

Abstract Submitted
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Was Nazi Germany on the Road to an Atomic Bomb after all?

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— The story of Germany's efforts to develop a nuclear weapon during World War II is a much written about and contentious subject. However there has been agreement on one thing: by the end of the War the Germans had not achieved and were nowhere near to building a bomb. The dispute therefore has been about why Germany did not succeed. Now, from Germany, comes a challenge to this truth, in the provocative book *Hitlers Bombe* by Rainer Karlsch. The bombshell in *Hitlers Bombe* is the assertion that German scientists developed and tested a primitive fission and fusion nuclear weapon in March 1945. Karlsch bases this claim on testimony of witnesses in 1962, previously secret Russian documents, and the results of soil tests carried out in 2004 and 2005. However the physics is very murky and it seems out of the question that Germany had enough Uranium 235 or produced any Plutonium for a bomb. *Hitlers Bombe* also makes other, better documented and more credible revisionist assertions. These include the claim that the Nazis did continue to try to build a bomb after 1942 and that not Werner Heisenberg, but Kurt Diebner and Walther Gerlach were then the leaders of the German Uranium project. Karlsch's book therefore deserves more attention from physicists and historians than it has received in the United States.

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