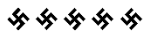


*NATURE AND FORM OF
NATIONAL SOCIALISM*

*Speech Delivered by Dr. Joseph Goebbels
Reich Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda*



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Dr. Joseph Goebbels.

NATURE AND FORM OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

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NATURE AND FORM OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM



It is impossible to give an all-encompassing interpretation of the nature of National Socialism in a temporary outline, since it is a question of a movement and idea that broke into German public life with dynamic force and fundamentally changed all relationships and relationships between people from the ground up. In addition, National Socialism today does not represent something that has become, but something that is becoming, that it is subject to continuous changes and transformations and therefore cannot be defined in its entirety.

We do not want to view National Socialism as an overall phenomenon, but rather to clarify the basic concepts of National Socialist thought and to outline the conceptual pillars on which our ideological structure rests and to read from these basic concepts not only the possibility, but the necessity of National Socialist reality.

Like every great Weltanschauung, National Socialism is based on a few basic concepts that have a deep inner meaning.

The simple explanation of all the fundamental errors in the past 14 years of German policy lies in the fact that we Germans never argue about our questions of fate, neither as individuals nor as an organization or party.

Terms were discussed; but it was impossible from the outset to come to an agreement on the basic principles of our political thought, for each individual took the right to see something different under these terms. What one understood by "democracy", the other regarded as "monarchy"; one said "black-white-red", the other "black-red-gold", what one understood as an "authoritarian state", the other saw as a "parliamentary system".

We discussed and talked about these terms. If one had made the effort 14 years ago at the beginning of the political debate to clarify these terms of politics and to determine what the individual actually meant by "democracy" or "monarchy", by "system" or "authoritarian state", it would have made in clear clear that we

Germans agreed on the basic principles, but that we gave them different names.

National Socialism has now simplified the thinking of the German people for us and has not reduced it to any primitive archetypes. He brought the complex processes of political and economic life back to their simplest formula. This came about out of the natural consideration of bringing the broad masses of the people back to political life. In order to find understanding among the popular masses, we deliberately carried out popular propaganda. So we carried facts that were otherwise only accessible to a few experts into the street and hammered them into the little man's brain; all things were set forth so simply that even the most primitive mind could perceive them. We refused to operate on vague, watered-down and unclear terms, but gave everything a clear meaning.

Here was the secret of our success.

The bourgeois parties, in their lack of understanding, felt that they were above our "primitive cult", they sat in judgment over us with an elegant intellectual arrogance and came to the misjudgment that they were statesmen and we were the drummers. At best they viewed us as agitators and champions of the bourgeois Weltanschauung. But we had set ourselves other tasks than conquering wavering thrones, and then generously leaving them to the others after the decision.

Since we had the ability to clearly see and present the basic principles of the German situation and German community life, we also had the strength to move the broad masses of our people to adopt these new principles and original formulas of political life. This purely agitational process was not without decisive consequences on the level of power politics.

I see this success as the prerequisite for a political understanding between the Germans and their whole people with the partly democratic, fascist or Bolshevik states. If we do not use the same disambiguation procedure everywhere, agreement is impossible. The first necessity of any political debate is based on this definition of terms and principles, and it is important that one can easily anticipate political practice from the section "Definition".

Anyone who once clearly recognizes the basic concepts will be

amazed to see that political practice emerges from them almost organically, and naturally. It becomes clear to him where the political development had to lead and thus the process that has taken place in Germany since the beginning of the National Socialist revolution cannot be considered complete, but must be continued, so that it can only come to an end when the National Socialist way of thinking has fundamentally renewed all public and private life in Germany and filled it with its content.

Today in Germany it is said: "We made a revolution." But very few people know what this revolution means in detail, what it represents dynamically, historically and in terms of development. There are even Volksgenossen who do not want it to be true that a revolution has actually taken place in Germany.

What is this: "A Revolution"? Before the outbreak of the National Socialist upheaval, the term revolution was generally associated with features that actually only had something to do with the original meaning of the revolutionary. Under "revolution" one imagined a political pretext that takes place on the barricades with the help of any means of power and is directed against the existing laws. One only knew about the visible process, namely a violent depossession of a ruling class and the takeover of power by a new power group who proceeded with violence. But the invisible implementation of a revolution means something completely different. The term barricade does not necessarily belong to it, nor does it always have to be the characteristic of a genuine revolution. A revolution can take place bloodlessly and lawfully, and it is possible that a power group goes to the barricades with no revolution in mind. Revolution is an inherently dynamic process with its own legality, which aims to transfer its dynamism and legality, as the previous prerogative of the opposition, to state legality. It is completely irrelevant by which means this happens. In characterizing a revolution, the means of violence or legality play no role. The German revolution provides the classic proof of this, because it was carried out legally in painstaking compliance with the existing laws and nevertheless brought about the greatest intellectual, cultural, economic and social upheaval that has ever occurred in world history. This is due to a special characteristic, namely that the German revolution was made from below and not from above.

There are revolutions from above and revolutions from below; they differ less in the area of power they conquer than in the permanence with which they can maintain this area of power. A revolution from above is inorganic and usually becomes of little historical significance. A revolution from below, on the other hand, is organic and lasts for centuries. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to impose a new legality on a people from above without spiritual preparation; therefore revolutions from above usually only have a short life span.

It is the other way around with the revolutions from below, their legality is not invented and enforced by a small group of men upstairs at the green desk, but already experienced by the people below and brought to growth upwards. If a people are not prepared for a revolution, a revolutionary group may conquer power and have the best goal in mind, but it will not hold power for long. Revolutions from above usually happen very quickly. A handful of generals or statesmen band together, overthrow the regime and take power. Revolutions from below, on the other hand, grow from below; They develop from the smallest primordial cells of the people, ten revolutionaries become one hundred, one thousand become one hundred thousand and at the moment when the dynamic force of the revolutionary opposition is stronger than the gradually orphaned state apparatus, the revolution has already been spiritually won. With the seizure of power and the marriage to the state apparatus, what we have experienced in Germany since January 30, 1933, takes place. It is not the "revolution" per se, but the last part of a revolutionary act. The legality, the way of thinking and the dynamics of the revolution - which have grown up over decades from the deepest roots of popular power - are visibly transferred to the state.

We have experienced the miracle in Germany: without bloodshed, without barricades and machine guns, a revolution took place within our 60 million people, the momentum of which did not stop anywhere, which occupied all territories with sovereign self-evidence and whose law ruled all things. Over the past few months, the men of the revolution have set the pace of the upheaval. The result is a new state!

In fact, nothing else took place than the transposition of revolutionary legality onto the state. From then on, National

Socialist authorities were regarded as the authorities of the state, the laws of the revolution became state laws and the National Socialist way of thinking passed over to the nation. There was nothing in Germany that could have evaded the legal progress of this historical process.

The revolution would never have prevailed if it had only been carried by the usurpatory intention of a group of men whose conquest of power had taken place without the inner meaning of an idea. In the National Socialist Revolution, a Weltanschauung made a breakthrough!

A Weltanschauung has - and this is its most essential characteristic - nothing to do with knowledge. A poor, unknown worker with a small supply of knowledge can represent a Weltanschauung, while it need by no means be the case with a highly learned university professor who has mastered all areas of knowledge. Experience has even taught that the greater the knowledge, often the less the courage to stand up for a Weltanschauung.

Weltanschauung is - as the word suggests - a certain way of looking at the world. The prerequisite for this is that this kind of view always takes place from the same point of view.

As a representative of a Weltanschauung, no other standards are applied to the economy than to politics, while cultural life is organically related to the social and foreign policy is viewed in organic relation to the domestic political situation. Weltanschauung means always looking at people and their relationship to the world, to the state, to the economy, to culture and religion from the same point of view. This process does not require a large program, but can usually be defined in a short sentence. However, it depends on whether this sentence is right or wrong. If it is correct, it can bring healing to a people for several centuries or millennia; if it is falsified, the system that emerged from it must very soon disintegrate. All great revolutions in history have taken place from these omens. At the beginning of a revolution there was never a book or an initialed program, but only a single slogan that overshadowed all public and private life.

Thus the great extent of Christian moral teaching and religion was not determined by its master himself. Christ only clarified the basic concept of charity, everything else is the work of the Church

Fathers. Charity was so diametrically opposed to the concepts of the ancient world that there was no understanding between these two poles and either the ancient world had to do away with Christian doctrine or Christianity had to do away with ancient times.

Revolutionaries do not intend to get stuck in theory, but advance from theory into practice, and see the development so clearly that there is no need for any discussion of the realization of their slogans. In the same way as the teachings of the Christian and French revolutions, the slogans of the National Socialist revolution will be realized.

The bourgeois world in Germany used to mock: "The program of National Socialism means lack of a program." We National Socialists, on the other hand, did not see ourselves as church fathers, but as agitators and champions of our teaching. It was not our intention to scientifically justify our worldview, but to realize its teachings, and it was to be reserved for later times to leave practice as the object of knowledge of the idea. It should never be the task of lawyers to determine the way of life of a people at the green table. Constitutions made on paper will never give the constitution to a people. Nature ignores science and shapes its own life. This is what happened in the National Socialist Revolution!

Shortly before we came to power, science tried to prove that this or that revolutionary process did not conform to the existing laws and they did not shy away from referring state-political disputes to the highest court. At that time we only smiled, because while science maintained that it should not be the way it was, things had long since prevailed. Science only has the right to read out a new legality from the existing conditions, and that is why the state of affairs created by transposing our National Socialist revolutionary legalism onto the state - law.

It represents the new normal for the people and evades scientific criticism. The revolution has become a reality and only crazy reactionaries can believe that anything we create can be reversed.

National Socialism is now about to slowly stabilize the revolutionary new legal status in Germany. This differs fundamentally from the old legality and also eludes the possibilities of criticism that he himself could apply in the old system. If democracy allowed us in times of opposition to use

democratic methods, it had to be done in a democratic system. We National Socialists, however, never claimed that we were representatives of a democratic point of view. Instead, we openly declared that we only used democratic means to gain power and that after we had seized power we would ruthlessly deny our opponents all the means that we had been granted in times of opposition. Nevertheless, we can declare that our government conforms to the laws of a refined democracy.

We have been the sovereign masters of criticism and today we can unanimously take the standpoint of the right to criticize. There is only one difference: the right to criticism, if it is supposed to make sense and not represent democratic nonsense, can for the benefit of a people, who must stand above all things of politics - always be granted only to the wiser over the stupid and never vice versa. All that remains to be shown is that we National Socialists were apparently the smarter ones during the opposition.

The other side was in possession of the power, the army, the police, the bureaucratic apparatus, the money, the parties and the parliamentary majority. It dominated public opinion, the press, the radio - in short, everything that can be summarized under the general term "power". If, however, a small group that started with seven men in 14 years succeeds in contesting this right together with power only with the right of criticism of the other side, then it appears undoubtedly who the smarter would be if the other side were. It would have been wiser, with such an unequal distribution of the means of success, she should have found ways and means to prevent us from being deposed. That did not happen; on the contrary, it did indeed succeed in holding back the organic development of the revolution for a certain time, but the new legalism prevailed.

When the German revolution made its visible appearance on January 30, 1933 and wed the National Socialist movement to power, it seemed as if it had only broken out on that day. In fact, it had started much earlier, perhaps with the outbreak of war and the signing of the Versailles dictate. Over the years it had an impact, soliciting followers, shaping the community life of its followers, creating new authorities, new ways of being, new ways of thinking and a new style which it transferred to the new state on the day of the conquest of power.

From a historical perspective, August 1, 1914 is the point of intersection, and even then it had to be obvious to every historically thinking person: "Where we stop today, we cannot start again after the great war." Nine million German men went through the most terrible physical and mental torments; they went through all the hells and purgatory of human suffering, human pain, and human renunciation and depression. It was impossible for them to start where they left off four years ago. No - these people brought a new way of thinking with them from the trenches. In the face of terrible hardships and dangers, they had experienced a new kind of community which, if they had been lucky, could never have been given to them. They had become acquainted with the sovereign leveling of death and had experienced that in the end only the values of character remained. Outside of this there was no property, education or a noble name that mattered; no difference guided the bullets in their course. The eternal leveling of the high and low, poor and rich, big and small were mowed down. There was only one difference between people: personal worth. The uniform could never level if one was brave, the other cowardly, when one proved himself to be a man and threw his life into the redoubt while the other tried to hide. It was a matter of course that the valuation from the trenches carried over to the homeland and that the old "statesmen" who had stayed in the crowd and felt no hint of this new attitude, rebelled against it. But it was only a matter of time that according to the law of strength the younger, the harder and the more courageous had to triumph over the older and the more discouraged.

The nine million German soldiers at the front knew about the fragility of the regime which they defended at the risk of their lives for the nation's sake. They had seen the whole world rise against Germany and realized that this threat could only be averted with all efforts. It became apparent that even the poorest Volksgenosse confessed to his nation, although he had never felt it was a possession. He knew nothing about the cultural values of his country, he knew the names Wagner, Beethoven, Mozart, Goethe, Kant and Schopenhauer at best from hearsay. He would have had a right to say. "The mines and ore mines that we want to conquer have nothing to do with me, because it will probably be completely indifferent to me whether I work for a German or a

French owner." In spite of this, it was seen that these people stood up for an ideal which they did not even know in its broad outline. When the toughest endurance test came later, millions fell away from this ideal out of ignorance and weakness. But we were not a Volksstaat, because such a state grows with its dangers. A people will never abandon their own state.

The National Socialist movement went through the opposite development. During the crises, party comrades never fell away from the movement, only supporters and voters. The party comrades, on the other hand, became all the more ruthless and active in order to wipe out the gap again. It would be the same with a people who remain clearly conscious of the value and property of the Volksstaates. Had the people who committed their lives outside had any idea of the size, value, and achievement of a country they were defending, they would never have let that country play into the hands of political impostors and profiteers at decision-making time. They would have resisted it with fanatical zeal and would never have tolerated the terrible sacrifices made outside on the fronts being gambled away and wasted in a single day.

We Germans used to be no world people and for this reason we did not pursue world politics. When the war broke out, the nation was headed by a philosopher as bad as a statesman. Later one did not learn from the failure of this man, rather the German statesmen did not get younger but older, while the opposite occurred on the opposing side. There were real men at the helm, brutal power people complained of no sentimentality and inconsiderate in the use of state power. They did not let their parliaments deliberate for weeks on whether a revolting sailor should be shot, but had the nerve to shoot the guilty. We Germans won the war brilliantly from a military point of view, but lost it politically across the board. We had no war goal and we did not pursue world politics.

For a whirling jumble of hazy war aims, the proletariat would be dead.

And so it happened that our front gave way, our people broke up and the concept of the Volksstaates did not stand before the harshness of historical development; after a heroically and courageously waged war, the terrible catastrophe was bound to break out. The straight lines, the best, the German patriots in fact

despaired of the future of their people in those gray weeks of November, and many of them perished.

Today we see things differently. We recognize the organic connection and expediency of this development and understand Moeller van den Bruck's prophetic words: "We had to lose the war to win the revolution!" If we start from the view that the war already represented a part of the revolution, which had an effect not in the circumstances but in the people, then we come to the result: We had to lose the first part of the revolution in order to reflect on ourselves in the second, third and fourth acts and to win anyway!

After the end of the war, the opposing side had invented a peace treaty for Germany which, with ingenious refinement, resulted in destroying the nation of Germans and finally removing it from the list of world powers. The parties of the Weimar system never realized that. A few years ago even the bourgeois press in Germany shrank from the word "tribute" and the view was that the mere mention of the Versailles Treaty of Shame was capable of poisoning the relationship between "nations united in friendship". We National Socialists have made the complicated facts of the opposing methods of slavery clear to our people over many years. Today every schoolchild in Germany knows the terrible effects of Versailles and there is no longer a German who is not clear about the scope of the tribute treaty. But just 15 years ago the mutinous German Chancellor was able to appear before the nation and, in view of this disgraceful treaty, coined the word: "The German people have triumphed across the board!" What a change has taken place in these 15 years of struggle. Indeed, one can say: Nations are not always the same, there are all dispositions for good or bad in them and it always depends on their leadership whether nations decide for good or bad! The German people of today cannot be compared with that of 1918, any more than the masses of 1918 can be compared with the nation of 1914. These are fundamentally different mentalities, a different way of thinking, a new sense of community and closer internal cohesion.

We have described the methods of conquering power and the roots of our being. There are still some basic terms to clarify, which should give us the ultimate understanding of the National Socialist world of thought.

In public you often hear the word: "National Socialism wants the total state!" There is a great error here, because National Socialism does not strive for the totality of the state, but the totality of the idea. That means a complete implementation of the kind of view that has been fought for in the last decade and which we have led to victory. It applies in the entire public life of the nation and does not stop at the areas of economy, culture or religion. In Germany there can no longer be any relation that does not correspond to the National Socialist point of view.

The view is often held that the National Socialist movement is falling into disintegration because it has power and has destroyed all other parties. The argument for this attitude is that we are "all National Socialists" today. That's not true! A whole people can think in a soldier-like manner, but nevertheless it does not renounce an army as the actual foster home of a soldierly attitude. It is she who maintains the tradition, the organization and the experiences of soldier life. Only in exceptional cases is the whole people a soldier; as a rule it remains the privilege of a select minority.

Another example: a theater director has a great interest in seeing as many people as possible visit his theater. But it is not acceptable that every theatergoer goes on stage to replace the actor. This right cannot be acquired by attending the theater, however diligent, entry into the small hierarchy of artistic designers has to be fought for with hard work.

Not everyone can put on their hero's cloak or - politically speaking - put on the party badge and declare that they are a real National Socialist. If a layman puts on his toga, he is by no means a great tragedy. On the contrary, one recognizes the great tragedy even without a toga, and the dilettante only puts on the toga because he lacks the talent for tragedy. So the party must always remain the hierarchy of the National Socialist leadership. Their minority must always insist on the prerogative of government. She has to keep the way open for the German youth who want to march into her hierarchy. Beyond that, however, their hierarchy has fewer privileges than preliminary obligations! It is responsible for the leadership of the state and it solemnly takes responsibility from the people. It has a duty to run its state for the good and general benefit of the nation.

We would be making a mistake with grave consequences if we put the National Socialist movement on the same level as the earlier bourgeois and Marxist parties. From the very beginning, National Socialism had set itself the goal of destroying all other parties and removing the people from their encrusted influences. That is why the essential programmatic prerequisites of the National Socialist movement cannot be changed today. Her view of the future remains clear and clearly in the design of her own programmatic content, she relies on the steadfast and is not dependent on the changing and wavering character of the crowd.

In many cases, we National Socialists are secretly requested to change this or that terminology and our program. One speaks: "Why do you call yourselves Socialist? Social is enough! After all, we are all social! Take away the hurtful edge of this word and everything would be in full agreement." No - we National Socialists cannot do that, because it is fundamentally different whether I am "Social" or "Socialist", whether we are "National" or "Nationalistic". The word "also" is usually included with the term "National" - and that is the decisive factor. Here two worlds separate. For the National Socialist, however, what the other emphasizes as a characteristic of his "national" attitude is completely meaningless.

For him it is not the outward appearances that count, but he has dedicated himself to his people with flesh and blood, body and soul. The real Nationalist will never utter the hollow phrase: "It is sweet and honorable to die for the Fatherland." He is far too honest for that and he is reluctant to degrade his constant willingness to work on the floor of the philistine audience to a babbling phrase.

The same is true of the concept of Socialism. "I am Social!" This is usually what a bank director, syndic, factory owner or civil servant in a high position says. They want to set up hospitals and recovery centers to help the poor; they admit that this cannot continue and that something needs to be changed. The Socialist is above that. His standpoint is that we must all become one people in order for the nation to stand its test.

Every sacrifice is right for this nation becoming. I belong to my people in good and bad days and carry joys and sorrows with them. I don't know any classes, I feel only obliged to the nation!

National Socialism does not think in the slightest about leveling

the German people and recognizes every achievement that lifts people out of the multitude of contemporaries. But basically we are all equal before death, before danger and before probation, and we want to express this equality when we profess one another and never allow a gap to open up between us; for there will come the times of danger when our people will be dependent on their inner solidarity.

The much discussed Jewish question must also be seen from this point of view. In this case too, it does not depend on the individual sacrifice, but solely on the well-being of the nation.

When we took over the government, we decided to work out a development period of four years in front of the German people. More than a quarter of this time has passed, and no one can say that it passed uselessly. One can hold against us with much malice and dialectic, how much more is still yet to be done. But we can proudly claim that what was humanly possible has been achieved in our state. We did not prophesy a miracle and therefore no one could expect miracles.

We tried ruthlessly and step by step to stop the damage caused by time and its development. We National Socialists solved problems in Germany that were considered unsolvable: the problem of imperial reform (Reichsreform), the reorganization of the estates (Stände-Neuordnung), party disunity and the creation of popular unity in political, spiritual and ideological terms. Our government has launched a successful fight against unemployment in a way that never happened in the old system. She attacked the winter hardship with unheard of courage and she will continue to fight obsessively against the terrible time sickness of unemployment in the future.

In the past year, the German people received an object lesson on National Socialism that could not be better wished for. Those who used to face us with enmity and skepticism have now become convinced that we have successfully approached the solution of the most difficult problems with honest will. Much remains to be done! We are stepping into the future with youthful vigor, and despite sorrow and misery, the German people have no reason to despair, because they are already standing on the ground of their own strength.

"Germany will not go under if we have the courage to be

stronger than the hardship that has thrown us all down to the ground!"