallen this afternoon in his command post in the Reich Chancellery fighting to his last breath against Bolshevism.

"On April 30 (Monday) the Führer appointed Grand Admiral Doenitz as his successor. The Grand Admiral will now speak to the German people."

Admiral Doenitz, who immediately came on the air, said: "My task is to save the German people from annihilation at the hands of Bolshevism. We shall have to fight on against the British and Americans as far as they hinder our aim."

The naming of the admiral as the new Führer comes as a complete surprise.

It suggests that what remains of Germany has been split into two camps—those who wish to fight on, led by Doenitz, and those who want to surrender, led by Himmler.

"It is significant that no reference was made in the announcement to Himmler, who has already offered unconditional surrender to Britain and the United States, and is expected to comply with the Allied demand that capitulation must be made only to Russia.

Doenitz said: "German men and women, soldiers of the German Army, our Führer, Adolf Hitler, has fallen. The German people are bowed in sorrow and reverence.

"Our Führer had recommended every soldier to

Busmen to strike to-day

FOOD SHIPS FOR DUTCH

SHAEP announces Atlantic and German representatives made arrangements for food supply to Dutch by air, sea, and road. The Anglo-Dutch news agency's report states in detail that the British and German forces are to be supplied by air, sea, and road.

THE BERGHOF DID NOT SURVIVE THE WAR UNSCATHED. IN APRIL 1945 IT WAS DAMAGED IN A RAID BY MORE THAN 350 RAF BOMBERS AND, ON MAY 4, WAS SET ABLAZE AND ABANDONED HOURS BEFORE IT WAS CAPTURED BY US AND FRENCH TROOPS. IT WAS DEMOLISHED IN 1952
ULLSTEINBILD/GETTY

would have to be done when the train received its final washdown on the day before leaving the sidings.

How practical all this was, is open to question – and was thought so at the time, particularly as the French women were only responsible for cleaning the outside of the train. The inside was serviced by Reichbahn (state railway) employees, a far less inviting proposition for infiltration or

subversion. As a result, this plan to poison the waterhole, so to speak, like so many other suggestions, came to nothing.

However, despite extensive investigations and discussion around the question of killing the Führer, as the war raged on it was concluded that Hitler's handling of Germany's war effort was so destructive that it would be far better for him to be left in charge. ●

FURTHER READING

The author suggests the following: *Kill the Führer: Section X and Operation Foxley* (History Press) by Dennis Rigden; *Approach March* (Hutchinson) by Julian Amery (autobiography); *Operation Foxley: The British Plan to Kill Hitler* (PRO Publications) by Mark Seaman; and *Guarding Hitler, The Secret World of the Führer* (Pen & Sword) by Mark Felton.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Grehan is a military historian, author and former member of the *Britain at War* editorial team whose works and interests range from the conflict in Afghanistan all the way back to the Battle of Hastings.

More details of Britain's involvement in plans to assassinate Hitler, plus scores of other plots and actual attempts planned in Germany and the world-over – some never previously published – can be found in John's latest book *The Hitler Assassination Attempts: The Plots, Places and People that Almost Changed History*. (Frontline Books, ISBN: 978-1-39901-890-6, RRP £25.)

