

Background: In this 1931 article from *Der Angriff*, Goebbels discusses Christmas. He suggests that within a year the Nazis will be in power, but in the meanwhile they and their followers should avoid buying from Jews. The article is dated December 1931.

The source: "Weihnacht 1931," *Wetterleuchten. Aufsätze aus der Kampfzeit* (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, 1939), pp. 241-242.

Christmas 1931

by Joseph Goebbels

The German people faces the hardest, most severe Christmas in its history. True, there were sometimes days in the past filled with misery and sorrow, as when the soldiers of the Great War were in the trenches in Flanders and Poland making bloody sacrifices for the freedom and honor of the nation. But even through the darkest clouds, a star of hope shone above us. This year, however, the whole people is filled with gray desperation. The economy is in ruins, the factories empty, the smokestacks smoke no longer, the furnaces burn no more. The streets of large cities are filled with the army of the unemployed. Misery and poverty are guests in the farmhouses. The middle class is flat on the ground. The creative classes are robbed of the basic necessities of life, and ever new and heavy clouds loom over the nation. The people are divided, torn in two. The national crisis is reflected in an ever worsening world crisis. Political life is more confused than ever before, and nowhere except with us is there a program, a thought, a will, a man.

Official Germany defends itself with desperate energy. Activism, however, is with the opposition, which must at least for now use its strength to criticize.

The people have every reason to despair of the future. Were there no National Socialist movement as the last hope of those of good will, millions of people in Germany would long since have plunged into the abyss of chaos and anarchy. We have raised the banner of a new faith. We hold it unshakably and firmly in our hand, and we give working people confidence that sooner or later Germany will change in fundamental ways that will allow for the rebuilding of a national state and therefore the beginning of the rebirth of the German people.

That is not only a promise for the future, but much more an obligation for the present. Today we carry in our hands the last hope of millions. The German people looks to us with faithful devotion. In us it sees the guarantee of the coming victory. If we fail, Germany's fate is forever sealed, and our once proud, rich and powerful cultural people will be stricken from the list of nations that make history.

A movement that includes and embodies the last hope of an entire people accepts a grave responsibility to this people and to the future. We are every hour conscious of this responsibility. In the face of mass misery that cries to the heavens, of the hopelessness of economic chaos, of the desperation of working people and the growing mood of panic in the country, we affirm before the world public that we have no responsibility for this situation and accuse before the court of history those who have led Germany into this catastrophe. They more than anyone else had at least the responsibility of extending a helping hand to the people, to do at least that which was possible to alleviate the great social misery, to lay balsam on the wounds that desperation has caused us. Instead they have tried to conceal their traitorous deeds, to accuse us of the crimes they have committed against Germany, to take from the people the last shreds of a decent existence by their unbearable and inflammatory attempt to throttle the social life of the nation. For years we have opposed this immoral effort to reduce Germany's living standard to an

intolerable level while attempting to meet the impossible demands for tribute. We opposed the fathers of this policy. The people have joined us in growing numbers. The masses have deserted official Germany for the opposition.

National Socialism has given sufficient proof that has the strength and intelligence to dissect contemporary policies, driving them more and more into a corner. Now we must convince the German people of something more: We want to help. We want to alleviate the misery. We want to reach out our rescuing hand to the hard-pressed and those battling desperation. The time has come to forge the people, under our leadership, into a great community of those suffering misery and the blows of fate.

There is little we can buy this Christmas with our limited means. But that which we buy should at least be bought in Germany, from Germans, for Germans. The small merchant is in a desperate situation. We should support him. He must be brought along the path to the coming recovery. He may not be left behind, a victim of the collapse. This year, German men and women will shop only in German shops. They will avoid the Jewish department stores where they formerly gave their hard-earned money for trifles and fooleries, money that flowed into the channels of international Marxism to be used to further enslave German labor. However gray and empty the festival of love may be this year, we should wherever possible light the candle of solidarity and camaraderie in the midst of social darkness.

The barriers of class and profession have fallen. The German worker reaches his hand to the middle class, for he knows that the middle class will also extend the hand to him. National Socialism has forged us all into a new people. The misery of one is the misery of the other. We will face the troubles of the day with a readiness to help and a true socialist spirit. Next year we will probably have prepared a wide-ranging governmental plan of action, which we shall attempt this year from the side of the opposition.

Each penny we spend should find its way to a German cash register. It should give German businessmen and merchants the possibility to survive this difficult winter. It should favor German industry and German labor. We want to see only German goods on the Christmas table. Let the Jews drown in the trifles and fooleries of their department stores. We will go to our racial brethren and do the good work of fraternal brotherly love, thereby having in these holy days the consolation that we are following the first command of our heavenly teacher.