

procedures. Drug companies were barred from displaying letters of thanks from satisfied customers and from making unsubstantiated claims of efficacy. Ads for cancer drugs were allowed to be published only in medical journals, and ads construed as raising public fears (of cancer, for example) were banned altogether.²³ Auler was one of those calling for limits on what could be said about cancer: "The time is past when every physician and non-physician can publicly express his opinion about the nature of cancerous growths."²⁴ The campaign extended beyond cancer, as when Reich Health Leader Conti in 1939 stated that the regime would no longer tolerate "exaggerated advertising for infant formulas" which diminished a mother's "will to nurse" (*Stillwillen*).²⁵ The head of the government's Advertising Council boasted that the ads produced since the Nazi revolution were "far more honest" than ads published prior to that time; six years of Nazi rule had finally produced a genuine "truth in advertising."²⁶ The Nazis were obviously somewhat selective in their deceptions.

BIOWARFARE RESEARCH IN DISGUISE

It is important not to exaggerate the success of the Nazi war on cancer. Nazi militarism cut short many of the long-term hopes of the regime, including several of the most promising cancer initiatives. Anticancer efforts slowed dramatically as the war dragged on: in the face of mounting casualties on both fronts and the demand for breakneck production at home, more immediate priorities came to the fore. Hans Auler in 1943 complained that plans to conduct mass screening for cervical and uterine cancer had had to be scrapped,²⁷ and many other programs suffered. This is not hard to understand: nations offering up hundreds of thousands of men to be killed on the front are not likely to spend a lot of time thinking about how to prevent cancer at home. The same was true in other nations; in the United States, for example, Wilhelm Hueper's *Occupational Tumors and Allied Diseases*, the most comprehensive analysis of occupational cancer of the century, was essentially ig-

nored when it appeared in the spring of 1942, only a few weeks after the declaration of war against Japan.²⁸

This is not to say, however, that there were not important research initiatives undertaken during the five and a half years Germany was at war. The *Zeitschrift für Krebsforschung* and *Monatsschrift für Krebsbekämpfung* continued publishing through the end of 1944, as did several other journals reporting on cancer topics. Tobacco hazards research continued, as did experiments on food dyes, asbestos, hormones, and viral and radiation carcinogenesis. Efforts were even launched to find out whether the trauma and deprivation caused by the war might result in cancers. The *Monatsschrift für Unfallheilkunde* reviewed the medicolegal aspects of tumors caused by accidents, and whether gunshots could cause cancer. Such pursuits continued late into the war (e.g., explorations of whether frostbite or scarring or gas warfare could cause cancer).²⁹

Some of what passed for "cancer research," though, was not what it seemed to be on the surface. Ute Deichmann in her *Biologists under Hitler* has shown that participation in "cancer research" was successfully used to evade the draft, especially after the outbreak of war. Adolf Butenandt, winner of the 1939 Nobel Prize for his work on sex hormones, employed three DFG-supported scientists, all of whom obtained military deferments for their work. Then as now, it seems, the attachment of the label "cancer research" gave basic biology an aura of utility and respectability—and in Germany in the early 1940s could actually save your life. Richard Kuhn, head of Heidelberg's Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Medical Research, in 1942 argued that the Göttingen cancer chemist Hans Lettré should be exempted from uniformed service on the grounds that his work had military potential: "In the U.S. this problem [of chemical carcinogenesis] is being actively researched, and the suggestion has been made that cancer-causing substances may be deployed in the war"³⁰—as biowarfare agents, in other words. Suggestions such as this may help explain why some of Germany's leading cancer researchers tried to marry cancer research and biowarfare work, as we shall see in a moment.