

60 MINUTES

Volume XII, Number 29

as broadcast over the

CBS TELEVISION NETWORK

Sunday, March 30, 1980

7:00 - 8:00 PM, EST

With CBS News Correspondents

Mike Wallace, Morley Safer, Dan Rather and Harry Reasoner

"LOOKING OUT FOR MRS. BERWID" - Produced by Norman Gorin

"STRIKE TWO!" - Produced by Drew Phillips

"ONE OF HITLER'S FAVORITES" - Produced by Jeanne Solomon

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JUDGE JOSEPH DE MARO (Nassau County): After hearing all of the psychiatrists and seeing him on a number of occasions, I was convinced that he was going to kill his wife if he was ever free.

MORLEY SAFER: Exactly as the judge predicted, Adam Berwid murdered his wife. The psychiatric hospital where Berwid was a patient was warned that he would do just that if he were let off the grounds, and yet the hospital let him out on a pass.

HARRY REASONER: We may be on the verge of a baseball strike. Everybody else goes on strike, you say, why not ballplayers? Why not? The average salary of a big-league ballplayer is up 600 percent since 1970, and it may astound you to learn that a hundred and thirty-three thousand dollars is the average yearly paycheck in the major leagues. The players making the big money are known as free agents, but the owners say it's anything but free, as far as they're concerned. So, they're digging in, and the players are talking strike.

DAN RATHER: You were not Hitler's pinup?

LENI RIEFENSTAHL (laughing): No, not a little bit.

RATHER: Or his mistress?

RIEFENSTAHL: Not a little— not one day, not one minute.

RATHER: If she was not Hitler's pinup, she had certainly caught his eye. Leni Riefenstahl recently spent her 77th birthday in the Bahamas. To some, she remains one of the greatest film makers the cinema has ever seen. To others, she was an evil genius who helped celebrate a brutal regime.

MIKE WALLACE: I'm Mike Wallace.

SAFER: I'm Morley Safer.

RATHER: I'm Dan Rather.

REASONER: I'm Harry Reasoner. Those stories and more tonight on 60 MINUTES.

(Announcements)

REASONER: How about the players? They've voted almost unanimously to authorize a strike. But will the highly paid stars stay on strike long, watching those ten- and twenty-thousand-dollar-a-week paychecks go down the drain? They say they will.

DAVE PARKER: I'm for the players, you know. I'm in there with the Players Association, and the only way that we can fight this misjustice that's trying to take place towards us now is to stay together as a unit. And I'm definitely for whatever the— the Players Association choose to do.

REGGIE JACKSON: We have a very nice benefit plan and— and pension plan, and Reggie Jackson makes a very nice salary because of Marvin Miller and his Players Association. And I will stick with them 100 percent.

MIKE SCHMIDT: I'm willing to sacrifice whatever it takes in order to make it so that the younger ballplayers coming into the game now have the same opportunity that I have.

REASONER: Since Marvin Miller became head of the union in 1966, both sides have been playing hardball. The players boycotted spring training in the 1969 negotiations. They struck for 13 days in 1972. And in 1976, the owners locked the players out of spring training. So, tough talk by both sides has to be taken seriously.

The union meets Tuesday to set a strike date. Will there be a strike? We don't know. But we think you fans better enjoy these scenes. They might be the only baseball you see this season.

With negotiations going nowhere, last Thursday the owners asked federal mediators to step in. Meanwhile, the owners have put together a \$7-million strike fund and have taken out strike insurance. A strike could start opening day, April 9th, but there's talk the players would rather wait until Memorial Day weekend—when attendance is at its highest, the TV revenue begins to come in, and they have collected enough paychecks to make it through the summer.

(Announcements)

ANNOUNCER: 60 MINUTES, a CBS News weekly magazine, will continue.

(Announcements)

"ONE OF HITLER'S FAVORITES"

DAN RATHER: She was one of Hitler's favorites, although she hardly fit the part. The kind of woman Hitler admired was one whose life centered around her children, her kitchen and her church. This woman's life centered around her camera. She doesn't like to be reminded of it, but she will be remembered as the filmmaker who glorified the early Hitler years. And one of the films she made for Hitler was about a sports event many people thought the United States and the rest of the civilized world should have boycotted.

(Marching music)

If ever there was an Olympic Games where sport became consumed by politics, it was here: Berlin, 1936. The German team marched round the Olympic stadium in uniform and jackboots, and the whole spectacular organization was presented to a gullible world as a great Nazi achievement. The games were officially opened by Adolf Hitler in the name of peaceful competition between all nations.

ADOLF HITLER: (Speaking in German).

RATHER: Three years later, Hitler was at war, leading an attack for world conquest.

The Berlin Games were brilliantly documented in this film, Olympia, generally considered then and now to be a cinematic masterpiece. Film for the Nazis was as important a weapon of propaganda as sport. But Olympia was not the product of the party propaganda machinery. It was the work of the beautiful German movie actress Leni Riefenstahl, who later would not be forgiven for this and other films she made in Germany during the thirties.

Leni Riefenstahl recently spent her 77th birthday in the Bahamas. To some, she remains one of the greatest filmmakers the cinema has ever seen. To others, she was an evil genius who helped celebrate a brutal regime. It was said she recruited gypsies from concentration camps as extras for her movies; that she informed on her Jewish colleagues, and even filmed inside the concentration camps herself—accusations she has always vehemently denied. But because she was attractive and that rare phenomenon in Nazi Germany, a professionally successful woman, the most persistent rumor has centered around her personal relationship with Hitler. "The First Woman of the German Reich" is what the French called her, and in the States she made the cover of Time magazine as "Hitler's Leni Riefenstahl".

LENI RIEFENSTAHL: It is written so many things. Look here what is written, a book about Eva Braun, a diary. In this book is written unbelievable things—that I have danced naked for Hitler and this. And the whole book is— is not true.

RATHER: It's a lie?

RIEFENSTAHL: No, it's a lie.

RATHER: You were not a friend of Hitler's?

RIEFENSTAHL: No, never. Hitler have— had Eva Braun. She was a friend of him, and he had no other friends.

RATHER: You were not Hitler's pinup?

RIEFENSTAHL: No, not a little bit.

RATHER: Or his mistress?

RIEFENSTAHL: Not a bit. Not one day, not one minute.

RATHER: If she was not Hitler's pinup, she had certainly caught his eye. Back in 1932, Hitler told this former dancer, now an actress and movie director, "When we come to power, you must make our films for us."

In 1934, and now Chancellor of the German Reich, Hitler asked Riefenstahl to film the Nazi Party rally. The rally was to take place at the newly constructed stadium at Nuremburg. And this is what it looks like today—just another crumbling stadium, with grass growing between the stone cracks. But there's an eerie feeling being here, because who can forget Nuremburg? For anyone old enough to have experienced World War II, it burns forever in our memories. This was the spiritual center of Hitler's Nazism; its symbol and its soul.

(Except from Triumph of the Will)

This was the film that Riefenstahl was persuaded to make, Triumph of the Will, and Hitler could not have been better served. The only person unhappy about the arrangement was the Nazi minister of propaganda, Joseph Goebbels.

RIEFENSTAHL: Hitler wants that I make the film, because he has said, "It's not important that we get a film rally what is interesting for the party. It must be the idea, and Leni Riefenstahl is an artist. And the party people are not artists." And that was the beginning of big enemy between Goebbels and my person. And I have difficulties from the party. And then I told Hitler, "I'm a girl, I can't do this." "You give me only six days of your life," he told me this, Hitler. "The rally are six days. Give me six days. That is not so much." I told, "It is not six days. It means six months to cut." And he said, "Oh, Leni, you are very gifted, and I think you are one of the very few people who are able to make this a good film. Give me—" He— he— he has not said, "You must." He— he begged me. And then I seen it is hopeless. Hopeless? This is right?

RATHER: Yes.

RIEFENSTAHL: Then I have ask for my conditions. I told him, "Good. If I think I must do it, that I never must make the film in— in order from the government, from Hitler or any other; that I am free and that I can make my film what I want to make; and my own company, not under the order of Dr. Goebbels." That was that. Hitler agreed.

RATHER: He agreed?

RIEFENSTAHL: He agreed.

RATHER: Though Triumph of the Will has come to be regarded as the definitive work of propaganda in the cinema, it is still considered to be a technical and artistic masterpiece, a truly great film. The city of Nuremburg was turned into one giant film set for Riefenstahl's benefit on a scale that would have dwarfed a Hollywood epic. She even dressed her cameramen in Stormtrooper uniforms so they would not mar the pageantry. Riefenstahl now claims it was not propaganda. But in a book published under her name in 1935, she said, "Could mere reporting do justice to an experience such as Nuremburg? It would never reveal the meaning of those days."

(Excerpt from Triumph of the Will)

RIEFENSTAHL: I have had six months to finish the film, and in this six months I was day and night working to cut the film. And Hitler and Goebbels, nobody, has seen.

And as the film was ready maybe the same day, I have not even shown the film to the censorship. I don't know if it is a good film or not. I've had not a little bit idea. And then the film was shown in the Berlin, and it was a very big success.

RATHER: Was Leni Riefenstahl a Nazi, or was she an ambitious opportunist? Certainly she was never a member of the Nazi Party. Her absorption in her art was such, one of her cameramen told us, that if it had been necessary she would have quite happily worked for Stalin. But with the success of Triumph of the Will, which won top awards in Paris and Venice, Riefenstahl joined that closed social circle of Nazis around Hitler and enjoyed a reputation as the only person he would see without delay.

Riefenstahl's next film was the Olympic Games of 1936. Alone, she spent 18 months editing over a million feet of film shot by cameramen using the most sophisticated lenses and equipment available at the time. Riefenstahl claims she received the commission directly from the International Olympic Committee, and financed the project privately. Records in the German archives indicate the money came in fact from the German government, and that her company was only a front.

The Nazis brushed up their image for the Olympics. Signs saying "Jews Not Welcome" were temporarily dismantled so as not to offend foreign sensibilities. "They all came," Hitler exulted afterwards, and Germany did win most of the gold medals—but not all of them. The winner of the 100 meters and a fistful of other medals, much to the annoyance of Hitler and Goebbels, was not the hoped-for blond, blue-eyed Aryan, but a black American by the name of Jesse Owens. Goebbels warned Riefenstahl not to make, as he put it, "heroes of the black race," but she refused to edit Owens out of her film.

(Excerpt from Olympia featuring Jesse Owens setting a world record)

So, you were still having trouble with Mr. Goebbels?

RIEFENSTAHL: Very much. A lot—lot of trouble.

RATHER: Why did—did Dr. Goebbels not like you? You—you mentioned—first of all, you were not a member of the party.

RIEFENSTAHL: Yes, It was not the reason. It was not so important that I was not a member of the party. But the normal reason was very easy to understand. He was the propaganda minister and film was under him, and I was a filmmaker. And normally the most film companies are under his hands, and I have refused.

RATHER: So, he didn't like that.

RIEFENSTAHL: Oh, he hates this, naturally.

RATHER: "I admire Hitler," Riefenstahl said in 1940, "but he is surrounded by a bunch of criminals and we are going to lose the war." Arrested by the Allies in 1945, she spent three years in jail. Her property was confiscated, and her recent marriage to a German army officer broke up. Released by the Allies, she then faced years of investigation by the new German courts. At every stage, Riefenstahl was cleared of—quote—"political activity in support of the Nazi regime which would warrant punishment."

Three decades later, Leni Riefenstahl still lives in Germany in a house just outside Munich, and she continues to work. Though there's been no place for her in the post-war cinema, she has in the last ten years carved out a new career for herself as a first-rate still photographer. In two impressive books, she has documented the dying culture of an African tribe known as the Nuba. The years she spent with the Nuba, Riefenstahl says, were the happiest of her life.

Last summer, we went to the Bahamas to watch Leni Riefenstahl at work on her latest assignment. Five years ago, at the age of 72, she discovered scuba diving, and now specializes in deep underwater photography. The fact that only three months before this trip she had broke her hip skiing in St. Moritz was not going to put her off. In the face of that, how could we refuse to join her? Leni Riefenstahl's greatest bitterness is that for 30 years she has been unable to make movies. Several times after the war, she set up film deals, but at the last minute the funds always mysteriously fell through. These days this is as close as she can get.

Leni Riefenstahl now is going on down to about 70 feet to feed her favorite grouper. I think I'll leave her with it. "Nothing can touch you from the outside down here," she says. It's as if she now deliberately finds locations that are as far removed from her early career and her memories as possible.

If someone a hundred years from now—

RIEFENSTAHL: Uh-hmm.

RATHER: —or two hundred years from now—

RIEFENSTAHL: Yes?

RATHER: —takes a look at your work, what would you like for them to know about you? What is the most important thing you would like someone a hundred years or 200 years from now to know about you?

RIEFENSTAHL: I think The Blue Light, because it is a key for my life.

RATHER: The Blue Light was Riefenstahl's early film success which first brought her to Hitler's attention. She was the writer, director and star.

(Excerpt from The Blue Light)

Riefenstahl believes that the role she created for herself then in 1931 was to foretell what would later happen to her. She played the part of a young girl whose ideals are misunderstood. An innocent victim, she is persecuted and stoned as a witch.

(Excerpt from The Blue Light)

Others have seen her life differently. A report of the interrogation of Leni Riefenstahl by the American 7th Army in 1945 concluded with these words: "She has never grasped, and still does not grasp, the fact that she, by dedicating her life to art, has given expression to a gruesome regime and contributed to its glorification."

(Announcements)