even for "respectable" Germans were lowered several times in the course of the war. When rations were cut in March of 1942, a public opinion survey conducted by the Sicherheitsdienst (Heydrich's SS security service) found that no other announcement since the onset of war had delivered such a blow to public morale.[181]

We will probably never know what effect Nazi food and social policies may have had on German cancer rates. The British epidemiologist George Davey Smith has argued that Nazi healthy-eating campaigns "had no discernible long term impact" on German health and well-being; indeed, he suggests, the net effect may have been unfavorable, given the notorious *Fresswelle* ("wave of gluttony") that followed the war in the 1950s. Germans seem to have made up for the deprivations of war by feasting and fattening (and smoking) in subsequent decades. Germany today has roughly the same pattern of mortality seen in other overfed and oversmoked nations,[182] with some interesting exceptions that I will note in my concluding chapter.

We do know that postwar diabetes rates fell, as sugar was hard to come by; we also know that morbidity rates from several other illnesses fell. Cancer effects, though, are far more difficult to discern. Stomach cancer rates have declined everywhere in Europe and America, and probably have nothing to do with anything peculiar to what the Nazis did. Declining stomach cancer rates seem to be traceable to the increasing consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, owing in no small part to improved transport networks—including better roads and highways but also the development of refrigerated trucks and trains.

The ascetic impulses of the 1930s and 1940s have not disappeared, but they no longer cling to the right-wing impulses we associate with murderous antisemitism—or at least not with the same force. Movements can be disengaged from their ideological support strings, however important those strings may be at any given time in history.

6

The Campaign against Tobacco



So many excellent men have been lost to tobacco poisoning.

Adolf Hitler, 1942

Die "Tabakdämmerung" hat begonnen.
(We are witnessing the beginning of the end of tobacco.)

Wolfgang Klarner, in his 1940 medical thesis

HISTORIANS of science tend to treat the 1950s as a kind of *Stunde Null* (zero hour) of tobacco health research, especially when it comes to the question of when a lung cancer hazard was first recognized.[1] In a recent review of Richard Kluger's *Ashes to Ashes*, for example, Daniel J. Kevles remarked that the danger of smoking to health "rested on little more than anecdotal evidence coupled with moral censure until 1950, when studies appeared in the United States and England that strongly incriminated cigarettes as a cause of lung cancer."[2]

Was it, though, the Americans and British who first proved the lung cancer link? The startling truth is that it was actually in Nazi Germany that the link was originally established. German tobacco epidemiology was, in fact, for a time, the most advanced in the world, as were many other aspects of the antitobacco effort. Support for tobacco hazards research was strong among the Nazi medical elite; indeed, it was in Germany in the late 1930s that we first find a broad medical recognition of both the addictive nature of tobacco and the lung cancer hazard of smoking.