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Das mehrsprachige Webportal publiziert fortlaufend Informationen zur historisch-politischen Bildung in Schulen, Gedenkstätten und anderen Einrichtungen zur Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Schwerpunkte bilden der Nationalsozialismus, der Zweite Weltkrieg sowie die Folgegeschichte in den Ländern Europas bis zu den politischen Umbrüchen 1989.

Dabei nimmt es Bildungsangebote in den Fokus, die einen Gegenwartsbezug der Geschichte herausstellen und bietet einen Erfahrungsaustausch über historisch-politische Bildung in Europa an.

Excerpts from the

Required Report
in the Subject of History

The Controversy over General Dietl

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Table of Contents

I. Foreword

II. Basis in Contemporary History and the Current Debate

1.	Important Dates in Dietl's Life	
1.1	Personal Dates -----	4
1.2	Military Career-----	5
1	Involvement in National Socialism -----	6
2	Dietl's Sense of Responsibility Toward Other People-----	8
3	Dietl's Role in Nazi Propaganda-----	10
4	The Current Discussion	
4.1	Places Named For Dietl-----	12
4.2	Positions and Arguments of Supporters -----	13
4.3	Positions and Arguments of Opponents-----	16

1	Results of the Debate -----	20
2	Results of a Survey Among Residents of General-Dietl-Street in Bad Aibling ---- -----	21
	III. Personal Point of View -----	22
	IV. Bibliography -----	23

I. Foreword

The naming of streets by the town council of Bad Aibling normally does not give rise to controversy. But on January 26, 1982, it was different. After the names of two streets had been unanimously approved (23 to 0), the naming of a street in the building zone north of Mitterfeldstrasse was on the agenda. Due to a petition by the Brotherhood of Veterans, Soldiers, and Reservists, this street was to be dedicated to General Dietl, who had been born in Aibling. The motion was passed narrowly at 12 to 11 votes. The suggestion that it be named "Eduard-Dietl-Street" was rejected with a vote of 7 to 16. Four town councillors spoke out firmly against naming the street "Dietl."

This decision by the town council ignited a debate which has continued until today, ten years later. The debate revolves around the human qualities, the military accomplishments, and Dietl's involvement in National Socialism. While the supporters of naming the street for Dietl stress his human and military sides, the opponents are most concerned about fighting the inhumane and life-threatening ideology of National Socialism. They take every opportunity to rekindle the discussion.

In Kempten (which until recently had a General-Dietl-Street) and in Füssen (which has a General-Dietl-Street and a General-Dietl-Barracks), many intense discussions have also taken place, and are continuing.

This very controversial debate shows clearly how people today are grappling with National Socialist ideas.

Part of this report lists the essential information about General Dietl. Next, the arguments of the supporters and opponents are introduced. Not only are the individual opinions themselves interesting, but also the ways in which arguments and opinions are presented.

Obtaining the materials was time consuming, but thoroughly productive. Almost all of my questions were answered.

A resolute Dietl opponent, who had experienced the war himself, advised me to think of the saying: "Quidquid agis, prudenter agas et respice finem."

III. Personal point of view

Even when the positive sides of Dietl the person are acknowledged, in light of the fact that Dietl willingly allowed himself to be used for Nazi propaganda and was active in this himself, it is intolerable to name a street after him, thereby publicly honoring him and setting him up as

an example.

It is indisputable that in honoring Dietl, much of the National Socialist way of thinking is carried on. Rising neo-Nazism could thus be given further impetus. Right-wing radicals look for symbols, and symbolic places as well. This could lead to "a town becoming a mecca for radical forces and thereby coming to harm." (Mangfallbote, 16./17.93). "Videant consules,"

Dietl's adherents often try to explain and excuse his willingness to participate (in Nazi excesses) by the circumstances of the times. But it is clear that at that very time, there were people at all levels of society who rejected Hitler from the beginning. Others, even some who had been among the original National Socialists, became more and more critical when faced with the implementation of Hitler's policies. Those who resisted the totalitarian system risked their lives.

Today young people are expected to think critically, to support democracy and a constitutional state, and to resist injustice and violence. Therefore I believe that not Dietl, but rather someone who summoned the courage to stand up for threatened and denigrated people is appropriate as a model for democratic citizens.