

NEIGHBORS...JUST WATCHING.....

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MRS. MARX'S PILLOW

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Saul Friedlander, an expert on the Holocaust period, ends the first volume of his study *Nazi Germany and the Jews* with a description of what must have been a typical little set piece from those times in Germany. The morning after the November 9, 1938 Kristallnacht, when the Nazi authorities instigated anti-Jewish pogroms across the country (it is called "*Kristallnacht*" because the broken glass from thousands of shattered shop windows literally covered the streets of German towns the next day), half a dozen battered men stood on a truck in the square of the little Mosel town of Wittlich. Among them was the butcher, Marx, whose despairing wife stood nearby, wailing hysterically and stretching her hands out towards the faces of the neighbors watching the scene from behind the closed windows of the houses surrounding the square. "Why are you tormenting us?" she cried, "Have we ever wronged you?" More than half a century later there was an unexpected echo of her cry in Hamburg when, after delivering a lecture, Friedlander was approached by a young man who passed on a greeting from his grandmother, a resident of Wittlich. Seeing the surprised reaction of the lecturer, who had never heard of her, the young man explained that his grandmother had been Mrs. Marx's neighbor before the war. Like many other local people, she had taken over "formerly Jewish property." It so happened that she was still in the possession of a pillow that had belonged to Mrs. Marx. She kept it in the bottom of her wardrobe and, troubled by her conscience, had no idea what to do with it.

QUESTIONS

1. Your reaction??
2. Aryanization is the euphemism used by the Nazis in referring to the expropriation of Jewish businesses, enterprises and property, by Nazi German authorities and their transfer to "aryan" ownership or control. After Kristallnacht, the policy of aryanization was in full force. For further information, read the excerpt below:

Aryanization

As Hitler consolidated power, he pursued his goal to eliminate "non-Aryans" from the social and economic fabric of Germany. By 1938, thousands of Jews had been fired or forcibly "retired" from their jobs as a result of laws (e.g. "Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service") and decrees. Jews were barred from serving in government posts, practicing law, participating in cultural enterprises such as theater, movies, arts, and literature (September 29, 1933), and serving in the press (October 4, 1933).

By 1938, with the reins of power totally in Hitler's hands, the Nazis began a program to systematically remove the Jews from participation in the German economy. This policy, called "Aryanization," made use of several government decrees:

January 5, 1938 - The "Law Regarding Changes of Family Names and Given Names" was issued, regulating name changes. One purpose was to make it more difficult for Jews to escape persecution by changing their names.

April 22, 1938 - It became a crime for a German to disguise the fact that a business was owned by a Jew.

April 26, 1938 - Jews had to report the value of their property, except for personal goods, if the value exceeded 5,000 Reichmarks.

June 14, 1938 - Jewish businesses were defined by decree.

July 6, 1938 - Many types of businesses were ordered to stop operation by December 30, 1938 if they were "Jewish" consistent with the June 14, 1938 decree.

July 23, 1938 - Jews were required to carry identification cards.

July 25, 1938 - Jewish physicians were given until September 30th to give up their practices.

September 27, 1938 - Jewish lawyers were barred from practicing their profession after November 30th.

October 5, 1938 - Jews were required to hand in their passports, so that the passports could include the designation of "J." This action was motivated by a request by the Swiss government, which did not want to admit Jewish refugees

3. Can you interpret the euphemism **aryanization** using the information you have learned from our discussion of the Nazi concept of **Volk**?

Now go to the web link: <http://www.shoaheducation.com/aryan.html>