WHEN THE Nazis "burned the books" in Berlin's Opernplatz on May 10, 1933, 20-year-old Helmut Kindler was filled with shame. The young German university student resolved to help make up for this barbaric act of his fellow-countrymen.

Kindler, now 36, has accomplished what he set out to do. He has published a book which carries excerpts from writings by more than 200 German authors whose works were banned, burned, and forbidden by the Nazis in 1933.

His book was printed early in March, and is being sold in bookstores throughout Germany at RM 3.50. Called "Verboten und Verbrannt" (Forbiden and Burned) the book bears a title page with flamed red lettering.

The original spark for the book was generated last spring. Kindler, one of the two German licensees of the American-sponsored Berlin woman's magazine, "sie," approached Fred B. Bleistein, chief of the Publications Section, Office of Military Government, Berlin Sector, and asked if he could get four additional pages for a coming issue of the magazine.

"I want to fill an entire issue of "sie" with short items written by German authors whose works were forbidden by the Nazis," Kindler explained. He told Bleistein that both he and Heinz Ullstein, co-licensee of the magazine, had agreed to cut out of the particular issue all but a half page of advertising in order to make room for the editorial material.

"sie" came out on May 11, 1947, with its enlarged 16-page issue. Within its covers were short excerpts from writings by such world-famed German emigrants as Bert Brecht, Lion Feuchtwanger, Thomas Mann, Erich Remarque, Franz Werfel, and Stefan Zweig. The response from readers of "sie" was immediate and enthusiastic. Every day in the three months following publication the magazine received an average of 15 letters praising the article and requesting extra copies of the issue. It was then that Kindler advanced the idea of having the article enlarged and published in book form.

Bleistein granted the necessary paper allocation, and Kindler and Ullstein immediately began looking for an editor.

THEY FOUND two of them, Alfred Kantorowicz and Richard Drews, the former a German emigrant who had been to America during the Hitler period, the latter an anti-Hitlerite who had remained behind in Germany doing advertising work. Both were conversant with the main works of the important banned German writers. In fact, their own writings had been banned under the Nazis.

Assembling "Forbidden and Burned" was not difficult because most of the material came from books which Kindler had kept illegally in his library throughout the Hitler period.

"There wasn't anything especially heroic in this," explains Kindler. "There were few checks by the police.
Heinrich Fraenkel, the editors state, went to Paris in 1933 "without a passport," later moved on to London, then fought in the Spanish Civil War, and came back to Germany in 1946 as correspondent for the "New Statesman and Nation."

Hans Habe emigrated in 1934, joined the Free French Army in 1939, was taken prisoner in 1940 by the Germans, escaped, and was among the first American invasion troops in France in 1944. Next year found Habe in charge of the American occupation organ in Germany, "Die Neue Zeitung."

Perhaps most interesting of all the biographies is that of Arthur Koestler, world-famed former Communist Party member who today is known for his brilliantly harsh anti-Communist tracts and books.

Koestler went to Paris in 1933, served as correspondent for the London News Chronicle during the Spanish Civil War, was arrested by Franco troops and sentenced to death, freed upon British intervention, joined the British army, and is currently busy with further writings.


Joe Lederer, novelist, was in China, Austria, Italy and London.

Peter de Mendelssohn, novelist and journalist, went to Paris and England, and after the war returned to Berlin where he is chief press control officer with the British Control Commission. Ludwig Renn, novelist, also is back in Germany after living in Switzerland, Spain, France and Mexico.

Herbert Schlueter, novelist, lived in Spain, Yugoslavia and Italy before returning to Germany. Karl Schnog, satirist, was captured by the Gestapo and placed in eight concentration camps before US troops freed him. He is the former editor of the US-licensed satirical magazine, "Ulen-spiegel," in Berlin.

Some of the biographies are short, tragic notes. Hans Arno Joachim, literary critic, was arrested by the Gestapo in southern France and his present whereabouts are "unknown." Carl Einstein, art historian, committed suicide in France when the Germans marched in at the end of 1940. Ernst Toller, novelist and playwright, who went to the United States, committed suicide in 1939.

"We don't want our book misunderstood, however," said Kindler. "It doesn't aim to prove there was an organized resistance movement in Germany, nor does it aim the show (Continued on page 30)