

War Propaganda

EVER since I have been scrutinizing political events, I have taken a tremendous interest in propagandist activity. I saw that the Socialist-Marxist organizations mastered and applied this instrument with astounding skill. And I soon realized that the correct use of propaganda is a true art which has remained practically unknown to the bourgeois parties. Only the Christian-Social movement, especially in Lueger's time, achieved a certain virtuosity on this instrument, to which it owed many of its successes.

But it was not until the War that it became evident what immense results could be obtained by a correct application of propaganda. Here again, unfortunately, all our studying had to be done on the enemy side, for the activity on our side was modest, to say the least. The total miscarriage of the German 'enlightenment' service stared every soldier in the face, and this spurred me to take up the question of propaganda even more deeply than before.

There was often more than enough time for thinking, and the enemy offered practical instruction which, to our sorrow, was only too good.

For what we failed to do, the enemy did, with amazing skill and really brilliant calculation. I, myself, learned enormously from this enemy war propaganda. But time passed and left no trace in the minds of all those who should have benefited;

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partly because they considered themselves too clever to learn from the enemy, partly owing to lack of good will.

Did we have anything you could call propaganda?

I regret that I must answer in the negative. Everything that actually was done in this field was so inadequate and wrong from the very start that it certainly did no good and sometimes did actual harm.

The form was inadequate, the substance was psychologically wrong: a careful examination of German war propaganda can lead to no other diagnosis.

There seems to have been no clarity on the very first question: Is propaganda a means or an end?

It is a means and must therefore be judged with regard to its end. It must consequently take a form calculated to support the aim which it serves. It is also obvious that its aim can vary in importance from the standpoint of general need, and that the inner value of the propaganda will vary accordingly. The aim for which we were fighting the War was the loftiest, the most overpowering, that man can conceive: it was the freedom and independence of our nation, the security of our future food supply, and — our national honor; a thing which, despite all contrary opinions prevailing today, nevertheless exists, or rather should exist, since peoples without honor have sooner or later lost their freedom and independence, which in turn is only the result of a higher justice, since generations of rabble without honor deserve no freedom. Any man who wants to be a cowardly slave can have no honor, or honor itself would soon fall into general contempt.

The German nation was engaged in a struggle for a human existence, and the purpose of war propaganda should have been to support this struggle; its aim to help bring about victory.

When the nations on this planet fight for existence — when the question of destiny, 'to be or not to be,' cries out for a solution — then all considerations of humanitarianism or aesthetics crumble into nothingness; for all these concepts do not float about in the ether, they arise from man's imagination and are

bound up with man. When he departs from this world, these concepts are again dissolved into nothingness, for Nature does not know them. And even among mankind, they belong only to a few nations or rather races, and this in proportion as they emanate from the feeling of the nation or race in question. Humanitarianism and aesthetics would vanish even from a world inhabited by man if this world were to lose the races that have created and upheld these concepts.

But all such concepts become secondary when a nation is fighting for its existence; in fact, they become totally irrelevant to the forms of the struggle as soon as a situation arises where they might paralyze a struggling nation's power of self-preservation. And that has always been their only visible result.

As for humanitarianism, Moltke¹ said years ago that in war it lies in the brevity of the operation, and that means that the most aggressive fighting technique is the most humane.

But when people try to approach these questions with drivel about aesthetics, etc., really only one answer is possible: where the destiny and existence of a people are at stake, all obligation toward beauty ceases. The most unbeautiful thing there can be in human life is and remains the yoke of slavery. Or do these Schwabing² decadents view the present lot of the German people as 'aesthetic'? Certainly we don't have to discuss these matters with the Jews, the most modern inventors of this cultural perfume. Their whole existence is an embodied protest against the aesthetics of the Lord's image.

And since these criteria of humanitarianism and beauty must be eliminated from the struggle, they are also inapplicable to propaganda.

Propaganda in the War was a means to an end, and the end was the struggle for the existence of the German people; consequently, propaganda could only be considered in accordance with

¹ General Helmuth von Moltke (1800-91) became chief of the Prussian General Staff in 1859. He modernized the Prussian army and was the founder of the German General Staff.

² Schwabing: the bohemian quarter of Munich, located near the university.

the principles that were valid for this struggle. In this case the most cruel weapons were humane if they brought about a quicker victory; and only those methods were beautiful which helped the nation to safeguard the dignity of its freedom.

This was the only possible attitude toward war propaganda in a life-and-death struggle like ours.

If the so-called responsible authorities had been clear on this point, they would never have fallen into such uncertainty over the form and application of this weapon: for even propaganda is no more than a weapon, though a frightful one in the hand of an expert.

The second really decisive question was this: To whom should propaganda be addressed? To the scientifically trained intelligentsia or to the less educated masses?

It must be addressed always and exclusively to the masses.

What the intelligentsia — or those who today unfortunately often go by that name — what they need is not propaganda but scientific instruction. The content of propaganda is not science any more than the object represented in a poster is art. The art of the poster lies in the designer's ability to attract the attention of the crowd by form and color. A poster advertising an art exhibit must direct the attention of the public to the art being exhibited; the better it succeeds in this, the greater is the art of the poster itself. The poster should give the masses an idea of the significance of the exhibition, it should not be a substitute for the art on display. Anyone who wants to concern himself with the art itself must do more than study the poster; and it will not be enough for him just to saunter through the exhibition. We may expect him to examine and immerse himself in the individual works, and thus little by little form a fair opinion.

A similar situation prevails with what we today call propaganda.

The function of propaganda does not lie in the scientific training of the individual, but in calling the masses' attention to certain facts, processes, necessities, etc., whose significance is thus for the first time placed within their field of vision.

The whole art consists in doing this so skillfully that everyone will be convinced that the fact is real, the process necessary, the necessity correct, etc. But since propaganda is not and cannot be the necessity in itself, since its function, like the poster, consists in attracting the attention of the crowd, and not in educating those who are already educated or who are striving after education and knowledge, its effect for the most part must be aimed at the emotions and only to a very limited degree at the so-called intellect.

All propaganda must be popular and its intellectual level must be adjusted to the most limited intelligence among those it is addressed to. Consequently, the greater the mass it is intended to reach, the lower its purely intellectual level will have to be. But if, as in propaganda for sticking out a war, the aim is to influence a whole people, we must avoid excessive intellectual demands on our public, and too much caution cannot be exerted in this direction.

The more modest its intellectual ballast, the more exclusively it takes into consideration the emotions of the masses, the more effective it will be. And this is the best proof of the soundness or unsoundness of a propaganda campaign, and not success in pleasing a few scholars or young aesthetes.

The art of propaganda lies in understanding the emotional ideas of the great masses and finding, through a psychologically correct form, the way to the attention and thence to the heart of the broad masses. The fact that our bright boys do not understand this merely shows how mentally lazy and conceited they are.

Once we understand how necessary it is for propaganda to be adjusted to the broad mass, the following rule results:

It is a mistake to make propaganda many-sided, like scientific instruction, for instance.

The receptivity of the great masses is very limited, their intelligence is small, but their power of forgetting is enormous. In consequence of these facts, all effective propaganda must be limited to a very few points and must harp on these in slogans

until the last member of the public understands what you want him to understand by your slogan. As soon as you sacrifice this slogan and try to be many-sided, the effect will piddle away, for the crowd can neither digest nor retain the material offered. In this way the result is weakened and in the end entirely cancelled out.

Thus we see that propaganda must follow a simple line and correspondingly the basic tactics must be psychologically sound.

For instance, it was absolutely wrong to make the enemy ridiculous, as the Austrian and German comic papers did. It was absolutely wrong because actual contact with an enemy soldier was bound to arouse an entirely different conviction, and the results were devastating; for now the German soldier, under the direct impression of the enemy's resistance, felt himself swindled by his propaganda service. His desire to fight, or even to stand firm, was not strengthened, but the opposite occurred. His courage flagged.

By contrast, the war propaganda of the English and Americans was psychologically sound. By representing the Germans to their own people as barbarians and Huns, they prepared the individual soldier for the terrors of war, and thus helped to preserve him from disappointments. After this, the most terrible weapon that was used against him seemed only to confirm what his propagandists had told him; it likewise reinforced his faith in the truth of his government's assertions, while on the other hand it increased his rage and hatred against the vile enemy. For the cruel effects of the weapon, whose use by the enemy he now came to know, gradually came to confirm for him the 'Hunish' brutality of the barbarous enemy, which he had heard all about; and it never dawned on him for a moment that his own weapons possibly, if not probably, might be even more terrible in their effects.

And so the English soldier could never feel that he had been misinformed by his own countrymen, as unhappily was so much the case with the German soldier that in the end he rejected everything coming from this source as 'swindles' and 'bunk.'

All this resulted from the idea that any old simpleton (or even somebody who was intelligent 'in other things') could be assigned to propaganda work, and the failure to realize that the most brilliant psychologists would have been none too good.

And so the German war propaganda offered an unparalleled example of an 'enlightenment' service working in reverse, since any correct psychology was totally lacking.

There was no end to what could be learned from the enemy by a man who kept his eyes open, refused to let his perceptions be ossified, and for four and a half years privately turned the storm-flood of enemy propaganda over in his brain.

What our authorities least of all understood was the very first axiom of all propagandist activity: to wit, the basically subjective and one-sided attitude it must take toward every question it deals with. In this connection, from the very beginning of the War and from top to bottom, such sins were committed that we were entitled to doubt whether so much absurdity could really be attributed to pure stupidity alone.

What, for example, would we say about a poster that was supposed to advertise a new soap and that described other soaps as 'good'?

We would only shake our heads.

Exactly the same applies to political advertising.

The function of propaganda is, for example, not to weigh and ponder the rights of different people, but exclusively to emphasize the one right which it has set out to argue for. Its task is not to make an objective study of the truth, in so far as it favors the enemy, and then set it before the masses with academic fairness; its task is to serve our own right, always and unflinchingly.

It was absolutely wrong to discuss war-guilt from the standpoint that Germany alone could not be held responsible for the outbreak of the catastrophe; it would have been correct to load every bit of the blame on the shoulders of the enemy, even if this had not really corresponded to the true facts, as it actually did.

And what was the consequence of this half-heartedness?

The broad mass of a nation does not consist of diplomats, or even professors of political law, or even individuals capable of forming a rational opinion; it consists of plain mortals, wavering and inclined to doubt and uncertainty. As soon as our own propaganda admits so much as a glimmer of right on the other side, the foundation for doubt in our own right has been laid. The masses are then in no position to distinguish where foreign injustice ends and our own begins. In such a case they become uncertain and suspicious, especially if the enemy refrains from going in for the same nonsense, but unloads every bit of blame on his adversary. Isn't it perfectly understandable that the whole country ends up by lending more credence to enemy propaganda, which is more unified and coherent, than to its own? And particularly a people that suffers from the mania of objectivity as much as the Germans. For, after all this, everyone will take the greatest pains to avoid doing the enemy any injustice, even at the peril of seriously besmirching and even destroying his own people and country.

Of course, this was not the intent of the responsible authorities, but the people never realize that.

The people in their overwhelming majority are so feminine by nature and attitude that sober reasoning determines their thoughts and actions far less than emotion and feeling.

And this sentiment is not complicated, but very simple and all of a piece. It does not have multiple shadings; it has a positive and a negative; love or hate, right or wrong, truth or lie, never half this way and half that way, never partially, or that kind of thing.

English propagandists understood all this most brilliantly — and acted accordingly. They made no half statements that might have given rise to doubts.

Their brilliant knowledge of the primitive sentiments of the broad masses is shown by their atrocity propaganda, which was adapted to this condition. As ruthless as it was brilliant, it created the preconditions for moral steadfastness at the front,

even in the face of the greatest actual defeats, and just as strikingly it pilloried the German enemy as the sole guilty party for the outbreak of the War: the rabid, impudent bias and persistence with which this lie was expressed took into account the emotional, always extreme, attitude of the great masses and for this reason was believed.

How effective this type of propaganda was is most strikingly shown by the fact that after four years of war it not only enabled the enemy to stick to its guns, but even began to nibble at our own people.

It need not surprise us that our propaganda did not enjoy this success. In its inner ambiguity alone, it bore the germ of ineffectualness. And finally its content was such that it was very unlikely to make the necessary impression on the masses. Only our feather-brained 'statesmen' could have dared to hope that this insipid pacifistic bilge could fire men's spirits till they were willing to die.

As a result, their miserable stuff¹ was useless, even harmful in fact.

But the most brilliant propagandist technique will yield no success unless one fundamental principle is borne in mind constantly and with unflagging attention. It must confine itself to a few points and repeat them over and over. Here, as so often in this world, persistence is the first and most important requirement for success.

Particularly in the field of propaganda, we must never let ourselves be led by aesthetes or people who have grown blasé: not by the former, because the form and expression of our propaganda would soon, instead of being suitable for the masses, have drawing power only for literary teas; and of the second we must beware, because, lacking in any fresh emotion of their own, they are always on the lookout for new stimulation. These people are quick to weary of everything; they want variety, and they are never able to feel or understand the needs of their fellow men who are not yet so callous. They are always the first to criticize

¹ 'Zeug.' Second edition has 'Produkt.'

a propaganda campaign, or rather its content, which seems to them too old-fashioned, too hackneyed, too out-of-date, etc. They are always after novelty, in search of a change, and this makes them mortal enemies of any effective political propaganda. For as soon as the organization and the content of propaganda begin to suit their tastes, it loses all cohesion and evaporates completely.

The purpose of propaganda is not to provide interesting distraction for blasé young gentlemen, but to convince, and what I mean is to convince the masses. But the masses are slow-moving, and they always require a certain time before they are ready even to notice a thing, and only after the simplest ideas are repeated thousands of times will the masses finally remember them.

When there is a change, it must not alter the content of what the propaganda is driving at, but in the end must always say the same thing. For instance, a slogan must be presented from different angles, but the end of all remarks must always and immutably be the slogan itself. Only in this way can the propaganda have a unified and complete effect.

This broadness of outline from which we must never depart, in combination with steady, consistent emphasis, allows our final success to mature. And then, to our amazement, we shall see what tremendous results such perseverance leads to — to results that are almost beyond our understanding.

All advertising, whether in the field of business or politics, achieves success through the continuity and sustained uniformity of its application.

Here, too, the example of enemy war propaganda was typical; limited to a few points, devised exclusively for the masses, carried on with indefatigable persistence. Once the basic ideas and methods of execution were recognized as correct, they were applied throughout the whole War without the slightest change. At first the claims of the propaganda were so impudent that people thought it insane; later, it got on people's nerves; and in the end, it was believed. After four and a half years, a revolution

broke out in Germany; and its slogans originated in the enemy's war propaganda.

And in England they understood one more thing: that this spiritual weapon can succeed only if it is applied on a tremendous scale, but that success amply covers all costs.

There, propaganda was regarded as a weapon of the first order, while in our country it was the last resort of unemployed politicians and a comfortable haven for slackers.

And, as was to be expected, its results all in all were zero.

CHAPTER VII

The Revolution

WITH THE YEAR 1915 enemy propaganda began in our country, after 1916 it became more and more intensive, till finally, at the beginning of the year 1918, it swelled to a positive flood. Now the results of this seduction could be seen at every step. The army gradually learned to think as the enemy wanted it to.

And the German counter-action was a complete failure.

In the person of the man whose intellect and will made him its leader, the army had the intention and determination to take up the struggle in this field, too, but it lacked the instrument which would have been necessary. And from the psychological point of view, it was wrong to have this enlightenment work carried on by the troops themselves. If it was to be effective, it had to come from home. Only then was there any assurance of success among the men who, after all, had been performing immortal deeds of heroism and privation for nearly four years for this homeland.

But what came out of the home country?

Was this failure stupidity or crime?

In midsummer of 1918, after the evacuation of the southern bank of the Marne, the German press above all conducted itself with such miserable awkwardness, nay, criminal stupidity, that my wrath mounted by the day, and the question arose within me: Is there really no one who can put an end to this spiritual squandering of the army's heroism?

this faith in the hearts of their readers while an infinitely shrewd propaganda raised the spirits of the troops at the front.

'Germany facing revolution! Victory of the Allies inevitable!' This was the best medicine to help the wavering poilu and Tommy back on their feet. Now rifles and machine guns could again be made to fire, and a headlong flight in panic fear was replaced by hopeful resistance.

This was the result of the munitions strike. It strengthened the enemy peoples' belief in victory and relieved the paralyzing despair of the Allied front — in the time that followed, thousands of German soldiers had to pay for this with their blood. The instigators of this vilest of all scoundrelly tricks were the aspirants to the highest state positions of revolutionary Germany.

On the German side, it is true, the visible reaction to this crime could at first apparently be handled; on the enemy side, however, the consequences did not fail to appear. The resistance had lost the aimlessness of an army giving up all as lost, and took on the bitterness of a struggle for victory.

For now, in all human probability, victory was inevitable if the Western Front could stand up under a German attack for only a few months. The parliaments of the Entente, however, recognized the possibilities for the future and approved unprecedented expenditures for continuing the propaganda to disrupt Germany.

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I had the good fortune to fight in the first two offensives and in the last.

These became the most tremendous impressions of my life; tremendous because now for the last time, as in 1914, the fight lost the character of defense and assumed that of attack. A sigh of relief passed through the trenches and the dugouts of the German army when at length, after more than three years' endurance in the enemy hell, the day of retribution came. Once

again the victorious battalions cheered and hung the last wreaths of immortal laurel on their banners rent by the storm of victory. Once again the songs of the fatherland roared to the heavens along the endless marching columns, and for the last time the Lord's grace smiled on His ungrateful children.

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In midsummer of 1918, oppressive sultriness lay over the front. At home there was fighting. For what? In the different detachments of the field army all sorts of things were being said: that the war was now hopeless and only fools could believe in victory. That not the people but only capital and the monarchy had an interest in holding out any longer — all this came from the homeland and was discussed even at the front.

At first the front reacted very little. What did we care about universal suffrage? Had we fought four years for that? It was vile banditry to steal the war aim of the dead heroes from their very graves. The young regiments had not gone to their death in Flanders crying: 'Long live universal suffrage and the secret ballot,' but crying: '*Deutschland über Alles in der Welt.*' A small, yet not entirely insignificant, difference. But most of those who cried out for suffrage hadn't ever been in the place where they now wanted to fight for it. The front was unknown to the whole political party rabble. Only a small fraction of the Parliamentary gentlemen could be seen where all decent Germans with sound limbs left were sojourning at that time.

And so the old personnel at the front was not very receptive to this new war aim of Messrs. Ebert, Scheidemann,¹ Barth, Lieb-

¹ Friedrich Ebert and Philip Scheidemann were leaders of the majority Socialists who took over the German government on the abdication of William II on November 9, 1918. On November 25, representatives of the new provincial governments met in Berlin and decided on the election of a National Assembly. Elections took place on January 19. The Assembly, which met in Weimar on February 6, was controlled by a coalition of the

nitz, etc. They couldn't for the life of them see why suddenly the slackers should have the right to arrogate to themselves control of the state over the heads of the army.

My personal attitude was established from the very start. I hated the whole gang of miserable party scoundrels and betrayers of the people in the extreme. It had long been clear to me that this whole gang was not really concerned with the welfare of the nation, but with filling empty pockets. For this they were ready to sacrifice the whole nation, and if necessary to let Germany be destroyed; and in my eyes this made them ripe for hanging. To take consideration of their wishes was to sacrifice the interests of the working people for the benefit of a few pickpockets; these wishes could only be fulfilled by giving up Germany.

And the great majority of the embattled army still thought the same. Only the reinforcements coming from home rapidly grew worse and worse, so that their arrival meant, not a reinforcement but a weakening of our fighting strength. Especially the young reinforcements were mostly worthless. It was often hard to believe that these were sons of the same nation which had once sent its youth out to the battle for Ypres.

In August and September, the symptoms of disorganization increased more and more rapidly, although the effect of the enemy attack was not to be compared with the terror of our former defensive battles. The past Battle of Flanders and the Battle of the Somme had been awesome by comparison.

At the end of September, my division arrived for the third time at the positions which as young volunteer regiments we had once stormed.

What a memory!

Socialists, the Center, and the Democrats, led by Scheidemann. On February 11, it chose Friedrich Ebert President of Germany. The Scheidemann Cabinet resigned on June 20 because it was unwilling to sign the peace treaty. The treaty was signed by the succeeding Cabinet of Gustav Bauer after the Assembly had voted acceptance. The Socialist and Democrat majority were attacked by both Right and Left for accepting this 'national disgrace.'

In October and November of 1914, we had there received our baptism of fire. Fatherland love in our heart and songs on our lips, our young regiments had gone into the battle as to a dance. The most precious blood there sacrificed itself joyfully, in the faith that it was preserving the independence and freedom of the fatherland.

In July, 1917, we set foot for the second time on the ground that was sacred to all of us. For in it the best comrades slumbered, still almost children, who had run to their death with gleaming eyes for the one true fatherland.

We old soldiers, who had then marched out with the regiment, stood in respectful emotion at this shrine of 'loyalty and obedience to the death.'

Now in a hard defensive battle the regiment was to defend this soil which it had stormed three years earlier.

With three weeks of drumfire the Englishman prepared the great Flanders offensive. The spirits of the dead seemed to quicken; the regiment clawed its way into the filthy mud, bit into the various holes and craters, and neither gave ground nor wavered. As once before in this place, it grew steadily smaller and thinner, until the British attack finally broke loose on July 13, 1917.

In the first days of August we were relieved.

The regiment had turned into a few companies: crusted with mud they tottered back, more like ghosts than men. But aside from a few hundred meters of shell holes, the Englishman had found nothing but death.

Now, in the fall of 1918, we stood for the third time on the storm site of 1914. The little city of Comines where we then rested had now become our battlefield. Yet, though the battlefield was the same, the men had changed: for now 'political discussions' went on even among the troops. As everywhere, the poison of the hinterland began, here too, to be effective. And the younger recruit fell down completely — for he came from home.

In the night of October 13, the English gas attack on the

southern front before Ypres burst loose; they used yellow-cross gas, whose effects were still unknown to us as far as personal experience was concerned. In this same night I myself was to become acquainted with it. On a hill south of Wervick, we came on the evening of October 13 into several hours of drumfire with gas shells which continued all night more or less violently. As early as midnight, a number of us passed out, a few of our comrades forever. Toward morning I, too, was seized with pain which grew worse with every quarter hour, and at seven in the morning I stumbled and tottered back with burning eyes; taking with me my last report of the War.

A few hours later, my eyes had turned into glowing coals; it had grown dark around me.

Thus I came to the hospital at Pasewalk in Pomerania, and there I was fated to experience — the greatest villainy of the century.¹

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For a long time there had been something indefinite but repulsive in the air. People were telling each other that in the next few weeks it would 'start in' — but I was unable to imagine what was meant by this. First I thought of a strike like that of the spring. Unfavorable rumors were constantly coming from the navy, which was said to be in a state of ferment. But this, too, seemed to me more the product of the imagination of individual scoundrels than an affair involving real masses. Even in the hospital, people were discussing the end of the War which they hoped would come soon, but no one counted on anything immediate. I was unable to read the papers.

In November the general tension increased.

And then one day, suddenly and unexpectedly, the calamity descended. Sailors arrived in trucks and proclaimed the revolu-

¹ 'greatest villainy of the century' changed to 'revolution' in second edition.

tion; a few Jewish youths were the 'leaders' in this struggle for the 'freedom, beauty, and dignity' of our national existence. None of them had been at the front. By way of a so-called 'gonorrhoea hospital,' the three Orientals had been sent back home from their second-line base. Now they raised the red rag in the homeland.

In the last few days I had been getting along better. The piercing pain in my eye sockets was diminishing; slowly I succeeded in distinguishing the broad outlines of the things about me. I was given grounds for hoping that I should recover my eyesight at least well enough to be able to pursue some profession later. To be sure, I could no longer hope that I would ever be able to draw again. In any case, I was on the road to improvement when the monstrous thing happened.

My first hope was still that this high treason might still be a more or less local affair. I also tried to bolster up a few comrades in this view. Particularly my Bavarian friends in the hospital were more than accessible to this. The mood there was anything but 'revolutionary.' I could not imagine that the madness would break out in Munich, too. Loyalty to the venerable House of Wittelsbach¹ seemed to me stronger, after all, than the will of a few Jews. Thus I could not help but believe that this was merely a *Putsch* on the part of the navy and would be crushed in the next few days.

The next few days came and with them the most terrible certainty of my life. The rumors became more and more oppressive. What I had taken for a local affair was now said to be a general revolution. To this was added the disgraceful news from the front. They wanted to capitulate. Was such a thing really possible?

On November 10, the pastor came to the hospital for a short address: now we learned everything.

In extreme agitation, I, too, was present at the short speech. The dignified old gentleman seemed all a-tremble as he informed

¹ Wittelsbach. Family of the Kings of Bavaria, dating back to the tenth century.

us that the House of Hollenzollern should no longer bear the German imperial crown; that the fatherland had become a 'republic'; that we must pray to the Almighty not to refuse His blessing to this change and not to abandon our people in the times to come. He could not help himself, he had to speak a few words in memory of the royal house. He began to praise its services in Pomerania, in Prussia, nay, to the German fatherland, and — here he began to sob gently to himself — in the little hall the deepest dejection settled on all hearts, and I believe that not an eye was able to restrain its tears. But when the old gentleman tried to go on, and began to tell us that we must now end the long War, yes, that now that it was lost and we were throwing ourselves upon the mercy of the victors, our fatherland would for the future be exposed to dire oppression, that the armistice should be accepted with confidence in the magnanimity of our previous enemies — I could stand it no longer. It became impossible for me to sit still one minute more. Again everything went black before my eyes; I tottered and groped my way back to the dormitory, threw myself on my bunk, and dug my burning head into my blanket and pillow.

Since the day when I had stood at my mother's grave, I had not wept. When in my youth Fate seized me with merciless hardness, my defiance mounted. When in the long war years Death snatched so many a dear comrade and friend from our ranks, it would have seemed to me almost a sin to complain — after all, were they not dying for Germany? And when at length the creeping gas — in the last days of the dreadful struggle — attacked me, too, and began to gnaw at my eyes, and beneath the fear of going blind forever, I nearly lost heart for a moment, the voice of my conscience thundered at me: Miserable wretch, are you going to cry when thousands are a hundred times worse off than you! And so I bore my lot in dull silence. But now I could not help it. Only now did I see how all personal suffering vanishes in comparison with the misfortune of the fatherland.

And so it had all been in vain. In vain all the sacrifices and

privations; in vain the hunger and thirst of months which were often endless; in vain the hours in which, with mortal fear clutching at our hearts, we nevertheless did our duty; and in vain the death of two millions who died. Would not the graves of all the hundreds of thousands open, the graves of those who with faith in the fatherland had marched forth never to return? Would they not open and send the silent mud- and blood-covered heroes back as spirits of vengeance to the homeland which had cheated them with such mockery of the highest sacrifice which a man can make to his people in this world? Had they died for this, the soldiers of August and September, 1914? Was it for this that in the autumn of the same year the volunteer regiments marched after their old comrades? Was it for this that these boys of seventeen sank into the earth of Flanders? Was this the meaning of the sacrifice which the German mother made to the fatherland when with sore heart she let her best-loved boys march off, never to see them again? Did all this happen only so that a gang of wretched criminals could lay hands on the fatherland?

Was it for this that the German soldier had stood fast in the sun's heat and in snowstorms, hungry, thirsty, and freezing, weary from sleepless nights and endless marches? Was it for this that he had lain in the hell of the drumfire and in the fever of gas attacks without wavering, always thoughtful of his one duty to preserve the fatherland from the enemy peril?

Verily these heroes deserved a headstone: 'Thou Wanderer who comest to Germany, tell those at home that we lie here, true to the fatherland and obedient to duty.'

And what about those at home — ?

And yet, was it only our own sacrifice that we had to weigh in the balance? Was the Germany of the past less precious? Was there no obligation toward our own history? Were we still worthy to relate the glory of the past to ourselves? And how could this deed be justified to future generations?

Miserable and degenerate criminals!

The more I tried to achieve clarity on the monstrous event in this hour, the more the shame of indignation and disgrace burned

my brow. What was all the pain in my eyes compared to this misery?

There followed terrible days and even worse nights — I knew that all was lost. Only fools, liars, and criminals could hope in the mercy of the enemy. In these nights hatred grew in me, hatred for those responsible for this deed.

In the days that followed, my own fate became known to me.

I could not help but laugh at the thought of my own future which only a short time before had given me such bitter concern. Was it not ridiculous to expect to build houses on such ground? At last it became clear to me that what had happened was what I had so often feared but had never been able to believe with my emotions.

Kaiser William II was the first German Emperor to hold out a conciliatory hand to the leaders of Marxism, without suspecting that scoundrels have no honor. While they still held the imperial hand in theirs, their other hand was reaching for the dagger.

There is no making pacts with Jews; there can only be the hard: either — or.

I, for my part, decided to go into politics.

The Beginning of My Political Activity

AT THE END of November, 1918, I returned to Munich. Again I went to the replacement battalion of my regiment, which was in the hands of 'soldiers' councils.' Their whole activity was so repellent to me that I decided at once to leave again as soon as possible. With Schmiedt Ernst, a faithful war comrade, I went to Traunstein and remained there till the camp was broken up.

In March, 1919, we went back to Munich.

The situation was untenable and moved inevitably toward a further continuation of the revolution. Eisner's death only hastened the development and finally led to a dictatorship of the Councils,¹ or, better expressed, to a passing rule of the Jews, as had been the original aim of the instigators of the whole revolution.

At this time endless plans chased one another through my head. For days I wondered what could be done, but the end of every meditation was the sober realization that I, nameless as I was, did not possess the least basis for any useful action. I shall come back to speak of the reasons why then, as before, I could not decide to join any of the existing parties.

In the course of the new revolution of the Councils I for the

¹ Kurt Eisner (1867-1919). Edited the *Vorwärts* from 1899 to 1905. In 1917 he went over from the Majority to the Independent Socialists. On November 7, 1918, he led the revolution in Munich and headed a government of Majority and Independent Socialists. He was assassinated on February 21, 1919.

sincerest moral indignation. And this among other things was why the shameless and monstrous word '*reparations*' was able to make itself at home in Germany. This vile hypocrisy really seemed to millions of our incited national comrades an accomplishment of higher justice. Dreadful, but it was so. The best proof of this was offered by the propaganda I initiated against the peace treaty of Versailles, which I introduced by some enlightenment regarding the treaty of Brest-Litovsk. I contrasted the two peace treaties, compared them point for point, showed the actual boundless humanity of the one treaty compared to the inhuman cruelty of the second, and the result was telling. At that time I spoke on this theme at meetings of two thousand people, and often I was struck by the glances of three thousand six hundred hostile eyes. And three hours later I had before me a surging mass full of the holiest indignation and boundless wrath. Again a great lie had been torn out of the hearts and brains of a crowd numbering thousands, and a truth implanted in its place.

I considered these two lectures on 'The True Causes of the World War' and on 'The Peace Treaties of Brest-Litovsk and Versailles,' the most important of all, and so I repeated and repeated them dozens of times, always renewing the form, until, on this point at least, a certain clear and unified conception became current among the people from among whom the movement gathered its first members.

For myself, moreover, the meetings had the advantage that I gradually transformed myself into a speaker for mass meetings, that I became practiced in the pathos and the gestures which a great hall, with its thousands of people, demands.

At that time, except — as already emphasized — in small circles, I saw no enlightenment in this direction from the parties which today have their mouths so full of words and act as if *they* had brought about the change in public opinion. When a so-called '*national politician*' somewhere delivered a speech along these lines, it was only to circles who for the most part already shared his conviction, and for whom his utterances represented at most an intensification of their own opinions. This was not the im-

portant thing at that time; the important thing was to win by enlightenment and propaganda those people who, by virtue of their education and opinions, still stood on hostile ground.

The leaflet, too, was put into the service of this enlightenment. While still in the army, I had written a leaflet comparing the peace treaties of *Brest-Litovsk* and *Versailles*, and it was distributed in large editions. Later I took over stocks of it for the party, and here again the effect was good. The first meetings, in general, were distinguished by the fact that the tables were covered with all sorts of leaflets, newspapers, pamphlets, etc. But the chief emphasis was laid on the spoken word. And actually it alone — for general psychological reasons — is able to bring about really great changes.

I have already stated in the first volume that all great, world-shaking events have been brought about, not by written matter, but by the spoken word. This led to a lengthy discussion in a part of the press, where, of course, such an assertion was sharply attacked, particularly by our bourgeois wiseacres. But the very reason why this occurred confutes the doubters. For the bourgeois intelligentsia protest against such a view only because they themselves obviously lack the power and ability to influence the masses by the spoken word, since they have thrown themselves more and more into purely literary activity and renounced the real agitational activity of the spoken word. Such habits necessarily lead in time to what distinguishes our bourgeoisie today; that is, to the loss of the psychological instinct for *mass effect* and *mass influence*.

While the speaker gets a continuous correction of his speech from the crowd he is addressing, since he can always see in the faces of his listeners to what extent they can follow his arguments with understanding and whether the impression and the effect of his words lead to the desired goal — the writer does not know his readers at all. Therefore, to begin with, he will not aim at a definite mass before his eyes, but will keep his arguments entirely general. By this to a certain degree he loses psychological subtlety and in consequence suppleness. And so, by and large, a brilliant

speaker will be able to write better than a brilliant writer can speak, unless he continuously practices this art. On top of this there is the fact that the mass of people as such is lazy; that they remain inertly in the spirit of their old habits and, left to themselves, will take up a piece of written matter only reluctantly if it is not in agreement with what they themselves believe and does not bring them what they had hoped for. Therefore, an article with a definite tendency is for the most part read only by people who can already be reckoned to this tendency. At most a leaflet or a poster can, by its brevity, count on getting a moment's attention from someone who thinks differently. The picture in all its forms up to the film has greater possibilities. Here a man needs to use his brains even less; it suffices to look, or at most to read extremely brief texts, and thus many will more readily accept a *pictorial presentation* than read an *article of any length*. The picture brings them in a much briefer time, I might almost say at one stroke, the enlightenment which they obtain from written matter only after arduous reading.

The essential point, however, is that a piece of literature never knows into what hands it will fall, and yet must retain its definite form. In general the effect will be the greater, the more this form corresponds to the intellectual level and nature of those very people who will be its readers. A book that is destined for the broad masses must, therefore, attempt from the very beginning to have an effect, both in style and elevation, different from a work intended for higher intellectual classes.

Only by this kind of adaptability does written matter approach the spoken word. To my mind, the speaker can treat the same theme as the book; he will, if he is a brilliant popular orator, not be likely to repeat the same reproach and the same substance twice in the same form. He will always let himself be borne by the great masses in such a way that instinctively the very words come to his lips that he needs to speak to the hearts of his audience. And if he errs, even in the slightest, he has the living correction before him. As I have said, he can read from the facial expression of his audience whether, firstly, they *understand* what

he is saying, whether, secondly, they can *follow the speech as a whole*, and to what extent, thirdly, he has *convinced* them of the *soundness* of what he has said. If — firstly — he sees that they do not understand him, he will become so primitive and clear in his explanations that even the last member of his audience has to understand him; if he feels — secondly — that they cannot follow him, he will construct his ideas so cautiously and slowly that even the weakest member of the audience is not left behind, and he will — thirdly — if he suspects that they do not seem convinced of the soundness of his argument, repeat it over and over in constantly new examples. He himself will utter their objections, which he senses though unspoken, and go on confuting them and exploding them, until at length even the last group of an opposition, by its very bearing and facial expression, enables him to recognize its capitulation to his arguments.

Here again it is not seldom a question of overcoming prejudices which are not based on reason, but, for the most part unconsciously, are supported only by sentiment. To overcome this barrier of instinctive aversion, of emotional hatred, of prejudiced rejection, is a thousand times harder than to correct a faulty or erroneous scientific opinion. False concepts and poor knowledge can be eliminated by instruction, the resistance of the emotions never. Here only an appeal to these mysterious powers themselves can be effective; and the writer can hardly ever accomplish this, but almost exclusively the orator.

The most striking proof of this is furnished by the fact that, despite a bourgeois press that is often very skillfully gotten up, flooding our people with editions running into millions, this press could not prevent the masses from becoming the sharpest enemy of its own bourgeois world. The whole newspaper flood and all the books that are turned out year after year by the intellectuals slide off the millions of the lower classes like water from oiled leather. This can prove only two things: either the unsoundness of the content of this whole literary production of our bourgeois world or the impossibility of reaching the heart of the broad masses solely by written matter. Especially, indeed, when this

written matter demonstrates so unpsychological an attitude as is here the case.

Let no one reply (as a big German national newspaper in Berlin tried to do) that *Marxism* itself, by its writings, especially by the effect of the great basic work of Karl Marx, provides proof counter to this assertion. Seldom has anyone made a more superficial attempt to support an erroneous view. What gave *Marxism* its astonishing power over the great masses is by no means the formal written work of the Jewish intellectual world, but rather the enormous oratorical propaganda wave which took possession of the great masses in the course of the years. Of a hundred thousand German workers, not a hundred on the average know this work, which has always been studied by a thousand times more intellectuals and especially Jews than by real adherents of this movement from the great lower classes. And this work was not written for the great masses, but exclusively for the intellectual leadership of that Jewish machine for world conquest; it was stoked subsequently with an entirely different fuel: the press. For that is what distinguishes the Marxist press from our bourgeois press. *The Marxist press is written by agitators, and the bourgeois press would like to carry on agitation by means of writers.* The Social Democratic yellow journalist, who almost always goes from the meeting hall to the newspaper office, knows his public like no one else. But the bourgeois scribbler who comes out of his study to confront the great masses is nauseated by their very fumes and faces them helplessly with the written word.

What has won the millions of workers for Marxism is less the literary style of the Marxist church fathers than the indefatigable and truly enormous propaganda work of tens of thousands of untiring agitators, from the great agitator down to the small trade-union official and the shop steward and discussion speaker; this work consisted of the hundreds of thousands of meetings at which, standing on the table in smoky taverns, these people's orators hammered at the masses and thus were able to acquire a marvelous knowledge of this human material which really put them in a position to choose the best weapons for attacking the

fortress of public opinion. And it consisted, furthermore, in the gigantic mass demonstrations, these parades of hundreds of thousands of men, which burned into the small, wretched individual the proud conviction that, paltry worm as he was, he was nevertheless a part of a great dragon,¹ beneath whose burning breath the hated bourgeois world would some day go up in fire and flame and the proletarian dictatorship would celebrate its ultimate final victory.

Such propaganda produced the people who were ready and prepared to read a Social Democratic press, however, a press which itself in turn is not written, but which is spoken. For, while in the bourgeois camp professors and scholars, theoreticians and writers of all sorts, occasionally attempt to speak, in the Marxist movement the speakers occasionally try to write. And precisely the Jew, who is especially to be considered in this connection, will, in general, thanks to his lying dialectical skill and suppleness, even as a writer be more of an agitational orator than a literary creator.

That is the reason why the bourgeois newspaper world (quite aside from the fact that it, too, is mostly Jewified and therefore has no interest in really instructing the great masses) cannot exert the slightest influence on the opinion of the broadest sections of our people.

How hard it is to upset emotional prejudices, moods, sentiments, etc., and to replace them by others, on how many scarcely calculable influences and conditions success depends, the sensitive speaker can judge by the fact that even the time of day in which the lecture takes place can have a decisive influence on the effect. The same lecture, the same speaker, the same theme, have an entirely different effect at ten o'clock in the morning, at three o'clock in the afternoon, or at night. I myself as a beginner organized meetings for the morning, and especially remember a rally which we held in the Munich Kindl Keller as a protest 'against the oppression of German territories.' At that time it was Munich's largest hall and it seemed a very great

¹ 'Als kleiner Wurm dennoch Glied eines grossen Drachens zu sein.'

venture. In order to make attendance particularly easy for the adherents of the movement and all the others who came, I set the meeting for a Sunday morning at ten o'clock. The result was depressing, yet at the same time extremely instructive: the hall was full, the impression really overpowering, but the mood ice cold; no one became warm, and I myself as a speaker felt profoundly unhappy at being unable to create any bond, not even the slightest contact, between myself and my audience. I thought I had not spoken worse than usual; but the effect seemed to be practically nil. Utterly dissatisfied, though richer by one experience, I left the meeting. Tests of the same sort that I later undertook led to the same result.

This should surprise no one. Go to a theater performance and witness a play at three o'clock in the afternoon and the same play with the same actors at eight at night, and you will be amazed at the difference in effect and impression. A man with fine feelings and the power to achieve clarity with regard to this mood will be able to establish at once that the impression made by the performance at three in the afternoon is not as great as that made in the evening. The same applies even to a movie. This is important because in the theater it might be said that perhaps the actor does not take as much pains in the afternoon as at night. But a film is no different in the afternoon than at nine in the evening. No, the *time* itself exerts a definite effect, just as the hall does on me. There are halls which leave people cold for reasons that are hard to discern, but which somehow oppose the most violent resistance to any creation of mood. Traditional memories and ideas that are present in a man can also decisively determine an impression. Thus, a performance of *Parsifal* in Bayreuth will always have a different effect than anywhere else in the world. The mysterious magic of the house on the Festspielhügel in the old city of the margraves cannot be replaced or even compensated for by *externals*.

In all these cases we have to do with an encroachment upon man's freedom of will. This applies most, of course, to meetings attended by people with a contrary attitude of will, who must

now be won over to a new will. In the morning and even during the day people's will power seems to struggle with the greatest energy against an attempt to force upon them a strange will and a strange opinion. At night, however, they succumb more easily to the dominating force of a stronger will. For, in truth, every such meeting represents a wrestling bout between two opposing forces. The superior oratorical art of a dominating preacher will succeed more easily in winning to the new will people who have themselves experienced a weakening of their force of resistance in the most natural way than those who are still in full possession of their mental tension and will.

The same purpose, after all, is served by the artificially made and yet mysterious twilight in Catholic churches, the burning lamps, incense, censers, etc.

In this wrestling bout of the speaker with the adversaries he wants to convert, he will gradually achieve that wonderful sensitivity to the psychological requirements of propaganda, which the writer almost always lacks. Hence the written word in its limited effect will in general serve more to retain, to reinforce, to deepen, a point of view or opinion that is already present. Really great historical changes are not induced by the *written* word, but at most *accompanied* by it.

Let no one believe that the French Revolution would ever have come about through philosophical theories if it had not found an army of agitators led by demagogues in the grand style, who whipped up the passions of the people tormented to begin with, until at last there occurred that terrible volcanic eruption which held all Europe rigid with fear. And likewise the greatest revolutionary upheaval of the most recent period, the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, was brought about, not by Lenin's writings, but by the hate-fomenting oratorical activity of countless of the greatest and the smallest apostles of agitation.

The illiterate common people were not, forsooth, fired with enthusiasm for the Communist Revolution by the theoretical reading of Karl Marx, but solely by the glittering heaven which thousands of agitators, themselves, to be sure, all in the service of an idea, talked into the people.

And that has always been so and will eternally remain so.

It is entirely in keeping with the stubborn unworldliness of our German intelligentsia to believe that the writer must necessarily be mentally superior to the speaker. This conception is illustrated in the most precious way by a criticism appearing in the above-mentioned national newspaper, in which it is stated that one is so often disappointed to see the speech of a recognized great orator suddenly in print. This reminds me of another criticism which came into my hands in the course of the War; it painfully subjected the speeches of Lloyd George, who at that time was still munitions minister, to the magnifying glass, only to arrive at the brilliant discovery that these speeches were scientifically inferior products and hackneyed to boot. Later, in the form of a little volume, these speeches came into my own hands, and I had to laugh aloud that an average German knight of the ink-pot should possess no understanding for these psychological masterpieces in the art of mass propaganda. This man judged these speeches solely according to the impression they left on his own blasé nature, while the great English demagogue had set out solely to exert the greatest possible effect on the mass of his listeners, and in the broadest sense on the entire English lower class. Regarded from this standpoint, the speeches of this Englishman were the most wonderful performances, for they testified to a positively amazing knowledge of the soul of the broad masses of the people. And their effect was truly powerful.

Compare to it the helpless stammering of a Bethmann-Hollweg. These speeches, to be sure, were apparently wittier, but in reality they only showed this man's inability to speak to his people, which he simply did not know. Nevertheless, the average sparrow brain of a German scribbler, equipped, it goes without saying, with a high scientific education, manages to judge the intelligence of the English minister by the impression which a speech aimed at mass effect makes on his own brain, calcified with sheer science, and to compare it with that of a German statesman whose brilliant chatter naturally finds more receptive soil in him. Lloyd George proved that he was not only the equal in

genius of a Bethmann-Hollweg, but was a thousand times his superior, precisely by the fact that in his speeches he found that form and that expression which opened to him the heart of his people and in the end made this people serve his will completely. Precisely in the primitiveness of his language, the primordially of its forms of expression, and the use of easily intelligible examples of the simplest sort lies the proof of the towering political ability of this Englishman. *For I must not measure the speech of a statesman to his people by the impression which it leaves in a university professor, but by the effect it exerts on the people.* And this alone gives the standard for the speaker's genius.

* * *

The amazing development of our movement, which only a few years ago was founded out of the void and today is considered worthy to be sharply persecuted by all the inner and outer enemies of our people, must be attributed to the constant consideration and application of these realizations.

Important as the movement's literature may be, it will in our present position be more important for the equal and uniform training of the upper and lower leaders than for the winning of the hostile masses. Only in the rarest cases will a convinced Social Democrat or a fanatical Communist condescend to acquire a National Socialist pamphlet, let alone a book, to read it and from it gain an insight into our conception of life or to study the critique of his own. Even a newspaper will be read but very seldom if it does not bear the party stamp. Besides, this would be of little use; for the general aspect of a single copy of a newspaper is so chopped up and so divided in its effect that looking at it once cannot be expected to have any influence on the reader. We may and must expect no one, for whom pennies count, to subscribe steadily to an opposing newspaper merely from the urge for objective enlightenment. Scarcely one out of ten thousand will do this. Only a man who has already been won to

the movement will steadily read the party organ, and he will read it as a running news service of his movement.

The case is quite different with the 'spoken' leaflet! The man in the street will far sooner take it into his hands, especially if he gets it for nothing, and all the more if the headlines plastically treat a topic which at the moment is in everyone's mouth. By a more or less thorough perusal, it may be possible by such a leaflet to call his attention to new viewpoints and attitudes, even in fact to a new movement. But even this, in the most favorable case, will provide only a slight impetus, never an accomplished fact. For the leaflet, too, can only suggest or point to something, and its effect will only appear in combination with a subsequent more thoroughgoing instruction and enlightenment of its readers. And this is and remains the *mass meeting*.

The mass meeting is also necessary for the reason that in it the individual, who at first, while becoming a supporter of a young movement, feels lonely and easily succumbs to the fear of being alone, for the first time gets the picture of a larger community, which in most people has a strengthening, encouraging effect. The same man, within a company or a battalion, surrounded by all his comrades, would set out on an attack with a lighter heart than if left entirely on his own. In the crowd he always feels somewhat sheltered, even if a thousand reasons actually argue against it.

But the community of the great demonstration not only strengthens the individual, it also unites and helps to create an *esprit de corps*. The man who is exposed to grave tribulations, as the first advocate of a new doctrine in his factory or workshop, absolutely needs that strengthening which lies in the conviction of being a member and fighter in a great comprehensive body. And he obtains an impression of this body for the first time in the mass demonstration. When from his little workshop or big factory, in which he feels very small, he steps for the first time into a mass meeting and has thousands and thousands of people of the same opinions around him, when, as a seeker,¹ he is swept

¹ 'Als Suchender.' A Wagnerian phrase, which Hitler was apparently determined to use at all costs.

away by three or four thousand others into the mighty effect of suggestive intoxication and enthusiasm, when the visible success and agreement of thousands confirm to him the rightness of the new doctrine and for the first time arouse doubt in the truth of his previous conviction — then he himself has succumbed to the magic influence of what we designate as 'mass suggestion.' The will, the longing, and also the power of thousands are accumulated in every individual. The man who enters such a meeting doubting and wavering leaves it inwardly reinforced: he has become a link in the community.

The National Socialist movement must never forget this and in particular it must never let itself be influenced by those bourgeois simpletons who know everything better, but who nevertheless have gambled away a great state including their own existence and the rule of their class. Oh, yes, they are very, very clever, they know everything, understand everything — only one thing they did not understand, how to prevent the German people from falling into the arms of Marxism. In this they miserably and wretchedly failed, so that their present conceit is only arrogance,¹ which in the form of pride, as everyone knows, always thrives on the same tree as stupidity.

If today these people attribute no special value to the spoken word, they do so, it must be added, only because, thank the Lord, they have become thoroughly convinced by now of the ineffectualness of their own speechmaking.

¹ 'so dass ihre jetzige Eingebildetheit nur Dünkel ist.'

state, and, therefore, desires its annihilation even before establishing his own dictatorship.

And so he incites the nations against Japan as he once did against Germany, and this is what brings it about that, while British statesmen are still striving to build on the alliance with Japan, the British-Jewish press already demands struggle against the ally, and prepares the war of annihilation under the proclamation of democracy and under the battle-cry: Down with Japanese militarism and imperialism!

That is how insubordinate the Jew has become in England today.

And for this reason it is there that the struggle against the Jewish world menace will begin.

And again the National Socialist movement has the mightiest task to fulfill.

It must open the eyes of the people on the subject of foreign nations and must remind them again and again of the true enemy of our present-day world. In place of hatred against Aryans, from whom almost everything may separate us, but with whom we are bound by common blood or the great line of a kindred culture, it must call eternal wrath upon the head of the foul enemy of mankind as the real originator of our sufferings.

It must make certain that in our country, at least, the mortal enemy is recognized and that the fight against him becomes a gleaming symbol of brighter days, to show other nations the way to the salvation of an embattled Aryan humanity.

For the rest, may reason be our guide, may our will be our strength. May the sacred duty to act in this way give us determination, and above all may our faith protect us.

CHAPTER XIV

Eastern Orientation or Eastern Policy

THERE are two reasons which induce me to submit to a special examination the relation of Germany to Russia:

1. Here perhaps we are dealing with the most decisive concern of all German foreign affairs; and
2. This question is also the touchstone for the political capacity of the young National Socialist movements to think clearly and to act correctly.

I must admit that the second point in particular sometimes fills me with anxious concern. Since our young movement does not obtain membership material from the camp of the indifferent, but chiefly from very extreme outlooks, it is only too natural if these people, in the field of understanding foreign affairs as in other fields, are burdened with the preconceived ideas or feeble understanding of the circles to which they previously belonged, both politically and philosophically. And this by no means applies only to the man who comes to us from the *Left*. On the contrary. Harmful as his previous instruction with regard to such problems might be, in part at least it was not infrequently balanced by an existing remnant of natural and healthy instinct. Then it was only necessary to substitute a better attitude for the influence that was previously forced upon him, and often the essentially healthy instinct and impulse of self-preservation that still survived in him could be regarded as our best ally.

It is much harder, on the other hand, to induce clear political thinking in a man whose previous education in this field was no less devoid of any reason and logic, but on top of all this had also sacrificed his last remnant of natural instinct on the altar of objectivity. Precisely the members of our so-called intelligentsia are the hardest to move to a really clear and logical defense of their interests and the interests of their nation. They are not only burdened with a dead weight of the most senseless conceptions and prejudices, but what makes matters completely intolerable is that they have lost and abandoned all healthy instinct of self-preservation. The National Socialist movement is compelled to endure hard struggles with these people, hard because, despite total incompetence, they often unfortunately are afflicted with an amazing conceit, which causes them to look down without the slightest inner justification upon other people, for the most part healthier than they. Supercilious, arrogant know-it-alls, without any capacity for cool testing and weighing, which, in turn, must be recognized as the pre-condition for any will and action in the field of foreign affairs.

Since these very circles are beginning today to divert the tendency of our foreign policy in the most catastrophic way from any real defense of the folkish interests of our people, placing it instead in the service of their fantastic ideology, I feel it incumbent upon me to discuss for my supporters the most important question in the field of foreign affairs, our relation to Russia, in particular, and as thoroughly as is necessary for the general understanding and possible in the scope of such a work.

But first I would like to make the following introductory remarks:

If under foreign policy we must understand the regulation of a nation's relations with the rest of the world, the manner of this regulation will be determined by certain definite facts. As National Socialists we can, furthermore, establish the following principle concerning the nature of the foreign policy of a folkish state:

The foreign policy of the folkish state must safeguard the exist-

ence on this planet of the race embodied in the state, by creating a healthy, viable natural relation between the nation's population and growth on the one hand and the quantity and quality of its soil on the other hand.

As a healthy relation we may regard only that condition which assures the sustenance of a people on its own soil. Every other condition, even if it endures for hundreds, nay, thousands of years, is nevertheless unhealthy and will sooner or later lead to the injury if not annihilation of the people in question.

Only an adequately large space on this earth assures a nation of freedom of existence.

Moreover, the necessary size of the territory to be settled cannot be judged exclusively on the basis of present requirements, not even in fact on the basis of the yield of the soil compared to the population. For, as I explained in the first volume, under 'German Alliance Policy Before the War,' *in addition to its importance as a direct source of a people's food, another significance, that is, a military and political one, must be attributed to the area of a state.* If a nation's sustenance as such is assured by the amount of its soil, the safeguarding of the existing soil itself must also be borne in mind. This lies in the general power-political strength of the state, which in turn to no small extent is determined by geo-military considerations.

Hence, the German nation can defend its future only as a world power. For more than two thousand years the defense of our people's interests, as we should designate our more or less fortunate activity in the field of foreign affairs, was *world history*. We ourselves were witnesses to this fact: for the gigantic struggle of the nations in the years 1914-1918 was only the struggle of the German people for its existence on the globe, but we designated the type of event itself as a *World War*.

The German people entered this struggle as a *supposed* world power. I say here 'supposed,' for in reality it was none. If the German nation in 1914 had had a different relation between area and population, Germany would really have been a world power, and the War, aside from all other factors, could have been terminated favorably.

Germany today is no world power. Even if our momentary military impotence were overcome, we should no longer have any claim to this title. What can a formation, as miserable in its relation of population to area as the German Reich today, mean on this planet? In an era when the earth is gradually being divided up among states, some of which embrace almost entire continents, we cannot speak of a world power in connection with a formation whose political mother country is limited to the absurd area of five hundred thousand square kilometers.

From the purely territorial point of view, the area of the German Reich vanishes completely as compared with that of the so-called world powers. Let no one cite England as a proof to the contrary, for England in reality is merely the great capital of the British world empire which calls nearly a quarter of the earth's surface its own. In addition, we must regard as giant states, first of all the American Union, then Russia and China. All are spatial formations having in part an area more than ten times greater than the present German Reich. And even France must be counted among these states. Not only that she complements her army to an ever-increasing degree from her enormous empire's reservoir of colored humanity, but racially as well, she is making such great progress in negrification that we can actually speak of an African state arising on European soil. The colonial policy of present-day France cannot be compared with that of Germany in the past. If the development of France in the present style were to be continued for three hundred years, the last remnants of Frankish blood would be submerged in the developing European-African mulatto state. An immense self-contained area of settlement from the Rhine to the Congo, filled with a lower race gradually produced from continuous bastardization.

This distinguishes French colonial policy from the old German one.

The former German colonial policy, like everything we did, was carried out by halves. It neither increased the settlement area of the German Reich, nor did it undertake any attempt — criminal though it would have been — to strengthen the Reich by the

use of black blood. The Askaris in German East Africa were a short, hesitant step in this direction. Actually they served only for the defense of the colonies themselves. The idea of bringing black troops into a European battlefield, quite aside from its practical impossibility in the World War, never existed even as a design to be realized under more favorable circumstances, while, on the contrary, it was always regarded and felt by the French as the basic reason for their colonial activity. ✦

Thus, in the world today we see a number of power states, some of which not only far surpass the strength of our German nation in population, but whose area above all is the chief support of their political power. Never has the relation of the German Reich to other existing world states been as unfavorable as at the beginning of our history two thousand years ago and again today. Then we were a young people, rushing headlong into a world of great crumbling state formations, whose last giant, Rome, we ourselves helped to fell. Today we find ourselves in a world of great power states in process of formation, with our own Reich sinking more and more into insignificance.

We must bear this bitter truth coolly and soberly in mind. We must follow and compare the German Reich through the centuries in its relation to other states with regard to population and area. I know that everyone will then come to the dismayed conclusion which I have stated at the beginning of this discussion: *Germany is no longer a world power, regardless whether she is strong or weak from the military point of view.*

We have lost all proportion to the other great states of the earth, and this thanks only to the positively catastrophic leadership of our nation in the field of foreign affairs, thanks to our total failure to be guided by what I should almost call a testamentary aim in foreign policy, and thanks to the loss of any healthy instinct and impulse of self-preservation.

If the National Socialist movement really wants to be consecrated by history with a great mission for our nation, it must be permeated by knowledge and filled with pain at our true situation in this world; boldly and conscious of its goal, it must take up the struggle against

composed of men

✦ The French used troops, from their African colonies,

the aimlessness and incompetence which have hitherto guided our German nation in the line of foreign affairs. Then, without consideration of 'traditions' and prejudices, it must find the courage to gather our people and their strength for an advance along the road that will lead this people from its present restricted living space to new land and soil, and hence also free it from the danger of vanishing from the earth or of serving others as a slave nation.

The National Socialist movement must strive to eliminate the disproportion between our population and our area — viewing this latter as a source of food as well as a basis for power politics — between our historical past and the hopelessness of our present impotence. And in this it must remain aware that we, as guardians of the highest humanity on this earth, are bound by the highest obligation, and the more it strives to bring the German people to racial awareness so that, in addition to breeding dogs, horses, and cats, they will have mercy on their own blood, the more it will be able to meet this obligation.

* * *

If I characterize German policy up to now as aimless and incompetent, the proof of my assertion lies in the actual failure of this policy. If our people had been intellectually inferior or cowardly, the results of its struggle on the earth could not be worse than what we see before us today. Neither must the development of the last decades before the War deceive us on this score; for we cannot measure the strength of an empire by itself, but only by comparison with other states. And just such a comparison furnishes proof that the increase in strength of the other states was not only more even, but also greater in its ultimate effect; that consequently, despite its apparent rise, Germany's road actually diverged more and more from that of the other states and fell far behind; in short, the difference in magnitudes increased to our disfavor. Yes, as time went on, we fell behind more and more even in population. But since our people is cer-

tainly excelled by none on earth in heroism, in fact, all in all has certainly given the most blood of all the nations on earth for the preservation of its existence, the failure can reside only in the *mistaken way* in which it was given.

If we examine the political experiences of our people for more than a thousand years in this connection, passing all the innumerable wars and struggles in review and examining the present end result they created, we shall be forced to admit that this sea of blood has given rise to only three phenomena which we are justified in claiming as enduring fruits of clearly defined actions in the field of foreign and general politics:

- (1) The colonization of the *Ostmark*, carried out mostly by Bavarians;
- (2) the acquisition and penetration of the territory east of the Elbe; and
- (3) the organization by the Hohenzollerns of the Brandenburg-Prussian state as a model and nucleus for crystallization of a new Reich.

An instructive warning for the future!

The first two great successes of our foreign policy have remained the most enduring. Without them our nation today would no longer have any importance at all. They were the first, but unfortunately the only successful attempt to bring the rising population into harmony with the quantity of our soil. And it must be regarded as truly catastrophic that our German historians have never been able to estimate correctly these two achievements which are by far the greatest and most significant for the future, but by contrast have glorified everything conceivable, praised and admired fantastic heroism, innumerable adventurous wars and struggles, instead of finally recognizing how unimportant most of these events have been for the nation's great line of development.

The third great success of our political activity lies in the formation of the Prussian state and the resultant cultivation of a special state idea, as also of the German army's instinct of self-preservation and self-defense, adapted to the modern world and

put into organized form. The development of the idea of individual militancy into the duty of national militancy [conscription] has grown out of every state formation and every state conception. The significance of this development cannot be overestimated. Through the discipline of the Prussian army organism, the German people, shot through with hyperindividualism by their racial divisions, won back at least a part of the capacity for organization which they had long since lost. What other peoples still primitively possess in their herd community instinct, we, partially at least, regained artificially for our national community through the process of military training. Hence the elimination of universal conscription — which for dozens of other peoples might be a matter of no importance — is for us fraught with the gravest consequences. Ten German generations without corrective and educational military training, left to the evil effects of their racial and hence philosophical division — and our nation would really have lost the last remnant of an independent existence on this planet. Only through individual men, in the bosom of foreign nations, could the German spirit make its contribution to culture, and its origin would not even be recognized. Cultural fertilizer, until the last remnant of Aryan-Nordic blood in us would be corrupted or extinguished.

It is noteworthy that the significance of these real political successes won by our nation in its struggles, enduring more than a thousand years, were far better understood and appreciated by our adversaries than by ourselves. Even today we still rave about a heroism which robbed our people of millions of its noblest blood-bearers, but in its ultimate result remained totally fruitless.

The distinction between the real political successes of our people and the national blood spent for fruitless aims is of the greatest importance for our conduct in the present and the future.

We National Socialists must never under any circumstances join in the foul¹ hurrah patriotism of our present bourgeois world. In particular it is mortally dangerous to regard the last pre-War de-

¹ 'übel.' In preparing the second edition, the frugal copy-reader substitutes 'üblich,' usual.

velopments as binding even in the slightest degree for our own course. From the whole historical development of the nineteenth century, not a single obligation can be derived which was grounded in this period itself. In contrast to the conduct of the representatives of this period, we must again profess the highest aim of all foreign policy, to wit: *to bring the soil into harmony with the population.* Yes, from the past we can only learn that, in setting an objective for our political activity, we must proceed in two directions: *Land and soil as the goal of our foreign policy, and a new philosophically established, uniform foundation as the aim of political activity at home.*

* * *

I still wish briefly to take a position on the question as to what extent the demand for soil and territory seems ethically and morally justified. This is necessary, since unfortunately, even in so-called folkish circles, all sorts of unctuous big-mouths step forward, endeavoring to set the rectification of the injustice of 1918 as the aim of the German nation's endeavors in the field of foreign affairs, but at the same time find it necessary to assure the whole world of folkish brotherhood and sympathy.

I should like to make the following preliminary remarks: *The demand for restoration of the frontiers of 1914 is a political absurdity of such proportions and consequences as to make it seem a crime. Quite aside from the fact that the Reich's frontiers in 1914 were anything but logical. For in reality they were neither complete in the sense of embracing the people of German nationality, nor sensible with regard to geo-military expediency. They were not the result of a considered political action, but momentary frontiers in a political struggle that was by no means concluded; partly, in fact, they were the results of chance.* With equal right and in many cases with more right, some other sample year of German history could be picked out, and the restoration of the conditions at that time declared to be the aim of an activity in foreign affairs. The above

demand is entirely suited to our bourgeois society, which here as elsewhere does not possess a single creative political idea for the future, but lives only in the past, in fact, in the most immediate past; for even their backward gaze does not extend beyond their own times. The law of inertia binds them to a given situation and causes them to resist any change in it, but without ever increasing the activity of this opposition beyond the mere power of perseverance. So it is obvious that the political horizon of these people does not extend beyond the year 1914. By proclaiming the restoration of those borders as the political aim of their activity, they keep mending the crumbling league of our adversaries. Only in this way can it be explained that eight years after a world struggle in which states, some of which had the most heterogeneous desires, took part, the coalition of the victors of those days can still maintain itself in a more or less unbroken form.

All these states were at one time beneficiaries of the German collapse. Fear of our strength caused the greed and envy of the individual great powers among themselves to recede. By grabbing as much of the Reich as they could, they found the best guard against a future uprising. A bad conscience and fear of our people's strength is still the most enduring cement to hold together the various members of this alliance.

And we do not disappoint them. By setting up the restoration of the borders of 1914 as a political program for Germany, our bourgeoisie frighten away every partner who might desire to leave the league of our enemies, since he must inevitably fear to be attacked singly and thereby lose the protection of his individual fellow allies. Each single state feels concerned and threatened by this slogan.

Moreover, it is senseless in two respects:

(1) because the instruments of power are lacking to remove it from the vapors of club evenings into reality; and

(2) because, if it could actually be realized, the outcome would again be so pitiful that, by God, it would not be worth while to risk the blood of our people for *this*.

For it should scarcely seem questionable to anyone that even

the restoration of the frontiers of 1914 could be achieved only by blood. Only childish and naïve minds can lull themselves in the idea that they can bring about a correction of Versailles by wheedling and begging. Quite aside from the fact that such an attempt would presuppose a man of Talleyrand's talents, which we do not possess. One half of our political figures consist of extremely sly, but equally spineless elements which are hostile toward our nation to begin with, while the other is composed of good-natured, harmless, and easy-going soft-heads. Moreover, the times have changed since the Congress of Vienna: *Today it is not princes and princes' mistresses who haggle and bargain over state borders; it is the inexorable Jew who struggles for his domination over the nations.* No nation can remove this hand from its throat except by the sword. Only the assembled and concentrated might of a national passion rearing up in its strength can defy the international enslavement of peoples. Such a process is and remains a bloody one.

If, however, we harbor the conviction that the German future, regardless what happens, demands the supreme sacrifice, quite aside from all considerations of political expediency as such, we must set up an aim worthy of this sacrifice and fight for it.

The boundaries of the year 1914 mean nothing at all for the German future. Neither did they provide a defense of the past, nor would they contain any strength for the future. Through them the German nation will neither achieve its inner integrity, nor will its sustenance be safeguarded by them, nor do these boundaries, viewed from the military standpoint, seem expedient or even satisfactory, nor finally can they improve the relation in which we at present find ourselves toward the other world powers, or, better expressed, the real world powers. The lag behind England will not be caught up, the magnitude of the Union will not be achieved; not even France would experience a material diminution of her world-political importance.

Only one thing would be certain: even with a favorable outcome, such an attempt to restore the borders of 1914 would lead to a further bleeding of our national body, so much so that there

would be no worth-while blood left to stake for the decisions and actions really to secure the nation's future. On the contrary, drunk with such a shallow success, we should renounce any further goals, all the more readily as 'national honor' would be repaired and, for the moment at least, a few doors would have been reopened to commercial development.

As opposed to this, we National Socialists must hold unflinchingly to our aim in foreign policy, namely, *to secure for the German people the land and soil to which they are entitled on this earth.* And this action is the only one which, before God and our German posterity, would make any sacrifice of blood seem justified: before God, since we have been put on this earth with the mission of eternal struggle for our daily bread, beings who receive nothing as a gift, and who owe their position as lords of the earth only to the genius and the courage with which they can conquer and defend it; and before our German posterity in so far as we have shed no citizen's blood out of which a thousand others are not bequeathed to posterity. The soil on which some day German generations of peasants can beget powerful sons will sanction the investment of the sons of today, and will some day acquit the responsible statesmen of blood-guilt and sacrifice of the people, even if they are persecuted by their contemporaries.

And I must sharply attack those folkish pen-pushers who claim to regard such an acquisition of soil as a 'breach of sacred human rights' and attack it as such in their scribblings. One never knows who stands behind these fellows. But one thing is certain, that the confusion they can create is desirable and convenient to our national enemies. By such an attitude they help to weaken and destroy from within our people's will for the only correct way of defending their vital needs. For no people on this earth possesses so much as a square yard of territory on the strength of a higher will or superior right. Just as Germany's frontiers are fortuitous frontiers, momentary frontiers in the current political struggle of any period, so are the boundaries of other nations' living space. And just as the shape of our earth's surface can seem immutable as granite only to the thoughtless

soft-head, but in reality only represents at each period an apparent pause in a continuous development, created by the mighty forces of Nature in a process of continuous growth, only to be transformed or destroyed tomorrow by greater forces, likewise the boundaries of living spaces in the life of nations.

State boundaries are made by man and changed by man.

The fact that a nation has succeeded in acquiring an undue amount of soil constitutes no higher obligation that it should be recognized eternally. At most it proves the strength of the conquerors and the weakness of the nations. And in this case, right lies in this strength alone. If the German nation today, penned into an impossible area, faces a lamentable future, this is no more a commandment of Fate than revolt against this state of affairs constitutes an affront to Fate. No more than any higher power has promised another nation more territory than the German nation, or is offended by the fact of this unjust distribution of the soil. Just as our ancestors did not receive the soil on which we live today as a gift from Heaven, but had to fight for it at the risk of their lives, in the future no folkish grace will win soil for us and hence life for our people, but only the might of a victorious sword.

Much as all of us today recognize the necessity of a reckoning with France, it would remain ineffectual in the long run if it represented the whole of our aim in foreign policy. It can and will achieve meaning only if it offers the rear cover for an enlargement of our people's living space in Europe. For it is not in colonial acquisitions that we must see the solution of this problem, but exclusively in the acquisition of a territory for settlement, which will enhance the area of the mother country, and hence not only keep the new settlers in the most intimate community with the land of their origin, but secure for the total area those advantages which lie in its unified magnitude.

The folkish movement must not be the champion of other peoples, but the vanguard fighter of its own. Otherwise it is superfluous and above all has no right to sulk about the past. For in that case it is behaving in exactly the same way. The old

German policy was wrongly determined by dynastic considerations, and the future policy must not be directed by cosmopolitan folkish drivel. In particular, we are not constables guarding the well-known 'poor little nations,' but soldiers of our own nation.

But we National Socialists must go further. *The right to possess soil can become a duty if without extension of its soil a great nation seems doomed to destruction.* And most especially when not some little nigger nation or other is involved, but the Germanic mother of life, which has given the present-day world its cultural picture. *Germany will either be a world power or there will be no Germany.* And for world power she needs that magnitude which will give her the position she needs in the present period, and life to her citizens.

* * *

And so we National Socialists consciously draw a line beneath the foreign policy tendency of our pre-War period. We take up where we broke off six hundred years ago. We stop the endless German movement to the south and west, and turn our gaze toward the land in the east. At long last we break off the colonial and commercial policy of the pre-War period and shift to the soil policy of the future.

If we speak of soil in Europe today, we can primarily have in mind only *Russia* and her vassal border states.

Here Fate itself seems desirous of giving us a sign. By handing Russia to Bolshevism, it robbed the Russian nation of that intelligentsia which previously brought about and guaranteed its existence as a state. For the organization of a Russian state formation was not the result of the political abilities of the Slavs in Russia, but only a wonderful example of the state-forming efficacy of the German element in an inferior race. Numerous mighty empires on earth have been created in this way. Lower nations led by Germanic organizers and overlords have more than once grown to be mighty state formations and have endured as

long as the racial nucleus of the creative state race maintained itself. For centuries Russia drew nourishment from this Germanic nucleus of its upper leading strata. Today it can be regarded as almost totally exterminated and extinguished. It has been replaced by the Jew. Impossible as it is for the Russian by himself to shake off the yoke of the Jew by his own resources, it is equally impossible for the Jew to maintain the mighty empire forever. He himself is no element of organization, but a ferment of decomposition. The Persian¹ empire in the east is ripe for collapse. And the end of Jewish rule in Russia will also be the end of Russia as a state. We have been chosen by Fate as witnesses of a catastrophe which will be the mightiest confirmation of the soundness of the folkish theory.

Our task, the mission of the National Socialist movement, is to bring our own people to such political insight that they will not see their goal for the future in the breath-taking sensation of a new Alexander's conquest, but in the industrious work of the German plow, to which the sword need only give soil.

* * *

It goes without saying that the Jews announce the sharpest resistance to such a policy. Better than anyone else they sense the significance of this action for their own future. This very fact should teach all really national-minded men the correctness of such a reorientation. Unfortunately, the opposite is the case. Not only in German-National, but even in 'folkish' circles, the idea of such an eastern policy is violently attacked, and, as almost always in such matters, they appeal to a higher authority. The spirit of Bismarck is cited to cover a policy which is as senseless as it is impossible and in the highest degree harmful to the German nation. Bismarck in his time, they say, always set store on good relations with Russia. This, to a certain extent, is true. But they forget to mention that he set just as great store on good

¹ Second edition has 'giant' instead of 'Persian.'