



FIGURE 11.2 "An Aryan is ..." Cartoon. *Labor Front*, 1936.

Originally published in the American magazine, *Labor Front*, in 1936. The cartoon depicts Hitler in a cap and gown pointing out the attributes of the ideal "Aryan" type (tall, strong, and blonde) to Nazi soldiers. Under a diagram chart labeled "An Aryan Is" stand his paragons: short, apish Josef Goebbels, bloated Hermann Goering and the dark-haired Rudolf Hess. Students often inquire about the incongruity between the Nazi ideal and its party leadership. Contemporary illustrations such as this one validate this observation about the fundamental hypocrisy of Nazism.

One of the problems with the Nazis' adulation of Aryan perfection was that none of the regime's most senior leaders fit the tall, blond, blue-eyed model. Hitler, when not ranting, looked to be a rather prosaic type, a middle manager of middle age with a strange mustache that evoked the American comic actor Charlie Chaplin. Goring was hugely overweight, and increasingly given to odd quirks of narcissistic display, such as painting his nails and changing his uniform several times a day. Himmler looked like a practitioner of the field in which he had been employed before being anointed by Hitler: chicken farming.

Goebbels's appearance posed the greatest challenge, however. He was a shrunken figure with a crippled foot whose looks bore a startling resemblance to the grotesquely distorted caricatures that appeared regularly in Nazi hate literature. A bit of doggerel discreetly made the round in Berlin: "Dear God, made me blind / That I may Goebbels' Aryan find."