



A Stand Against Tyranny: Norway's Physicians and the Nazis

Maynard Cohen

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A Stand Against Tyranny presents the dramatic history of Norway's physicians during the Nazi Occupation. Throughout this important book Dr. Maynard Cohen weaves two principal interrelated themes: the valor, dedication, and irreplaceable contribution of Norwegian physicians to the Resistance Movement and the country's century-long progression from a position of official intolerance to a humanitarian state that functions at times as the "the conscience of the world."

Cohen interviewed more than twenty men and women whose personal stories are the foundation of this book. Based on these interviews and supplemented with information from Norwegian newspapers and other relevant literature, this book also brings to life the Holocaust as it unfolded in Norway.

While many citizens participated in the Resistance, the role of Norway's physicians was central to its efforts. As graduates of Norway's only medical school at the University of Oslo, doctors belonged to a tightly-knit group with a close communication network. They occupied a trusted position in Norwegian society, and under the guise of practicing medicine, they could contact virtually any of their fellow citizens without arousing Nazi suspicion. From rescuing children in orphanages to performing plastic surgery to disguise an underground agent, Norwegian doctors acted forcefully and effectively to combat the Nazi invasion.

In particular, Cohen recounts the story of Johan Scharffenberg, a psychiatrist and journalist who was committed to stifling the Nazi's power, and who, despite imminent punishment, published widely on the deplorable acts of Nazism and aided the fledgling resistance. Cohen also describes the moving heroism of Leo Eitinger, a Czech-born physician and lieutenant. While imprisoned in concentration camps with his own life in peril, Eitinger was brave in his dedication to treating and caring for fellow prisoners.

With A Stand Against Tyranny, Maynard Cohen weaves together an astonishing and triumphant tale of pride and determination, and provides a memorial to those many Norwegians, native and refugee alike, who placed their lives at risk in the service of humanity.

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