Germany has recently become a prolific source of fantastic news items. One of the oddest came from there not long ago, in the form of an ultimatum from the head of some Nazi bureau connected with poultry raising. "Our hens," said this official, "must increase their average quota of eggs from ninety to a hundred and forty a year, and must do it on the same feed"—which is admittedly scarce and largely ersatz. Well, maybe. The familiar hen of democracy is nothing to write home about in the matter of intelligence. She makes a poor pedestrian, frequently spends weeks sitting on a golf ball trying to hatch out a birdie, and if given the chance would probably vote for thirty dollars every Tuesday; but she has at least absorbed enough of the spirit of democracy to go on a standup strike if she doesn't get a full and unadulterated dinner pail.

The totalitarian hen, however, is probably different. The older pre-Hitler generation has passed on except possibly for a few very tough citizens, and the hope of the nation lies in the youth. Trained from early egghood in Nazi principles, the German hen should be proud to do her bit for the glorious Reich, swallowing anything given her and by that fact endearing herself to the party in power. With her mighty half-inch brain she will patriotically concentrate on mass egg production, using mostly gravel for raw material, and as a reward, will be at least as well treated as the average citizen. Even better, in fact, because she will not be required to join the Nazi party, in spite of her ideal mental and spiritual fitness for that signal honor.