



# The National Bolshevist Manifesto

ARPLAN

Karl Otto Paetel



Karl Otto Paetel  
1930

# Translator's Introduction:

## On Paetel

Karl Otto Paetel was born into a solidly middle-class Berlin-Charlottenberg family on November 23, 1906. The son of a bookseller, Paetel developed literary and intellectual interests early, and like most youth of his generation his thinking and outlook was deeply affected by the experience of the Great War and Germany's subsequent post-War travails. The flourishing German Youth Movement, too, had a strong impact on his development – it was Paetel's involvement in various youth groups that helped reinforce his nationalist sentiments, as well as his appreciation for the comradeship that came with activity within the framework of a tight-knit organization united around a common cause.

In 1928 Paetel enrolled at Friedrich-Wilhelm University in Berlin, studying philosophy and history with the intention of becoming a schoolteacher. Paetel's studies were brought to an end only five semesters later as a result of his early forays into political activism. Defying a ban on demonstrations, a mass of students descended on the French Embassy in protest against the Treaty of Versailles, Paetel among them. To his shock he soon found himself slung in the back of a police vehicle, stuffed inbetween a Communist youth on one side and a National Socialist doctoral student on the other. The consequence of Paetel's arrest once the University was alerted was the loss of his scholarship and his subsequent expulsion. With a sudden excess of free time on his hands, Paetel threw himself into journalism, writing articles for a variety of publications. He was particularly attracted to political subjects.

Paetel at this time was still also active within the Youth Movement; by this point in his life he had become a prominent figure within the hierarchy of the youth group *Deutsche Freischar*, an organization whose culture (initially, at least) complemented his own nationalist sentiments. As he became more politically active Paetel became much more strongly influenced by the 'new nationalism' popular at the time, a nationalism that positioned itself in the 'revolutionary camp' and rejected the stolidness of the old Wilhelmine era. Inspired by the work of figures such as Ernst Jünger, Ernst Niekisch, and August Winnig, Paetel's writing adopted an increasingly radical tone, his nationalism becoming imbued with a strong undercurrent of anticapitalism. Yet as Paetel and his writing grew more radical, his position within the *Deutsche Freischar* became jeopardized. Paetel's open sympathy for communism, his approving references to Lenin, his declaration that revolutionary young nationalists were the natural allies of the working-classes – these sentiments were a step too far for the *Freischar*. After writing an article in 1930 which criticized President Hindenburg over Germany's ratification of the Young Plan, Paetel was forced to resign from his positions within the group.

In May 1930, an increasingly-radicalized Paetel decided to start taking serious political action. For a year he and a number of friends had been working within an informal group called the Young Front Working Circle, an advocacy organization which tried to rally left- and right-wing radicals to join together in common cause. Now Paetel and his comrades chose to reorganize themselves as a formal group with a formal program, seeking to do more than simply try and push members of the NSDAP towards 'real socialism'. The 'Group of Social-Revolutionary Nationalists' (GSRN) they formed subsequently became one of the very few organizations in Weimar Germany which actually used the term 'National Bolshevik' to describe itself. Avowedly revolutionary, the GSRN advocated for the overthrow of the democratic-capitalist system, for a new government based on councils, for socialization of industry and land, for a military alliance with Soviet Russia, and for the arming of the masses as a Peoples' Militia. The GSRN, whose members were, like Paetel, almost all of educated middle-class background, affirmed that it was the task of nationalists to work together with the class-conscious proletariat in pursuit of these goals.

Despite this new sense of purpose, the initial focus of the GSRN – never a very large group – was on publishing and propaganda. An opportunity to engage in more lively action, however, was soon provided by the Left. A debate within the GSRN over whether to support the NSDAP or the KPD (Communist Party of Germany) in the September 1930 elections was suddenly resolved with the KPD's publication of its new party programme, the 'Programme for the National and Social Liberation of the German People'. This new programme was replete with nationalist language and demands, a deliberate attempt by the KPD to win back voters lost (or potentially lost) to the NSDAP. The GSRN however saw it as potential evidence that the KPD was drifting in a National Bolshevist direction, and so Paetel and his comrades threw their firm support behind the communists.

The GSRN thus became an ally of the KPD. Paetel and his group publicly supported the KPD during the election: writing articles, distributing propaganda, speaking at communist rallies. This cooperation continued on after the election, with the GSRN imploring nationalists to fight side-by-side with the KPD, declaring that only under the banners of communism would Germany be able to crush capitalism and liberate itself from the imperialism of the Versailles powers. GSRN members wrote articles for communist journals, joined KPD organizations like Antifascist Action, and in March and April 1932 they offered public support for the presidential campaign of KPD leader Ernst Thälmann. The KPD, for its part, provided its own form of support at times (such as by assisting in the distribution of the GSRN journal *Socialist Nation*), but overall the relationship was fairly one-sided.

It was this lack of reciprocity which led to a measure of disillusionment in the GSRN. Paetel came to suspect, quite rightly, that the KPD was hoping to co-opt and absorb his movement. Furthermore, by late 1932 he and his comrades had come to doubt the sincerity of the KPD's nationalism. As KPD-GSRN relations deteriorated, the ideological divisions between the two groups became more apparent; Paetel and his compatriots could no longer so easily wave away the fact that their end-goal of a nationalist-socialist sovereign German state, allied with but independent of a sovereign Soviet Russia, was fundamentally different to the ultimate goal of the KPD: borderless world communism. Although still pro-communist and supportive of the KPD, this division influenced the GSRN's tactics, with Paetel attempting to organize a separate National Communist Party to compete in the November '32 elections – an effort which failed due to the GSRN simply lacking the manpower and resources needed to bring forth a new legal political party.

The *National Bolshevik Manifesto* was published by Paetel as part of a second attempt to organize a National Communist electoral group, this time during the period in late 1932 to early 1933 when Germany was in a political shambles. The NSDAP was bleeding support, the KPD was gaining votes but struggling with internal factional disputes, and the entire Weimar system seemed on the verge of collapse. Yet events overtook Paetel in a fashion he had not predicted – the *Manifesto* he had laboured over was first published and distributed on January 30, 1933, the day Hitler became Chancellor and victorious, torch-bearing Stormtroopers marched in massed columns through the streets of Berlin. Many of the copies of the *Manifesto* were confiscated and pulped, Paetel's publication license was swiftly withdrawn, and the publications of he and his comrades were shut down. The GSRN did not last much longer, being banned along with the other communist and 'fellow-traveller' groups in the aftermath of the Reichstag fire.

From that point onwards Paetel experienced significant harassment from the government, particularly as he continued to associate with figures considered unsavoury to the National Socialist regime. His name was included on a black-list of suspected traitors during the events of the June 1934 Blood Purge (the 'Night of the Long Knives'), and by 1935 things had become so heated that Paetel was forced to flee Germany for his own safety. After some time moving around Europe he ended up in America, where he managed to find employment as an academic and eventually attained citizenship. In his later life Paetel published a number of different works, several of them detailing the history of German National Bolshevism. He died in New York in 1975.

# Translator's Introduction:

## On the Translation

This translation was made over the course of several months from early- to mid-2019. From the next page onwards everything, as far as is possible, is a replica in terms of content and style of Paetel's original *National Bolshevist Manifesto*. All the numbered footnotes within the text (i.e. <sup>1 2 3</sup>) are Paetel's, translated from the original German. The only change that has been made to them is put some of them into order – whether due to a printing error or complications in formatting and layout, the German version of the *Manifesto* does not order all the footnotes sequentially: the details for footnote <sup>59</sup>, for instance, are preceded by footnote <sup>60</sup> and followed by footnote <sup>58</sup>. For the sake my sanity and that of the readers, I have fixed this for the English translation.

Paetel in the *Manifesto* makes extensive reference to newspapers, journals, books, and articles. Most of the original newspapers and journals Paetel references have had their German names left untranslated to make their identification easier (Paetel's own frequently-appearing *Sozialistische Nation* is the one exception – I have consistently used the English translation *Socialist Nation* instead). Books and articles have had their names translated to make their contents more apparent to the reader, but the original German names are provided in brackets and Italics [*like so*] for anyone interested in tracking them down. The only works I have avoided this with are those which are already widely-known in English-speaking countries, such as those of Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Jünger, etc.

At times in the text I have included the original German for a word or phrase alongside the English translation, [*like this*]. This has mainly been employed when translating striking or unusual expressions – typically völkisch language, which does not always have an easy, direct translation in English. The only other additions I have made to the text are my own Translator's Notes. These are indicated in the text using footnote symbols (i.e. \*†‡§) to make them easily distinguishable from Paetel's numbered footnotes – the numbers are Paetel's, the symbols are mine. Sometimes these notes are employed to provide detail on a translating choice, more commonly they are there to offer some historical background to the reader. Much of Paetel's *Manifesto* is concerned with discussing and dissecting the ideas and writings of his political and cultural contemporaries, and he additionally makes frequent literary allusions and references to German historical events. This all has the potential of being rather obscure to modern, 21<sup>st</sup> century, English-speaking readers; Paetel assumes that his readers will of course know (for example) who “the communist Thomas” was or what “the slogan of the 97%” is in reference to, but this is less likely today than it was in 1933. I have endeavoured to be as neutral as possible in these sections, since one thing I despise is an editor or translator trying to influence *my* opinion on a text. Regardless, I am aware that these notes are my own work and not Paetel's original, that people have downloaded this document to read Paetel's words and not my own, so I have also attempted to make the separation as clear as possible. The Translator's Notes sections are very clearly indicated at the end of the relevant chapters with a heading and a different font, and I have deliberately tried to make them as small and unobtrusive as possible. If people find them distracting or unnecessary then I will happily issue an edition of the translation without them.

I hope you enjoy this work. Please feel free to distribute it where you like. If you have access to the German original (there are PDF copies available online; I used a physical reprint from German publishers Haag & Herchen) and believe you can improve the translation, then also please feel free to do so. The most important thing is that Paetel's writings are available – I have no special claim over them. If you have any questions, criticisms, or suggestions, please feel free to contact me.

**BOGUMIL**

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# **The National Bolshevist Manifesto**

**By  
Karl O. Paetel**



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Publisher of 'The Socialist Nation', Berlin-Charlottenburg 1  
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A.K.

*Dedicated to my good comrade.*

*New tablets bear the writ of the new age:  
Let greybeards revel in their heritage;  
The distant thunder does not reach their ears.  
But you shall label all the young ones lackeys  
Who drug themselves on mushy music now,  
Who skirt with chains of roses the abyss.  
You shall spit out what's decadent and rotten  
And hide the dagger in the laurel wreath, –  
Tuned to the new crusade in step and sound.*

***Stefan George, 1913.***

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*“Let us not push the Revolution on further, but instead the ideas dormant within it which it itself does not understand. We want to combine revolutionary ideas with those conservative ideas which are eternally re-establishing themselves, to make them conservative-revolutionary, so that we can attain a set of conditions under which we can hope to live again...”*

These simple phrases of Moeller van den Bruck should be of service to these pages. – Even where they go beyond them. No “refutation” of any “ism”, no academic work. – Only in the clearcut distinction of the fronts – self-understanding – for a young race that wants at any price:

A free Germany!  
Even if this price means:  
Breaking with yesterday!  
So we take up that dirty phrase:  
“National Bolsheviks!”  
Karl O. Paetel

***On the day of the ‘historical torchlight procession’,  
30<sup>th</sup> January 1933***

**“There is no German Reich, there is no German government, there is no German representation, there is only a colony of the Entente. We are natives of a colony. That’s the entire cruel and unrelenting truth, which one must make peace with mentally before thinking ahead.”**

(From the “*Vörrwärts*” of 15 May, 1919.)

# Vision

The red flag flutters over Cologne Cathedral.

Revolution over Germany. --

Radiogram from Berlin:

*"To the German people!*

*Land and soil belong to the nation.*

*The means of production are socialized.*

*Elections to the Council Congress are announced.*

*The verdicts of the People's Court on all the enemies of the Socialist Fatherland, all those responsible for the old regime, are enforced.*

*The Treaty of Versailles is considered torn to pieces.*

*Greater Germany is socialist!*

*The imperialist bandit-states are approaching. The Rhine is to be held under all circumstances, the counter-attack is to be initiated!"*

-- Long columns, black on black, trek across the Rhine bridges.

Singing rings out.

Flags wave in rhythm with the tramp of marching feet.

Columns of workers, rifles shouldered; in their midst flags with the hammer and sickle. The bars of the Marseillaise -- *"The Fatherland is in danger!"* -- A short distance behind them come streamlined figures in brown shirts, above their heads the red swastika banner, and over that a red pennant with the symbols of labour, their armbands half-covered with red strips.

A new column, grey on grey, endless troops of the Stahlhelm behind the war flags of the Great War of 1914-1918, their flags also bedecked with the red pennant of the revolutionary uprising, and peasant formations beyond them.

And luminescent above all the flags, over red, black-white-red, and black banners, raising its wings, the black eagle of Prussia!

Singing roars through the columns of the army, and the chorus is always growing stronger, and all the troops take it up, grey, brown and red formations coming in:

*"To the Rhine, to the Rhine,*

*To the German Rhine,*

*Guardians we all want to be!"*

And a shout sounds out:

*“Long live socialism!  
We carry the red flags under the German eagle  
Into France!  
Forwards!”*

The voice breaks off. –  
Only the masses march.  
Endless.

With different flags, in different dress, in the same step.  
Marching in enemy territory. Suppressed freedom, bringing the Lord’s retribution for  
a life of human bondage.

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This is the gateway to tomorrow.  
The way to it?  
The way we are!

# The Task

Germany has to fight today for the freedom of its unfree-born children, for a future home for its homeless, for the future hopeless generations.

But not only that. In German territory will the vision of our century be shaped. Here shall the formal principle of *Mitteleuropa*\* have to be proven. The fight for the sovereignty of the German lands will decide the fight for Europe's future, the rise or fall of the West. In German hearts and German minds today the forces of the East are already feuding with the principles of Western thought. The solution will have to be: to find one's own principle.

In the body of the German people [*deutschen Volkskörper*], within the German territories, the decisive battle will be fought between world mercantilist economy and socialist statehood. Here the class struggle between proletarian dynamism and bourgeois self-reliance will be fulfilled.<sup>1</sup>

The task that lies before the young generation of political Germans is one of decades. To solve it means giving a new, creative meaning to that old misused concept of the German imperial world-mission<sup>2</sup>; that on the third attempt (Moeller van den Bruck's expression already carries this meaning) the German nation-building which was unsuccessful in the *Ottonenreich* and *Staufferreich*, as well as in the Bismarckian Reich<sup>†</sup>, will become a reality.

To break away from this task means gambling away the future of Eternal Germany, shifting the Switzerlandization<sup>‡</sup> of the German Volk into its final stage.

The name of the task is, becoming a **Nation**.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This has nothing to do with hazy 'Reich' fantasies in the style of Youth Movement romanticism or the intellectual exercises<sup>§</sup> of the 'Mitteleuropa'-ideologists – both today drift off into idealism.

<sup>2</sup> Even Lenin says in "*Left-Wing*" *Communism: an Infantile Disorder*: "It would, of course, be grossly erroneous to exaggerate this truth and extend it beyond certain fundamental features of our revolution. It would also be erroneous to lose sight of the fact that, soon after the victory of the proletarian revolution in at least one of the advanced countries, a sharp change will probably come about: Russia will cease to be the model and will once again become a backward country (in the "Soviet" and the socialist sense)."

<sup>3</sup> The popular misrepresentation of the concepts Race – Volk – Nation must finally be brought to an end. From racial and other indiscernible elements arose the Volk. The Nation, as the historical form of this biological fact that emerges into the consciousness of the folk-comrades [*Volksgenossen*], still has yet to arise in Germany; the task of socialism is to create a Nation out of the mass and "populace" of the Volk, or, as Hegel would phrase it, for the "people in themselves" to become the "people for themselves". There is therefore something inadequate in the definition given by Bortoletto (*Fascism and Nation*, Hamburg): "The Nation is a historical and biological concept, it is a

Its guarantor is called, **Socialism**.

The path to it: **Revolution**.

Only those called to this task from within will understand what it is about, alone and above all: to open the door to tomorrow for a proletarianized Volk; to break all its bonds – chaos, adversity, affirmation of victimhood, class, estate, granting it personal happiness – in order that reality for the German people shall be:

### **The nation as the highest value.**

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#### ***Translator's Notes***

\* The *Mittleuropa* ('Central Europe') concept Paetel refers to here was discussed in German-speaking lands from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, proposing the idea of central-European federation, empire, or trading bloc as a counterbalance to the Western powers on one hand, and the Russian Empire on the other. In most conceptions of the idea, such as Friedrich Naumann's 1915 work by the same name (Naumann himself was the progenitor of an early, prototypical form of nationalist-socialism), the *Mittleuropa* power bloc would naturally be led by Germany or Austria.

† "*Ottonenreich*" and "*Staufferreich*" are alternative terms for the Ottonian and Hohenstaufen dynasties of the Holy Roman Empire respectively. "*Moeller van den Bruck's expression*" is a reference to the concept of the 'Third Reich', an ideal popular not just with the National Socialists but among nationalists of all stripes. Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, one of the most influential conservative-revolutionary intellectuals, is typically credited with popularizing the concept of the Third Reich, if not inventing it.

‡ The German word used here is '*Verschweizerung*', which in English could be rendered as 'Switzerlandization' or 'Swissification'. In 1928, völkisch journalist Hans von Liebig wrote a book called *The Switzerlandization of the German Peoples* ["*Die Verschweizerung des deutschen Volkes*"] which is possibly what Paetel is invoking by his use of the term. Switzerlandization, as von Liebig described it, is the process of a nation taking on the qualities of Switzerland, i.e. becoming a multi-ethnic society, peopled by different ethnic minorities with different languages and different cultures, all living side-by-side, without any real national sense uniting them.

§ '*Intellectual exercises*' – The actual German word Paetel uses here is '*Schreibtischrezepten*', which literally translates as 'writing-desk recipes'.

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unified, enduring, and indivisible entity of perfect existence, a truly autonomous social or political body."

# Ten Years of ‘National Bolshevism’

Wherever in Young-Germany\* today the deathly stillness of official politics is alarmed by an underground tremor – wherever the unconditionality of nationalist youth calls into question the old values of their fathers, over whose funeral-shrouds the elderly wail with spread hands, registering the (still emotional) socialist demand of the national-revolutionary young bourgeoisie – wherever the proletariat seems to recognize that only the German eagle on red flags will create a Fatherland for them which bears the national fervour of those without a Homeland - there does one see in the bourgeois newspapers a watchword:

## National Bolshevism!

But what historical fact first arose in Germany to trigger the political movement meant by that phrase?

It is not enough simply to take a pro-Russia-policy as its criterion, to see in it simply nothing but foreign policy- not at all. Its conception of foreign policy is indeed only the self-evident result of a very basic assessment.

The first truly National Bolshevik document was the ‘Political Testament’ of Count Brockdorff-Rantzau,<sup>4</sup> in which he set down the belief that a German radical socialism must take in hand, beneath the banners of socialism, a policy of freedom against Western imperialism and capitalism.<sup>5</sup>

Brockdorff-Rantzau’s<sup>†</sup> refusal to sign the Treaty of Versailles, Lenin’s offer to the People’s Deputies to support the resistance on the Rhine – these were the political realities behind it.<sup>6</sup> The second National Bolshevik wave was the policy of fraternization pursued by the Hamburg ‘National-Communist circles’ under Wolffheim-Laufenberg<sup>‡</sup> (alongside and within the KAPD, after their expulsion from the KPD), with parts of General Lettow-Vorbeck’s Freikorps in Hamburg and other cities. Later there were the efforts in Munich to come to a policy of joint action between the communist Thomas, völkisch Police-President Poehner<sup>§</sup>, and the fellows

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<sup>4</sup> Published in full in vol. 1, no. 3/4 of *Socialist Nation*.

<sup>5</sup> The quote from the English Prime Minister Lloyd George in Vienna’s *Neuen Freien Press* shows how dangerous this possibility appeared to the status of Versailles: “The steady expansion of communism in Germany represents a grave danger for the whole of Europe. The War has shown what a powerful people the Germans are when they are put to the test. That’s why a Communist Germany would be far more dangerous to the world than Communist Russia... I cannot imagine any greater danger for Europe, yes, for the whole world, than for there to be a great Communist state in Central Europe, directed and maintained by one of the world’s most intelligent and disciplined peoples.”

<sup>6</sup> The Treaty of Rapallo, the work of Brockdorff-Rantzau’s friend von Maltzan, was a later consequence of this– but Brockdorff-Rantzau died with the bitter words on his lips, “Everything for me has been shattered – I already died in Versailles.”

of the Freikorps Oberland<sup>7</sup>, attempting such organising in Thuringia, in the East Prussian border-guard, and yes, among the Kapp soldiers.<sup>8</sup>

Writings such as Wolffheim's "Nation and Working Class", a dissertation against the methods in Russia titled "Moscow and the German Revolution", the "Open Letter to Major-General Lettow-Vorbeck: Communism – A National Imperative" by Judicial Councillor Krüpfgant<sup>\*\*</sup>, among others – these were the ideological weapons with which those within the circles of the Communist Party and the right-wing radical groups campaigned for this synthesis. The *Hamburger Volkswart* and at times the *Kommunistische Arbeiterzeitung* were the available, representative newspapers.<sup>9</sup>

In practical terms all these efforts came to nothing. Seeckt made it clear that he would put down any 'national-communist uprising'. In the meantime, National Socialist groups formed; the KPD proscribed the Hamburg circles; and the connective threads in Hamburg between men like Stapel, A.E. Günther<sup>††</sup>, and a number of nationalist youth leaders that had led to the National Communists were torn away

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<sup>7</sup> The Munich communist newspaper *Neue Zeitung* issued the rallying-cry for armed popular uprising against the Entente.

<sup>8</sup> Material about this published in the Wolffheim-Laufenberg Hamburg newspaper *Volkswart*, no. 6, October 1921. A report:

"In the early morning hours of Tuesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, a detachment of soldiers from the Ehrhardt-Brigade arrives at the Reich Chancellery seeking to be received by Kapp. When they are not admitted, they express their discontent in heated words: they have no more desire to continue their involvement in the swindle, since the seizure of the assets of profiteers has not occurred; they have not tagged along to set in place of Ebert a new Wilhelmine government; from Kapp they've had a gutful. When it becomes known among the troops that the detachment has not been admitted, they are seized with a tremendous uproar. The last troops which still hold loyal to Kapp erupt in white-hot mutiny. Immediately the shop-stewards of all contingents are mustered together. The assembly takes place towards midday in a hall of the Reich Chancellery, while in an opposite hall the helpless mummies of the old regime are pensively racking their empty brains. In the soldiers' assembly, the indignation of the shop-stewards, who feel blatantly abused, is vented with unrestrained force. Added to that is the impression that they are situated in the midst of a mousetrap, from which the ring-leaders of the Putsch would certainly know of no way out. All who speak give speeches against the Wilhelmine officers and against the old regime. Under stormy applause, the Ehrhardt-people now call out to one of the national-socialist leaders in the hall: 'We helped the Reaction get back on its feet again, we must make it clear to the workers that we are not against them, but want to fight with them.' It is agreed to present their demands to General Lüttwitz. At this moment about 15 young officers rush into the hall, slung with hand-grenades from head to toe. One of them springs atop a table and calls out: 'Comrades, who is in favour of the military taking charge? Who is in favour of fumigating the hall next door? Who is in favour of doing it the way we thought it was going to be done?' And to all three questions there follows a unanimous, stormy applause. With rifles inversed, the formations that had just risen against the Kapp regime now move out of the city, where they come across armed workers in Friedenau to whom they shout: 'We've broken with Kapp! We're leaving!' But already shots are being fired from the rows of armed workers. The soldiers also tear their guns around and return fire. The carnage begins."

<sup>9</sup> Excerpts from Laufenberg's writings are reproduced in *Socialist Nation*, Vol. II, no. 3/4.

again. Wolffheim, who in Hamburg had power in his hands on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1918, was neutralized by the 'revolution' of the National Assembly.<sup>††</sup>

Later, the *Ruhrkampf*<sup>§§</sup> once again led to the revival of these tendencies.

After Schlageter's execution in 1923, Karl Radek on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June delivered to the Central Committee of the KPD his famous speech titled "Schlageter, the Wanderer into the Void"<sup>10</sup>, which called on the honest nationalists to integrate into the front of red revolution which alone would fight for national freedom, as the *Ruhrkampf* was being betrayed yet again by the bourgeoisie. The debate between the communists Radek & Fröhlich and the nationalists Reventlow & Moeller van den Bruck over "going a bit of the way together" was thereupon initiated in the '*Roten Fahne*', the völkisch '*Reichswart*' of Count Reventlow, and the '*Ring*' of Baron von Gleichen; likewise that too eventually failed.<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

Radek's line was abandoned first by the KPD. Wolffheim remained, for the most part, alone.

In 1929<sup>11</sup> these concepts, which had in the meantime become worked out ever more clearly and concretely, were revived again by the other side – this time by the right.

First in the *Jungen Volk*, then in the *Kommenden* – two newspapers of the national-revolutionary youth – were National Bolshevist demands discussed. In a special edition which committed itself to the class struggle, to the complete socialization of resources, and to a Greater German council-state, the National Bolsheviks for the first time presented themselves to the general public; Ascension Day 1930 thus saw the 'Group of Social-Revolutionary Nationalists' establish themselves around the National Bolshevist theses and the foundational work, "Social-Revolutionary Nationalism" ["*Sozialrevolutionärer Nationalismus*"].<sup>12</sup> From here the other national-revolutionary groups became more and more infected with this tendency. The *Socialist Nation* became the national-communist mouthpiece.

Such a 'National Bolshevist' position is today no longer so surprising as it was years ago. Ever more circles of people, especially of the younger generation, are today of anti-capitalist disposition, are through their mindset 'National Bolsheviks' even if they do not use the term. And where does one still find youth today who, turning their attentive eyes on their era, on the unemployment offices and working-districts,

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<sup>10</sup> Published verbatim in *Socialist Nation* no. 5, vol. I.

<sup>11</sup> Reventlow summarized his position in his work *Völkisch-Communist Unification?* ["*Völkisch-Kommunistische Einigung?*"], Moeller van den Bruck his in his *The Right of Young Peoples* ["*Recht der jungen Volker*"], the KPD theirs in the brochure "Schlageter".

<sup>12</sup> Available from the publisher of the *Socialist Nation*.

are still willing to justify and defend a social order that prevents 95% of the German people having any share at all in what they're supposed to call their Fatherland?

It is the honest prerogative of youth to break down the old defences, and youth defines the features of German National Bolshevism.

Daily do we realize how right Frank Thiess<sup>†††</sup> was (one of the few of our fathers' generation who joined with us), when he observed:

“In Germany today a new faith is emerging. A faith in the autonomy and hyper-reality of the nation. In the inescapability of their unifying compulsion. In the immutability of our destiny. In the indestructible force of our will to live.

“Only at a time of the greatest economic hardship and unspeakable adversity could there be raised, over this life of destitution and austerity, a dome of faith in the unified lives of the nation. Only at a time of national misfortune is a genuine national worldview possible. Indeed, the will to a new order of divergent parts pushes us towards a new state ethos, but such ideals do not spring into the world overnight, rather they fulfil themselves in spasms of crises over the course of decades. There are long years of disappointment, hardship, and experience necessary to achieve them.

“A new world begins, a new nation is formed, yes, an invisible revolution is perpetually in progress. Only its outer course has a revolutionary character – the way old truths, whose binding value still had validity a decade ago, are abruptly washed away, and instead there newly emerge objectives which were scarcely taken seriously before (autarchy, nationalism, a classless peoples'-state, bound agriculture, etc.), this swirling speed of events taking place amidst a phenomena that stands there steady like a '*rocher de bronze*'<sup>†††</sup> – all this has something of the soundless drumbeats of revolution, an appearance that is magnificent, sinister, and historically unprecedented.”

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### *Translator's Notes*

\* “*Young-Deutschland*” in the original text – a reference to the Young Plan, introduced in 1929 as an attempt to spell out more manageable terms for Germany's Versailles reparations payments, and vigorously opposed by nationalists and by the Communist Party of Germany (KPD).

† Ulrich von Brockdorff-Rantzau was a German diplomat of Prussian noble heritage. Despite his background, he accepted the post of Foreign Minister in the Ebert government after the November 1918 revolution. On June 20, 1919, he resigned his position in protest against the government's signing of the Treaty of Versailles, deeming it a “crime against Germany.” An advocate of German-Russian rapprochement, he afterwards became ambassador to Soviet Russia until his death in 1928. Although not a National Bolshevik himself, Brockdorff-Rantzau's writings nonetheless contained both German-nationalist and anti-capitalist sentiments, endearing him to later national-revolutionary radicals.

‡ “Wolffheim-Laufenberg” refers to Fritz Wolffheim and Heinrich Laufenberg, two prominent early National Bolsheviks. Expelled from the nascent KPD in late 1919 for alleged syndicalist tendencies, both subsequently joined the Communist Workers Party of Germany (KAPD), which practised a more independent line from Moscow. Leaders of the KAPD Hamburg branch, Wolffheim and Laufenberg were staunchly opposed to the Treaty of Versailles and began advocating for a position which would see communists ally tactically with nationalists and the middle-classes against it; this position was

dubbed 'National Bolshevism', and later criticized directly by Lenin in his pamphlet "*Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder*". Both men were eventually expelled from the KAPD. Wolffheim stayed politically active, drifted in a more völkisch direction, and ended up associated with Paetel's Group of Social-Revolutionary Nationalists. Laufenberg withdrew from active politics, although he continued to publish articles; he died impoverished in 1932. Wolffheim, who was Jewish, was arrested in 1936 and perished in Ravensbruck Concentration Camp in 1942.

§ The "communist Thomas" is Otto Thomas, editor-in-chief during the early '20s of the KPD's Bavarian newspaper *Neue Zeitung*. Thomas had National Bolshevik leanings, publishing nationalistically-inclined articles in his paper and developing links with the Freikorps Oberland and its leader Josef 'Beppo' Römer. These links led to accusations by fellow-communist Otto Graf that Thomas had received clandestine funding for the *Neue Zeitung* from Munich's nationalist Chief of Police, Ernst Pöhner. Despite these charges, Thomas remained a KPD member until his death in 1930, continuing to maintain his call for nationalist-communist cooperation. Pöhner himself was, as Paetel indicates, the Chief of Police of Bavaria from 1919 to 1922, in which position he did much to make Bavaria a safe-haven for nationalist radical/terrorist groups. A participant in the Beer Hall Putsch, Pöhner had by his death in 1925 become a member of the bourgeois-nationalist German National Peoples' Party (*Deutschnationale Volkspartei*, DNVP).

\*\* Judicial Councillor Fritz Krüpfgantz was a member of the 'Free Association for the Study of German Communism', a small, early National Bolshevik intellectual movement founded by Wolffheim and Albert Erich Günther after the former's expulsion from the KAPD. Krüpfgantz's "Open Letter" was published in the Free Association's publications in August 1920 and called on Major-General Lettow-Vorbeck (who had been involved in both the Kapp Putsch and in putting down the Spartakist uprising) to join a 'German Communism' (i.e. National Communism) which would bring about national liberation from Germany's post-War "humiliation".

†† Wilhelm Stapel and Albrecht Erich Günther were co-editors of the conservative-revolutionary journal *Deutsches Volkstum*. The *Volkstum*, formerly the *Bühne und Welt*, had been bought by the DHV (a nationalist, white-collar workers' union) in 1918, with Stapel and Günther becoming its leading lights. The *Volkstum* and its editors rejected the traditional nationalism of the Wilhelmine era, advocated against capitalism, and offered some support and sympathy towards workers' issues. Despite their anti-capitalist tendencies and their brief alignment with the Hamburg National Bolsheviks in the early '20s, both Stapel and Günther later moved towards a more 'conservative' position and expressed a wariness about Marxist economic ideals. For the *Volkstum*, socialism meant not collective ownership, wealth redistribution, or the abolition of private property, but "an ethical restraint on the economy based on professional honour and respect for man." (For source of quote, see: Roger Woods's *The Conservative Revolution in the Weimar Republic*)

‡‡ A reference to the revolutionary workers' council which ruled Hamburg in the period after the November 1918 revolution, in which both Laufenberg and Wolffheim played prominent roles. The councils ceased to have any legitimate political power after the transition to the new National Assembly was effected with the national elections of 19 January, 1919.

§§ "*Ruhrkampf*" is the German name for the period of German resistance in the Ruhr. In 1923 the Entente powers France and Belgium sent troops into the Ruhr valley, occupying the area as punishment for Germany's failure to sufficiently fulfil its obligations under the Treaty of Versailles. A united campaign of resistance resulted, with Germans of all political persuasions banding together to fight back (both through passive and active methods) against the occupying forces.

\*\*\* Paetel here is referencing the time of the 'Schlageter line', where the execution in 1923 of National Socialist terrorist Albert Leo Schlageter by Franco-Belgian occupation forces in the Ruhr led to a brief period of open collaboration between nationalists and communists. Karl Radek and Paul Fröhlich were prominent communists; the *Rote Fahne* ('Red Flag') was the KPD's national newspaper. Count Ernst zu Reventlow (publisher of the journal *Reichswehr*), Arthur Moeller van den Bruck (a major contributor to the journal *Gewissen*, in English "Conscience"), and Baron Heinrich von Gleichen (publisher of the *Gewissen*, renamed "*Ring*" in 1927) were prominent nationalists. All these men exchanged articles in one another's journals during this period, openly discussing and debating völkisch-Marxist collaboration.

††† Frank Thiess (alternately, Frank Thieß) was a German novelist and playwright, originally from the Baltic, who had some conservative-revolutionary leanings. After WWII he was well-known for having coined the term 'Inner Emigration' to describe those opposed to National Socialism who, unable to immigrate physically, instead immigrated 'mentally' – whether by withdrawing from public life, engaging in resistance work, or by subtly keeping clear of any action that would provide support or legitimacy to the NS regime.

‡‡‡ French for 'rock of bronze', an expression used in German and originating from Friedrich Wilhelm I of Prussia. It has a meaning suggesting solidity, lasting strength, unshakeable firmness and power. Friedrich Wilhelm I used the term to describe the authority and sovereignty of the Prussian crown.

# Young Nationalism

The youth in Germany are today faced with a concrete decision: Either *jeunesse dorée*, to be the last contingent of yesterday's age, in clear acknowledgement of the hopeless situation of the bourgeoisie who have failed politically in every circumstance (the shameless capitulation of the capitalists in the Ruhrkampf before General Dégoutte at the moment state subsidies were cut off is but one of many examples); or else, as socialists, to be the guardians of the original values of German history and even of bourgeois culture, standing in solidarity with the proletariat in their class-struggle without sentimental 'Proletkult'. There is no compromise solution.

This decision does not cut off German youth from the history of their people. And the facts, around which every political decision must be oriented today, make the choice clear enough:

The lost war, doomed due to its entire structure justifying un-völkisch politics (three-class franchise\*), due to the bourgeoisie's corruption amidst the commercial tumult – this made us into the most profoundly anti-bourgeois.

The lost revolution, doomed due to the half-measures and lack of instinct on the part of its leaders, lost out of blindness towards the national task of radical upheaval – this made us all the more revolutionary.

The lost sovereignty of Germany, its doom guaranteed by the liberal-capitalist Weimar Republic and sustained through its subordination to Paris and Wall Street – this made us unequivocal nationalists.

The lie of the *Volksgemeinschaft*<sup>†</sup>, a lie which defamed the process of renewing the body of the Volk [*Volkskörper*] and was embodied in the new state's people-destroying [*Volkszerstörend*] striving for power – this made of us fighting-comrades in the class-struggle.

The hopeless fate of all post-war generations, the recognition that this fate is contingent on an anti-grass-roots, propertied-bourgeois, capitalist order – this made us into anti-capitalists, made us into socialists.

Unquestionably, the *Bündische*<sup>‡</sup> willingness – as demonstrated by the *Jugendbünde*, the Freikorps, and so on – to subordinate oneself and one's own freedom to the 'We', to the self-selected 'collective', is not to be underestimated. It is pre-political rather than a fact of politics; ultimately it is a pedagogical category.

The *Bündische* ideal is not a political principle, it does not have to commit itself to a concrete manifestation in German politics. All the theories that the 'Bündische Front' can achieve state power tomorrow and will be able to transfer the laws of collective life from young people to the state order are indeed beautiful, but are regardless just romantic utopianism.

The true fronts work differently.

The Youth Movement has many accomplishments. Its educational aspects are undeniable today and can no longer be undone. Politically, however, it has failed all along the line.

In order to evaluate German politics correctly, the Youth Movement has to learn one thing: the significance of the Germany of big cities, the unemployment office, mass actions.

"The Youth Movement is dead! – Long live politics!"

This slogan, which years before closed out a leadership conference of one of the largest *Bünde* (although there were never any real consequences resulting from it), must be taken seriously at last by every single "Bündische" type.

Then, and only then, will power and success for the whole be pried from the substantial force which undoubtedly exists there.

Being young is not a virtue. And generational conflict is nothing new in the process of biological law. Only when, at the cross-roads of centuries, youth stands at the precipice of a decaying spiritual epochs, does the generational question take on a historical and therefore also political meaning. Even the Youth Movement – not engendered by any aspirations, but born out of the alienation of the lives of the young from the sociological and ideological values of their fathers, taking shape as the struggle for the autonomy of youthful community-life – has no political mission per se. To want to spur on the politics of the Youth Movement as the political fronts of Germany today – a dream that many of us once clung to – is absurd.

Attitude and intellectual openness are not yet political values, birth certificates are not political identity cards. Existential consciousness is only a pre-political basis, never a political criterion.

There are no political duties for the young generation as a whole. (Beyond that, one would have to take into account how much the individual age-groups between 18 and 40 differ today in their basic rhythms.)

But there is an approach for the youth that sees the nation as the central value of their personal lives and their societal function.<sup>13</sup>

The revolutionary bourgeois youth, which to this day undoubtedly for the most part sees in National Socialism the fulfilment of its vision of combining the national and revolutionary-economic impulses, is the sociological bearer of what the bourgeois call National Bolshevism.

There are no politics for the *Jugendbünden*, cut off from the fronts of their fathers.

There are no politics for the young generation in the battle of youth against age.<sup>14</sup>

But there is a mission for young nationalism, particularly the post-War youth, which – after over ten years of the Front-generation’s struggling in vain – only they are able to resolve: to plant the flags of the nation in the camp of the class-struggle, to pass on by the word of mouth the watchword “Germany” in the *Heerbann*<sup>5</sup> of the revolution, to form alongside the formations of the proletarian parties an order of nationalist, anti-bourgeois, and anti-capitalist revolutionaries.

To establish the focal point of immortal Germanness in the camp of today’s Fatherland-less, in readiness of the morrow’s duties: that is the task of

### **Young Revolutionary Nationalism.**

Only there can the questions which face Germany’s youth today be answered.

We do not consider following Oswald Spengler’s counsel: “Endure the lost position of a sinking world,<sup>15</sup> like that Roman soldier whose bones were found in front of a gate in Pompeii, who died at his post because, during the eruption of Vesuvius, they had forgotten to relieve him.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Compare Klaus Mehnert: “The Youth in Soviet Russia” [*Die Jugend in Sowjetrußland*], Fischer Verlag, Berlin.

<sup>14</sup> Compare Karl O. Paetel: “The Structure of National Youth” and “The Spiritual Face of National Youth” [*Die Struktur der nationalen Jugend*], “*Das geistige Gesicht der nationalen Jugend*”, available through the publisher of the *Socialist Nation*.

<sup>15</sup> As an example of how much the representatives of this world feel they are declining, an excerpt from the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, ed. 139, 23/03/32:

“At yesterday’s general assembly of the AEG\*\* , Privy Councillor Dr. Bücher made a statement that shed bright light on the tragedy of the German economy in these months of the most severe crisis. Privy Councillor Bücher said that the ambition of today’s entrepreneur can only be that he is one of the last to find himself interned in the cemetery where the private-capitalist economy is buried, without anyone being able to substitute another sustainable economic system in its place.”

<sup>16</sup> Oswald Spengler, “Man and Technics” [*Der Mensch und die Technik*], C. Beck, Munich.

## *Translator's Notes*

\* The Prussian 'three-class franchise' system was the German electoral system from 1848-1918, which was deliberately structured so as to provide the wealthy greater influence in elections than their proportion of the population would otherwise have warranted.

† The concept of the '*Volksgemeinschaft*', or classless 'people's community', today tends to be specifically associated with National Socialism as a result of it being a central aspect of NS propaganda. The concept pre-dates the NSDAP, however, and had a measure of popularity among many different groups of differing political persuasions, including segments of the Social-Democrats. The idea of a Germany free of the tensions created by class and status was an attractive one to many, and had been held up as an ideal both by the imperial government during the Great War and by the new Social-Democratic regime after the November Revolution. Paetel's use of the phrase "the lie of the *Volksgemeinschaft*" is, based on later comments within the *Manifesto*, unlikely to be a rejection of the concept itself as inherently dishonest; more likely he is criticizing the (in his eyes) dishonest way the term had been used by the various groups who championed it as a political concept. See in particular the later chapter "The Class Struggle as a Nationalist Demand".

‡ Much of this chapter deals with the Youth Movement [*Jugendbewegung*], which played a significant role in German political and cultural life in the pre-WWII era and strongly impacted the development of political and religious youth organizations like the Hitler Youth, the Young Communist League, etc. Originating as a kind of 'back-to-nature' movement (the *Wandervogel*), the German Youth Movement had a strong emphasis on scouting, hiking, camping, and other outdoorsy pursuits. This romantic attachment to the German countryside often led to a reinforcement of nationalist and/or völkisch tendencies in the youth. In the aftermath of the effects of the First World War, this ingrained national sentiment resulted in a transformation in the Youth Movement – in particular leading to the proliferation of many organized, hierarchical youth organizations, often with a central leadership, their own flags, uniforms and rituals, and a core set of values or beliefs guiding their activities (frequently these ideals were political and nationalist, although not always). These were known as the *Bündische* Youth (*Bündische Jugend*, or the *Jugendbünde*). *Bund* (plural *Bünde*) translates as 'league', although its meaning in German can be a little more evocative, suggestive of a more organic, communal association between members than that of related terms like *Orden* ('order'). Many of the *Bünde* came to see the *Bündische* ideal – which they experienced as a kind of communal, meritocratic brotherhood guided by charismatic leadership – as offering a prototype for a future organic German community or state. Paetel himself had been a leader in the *Deutsche Freischar*, one of the largest *Bündische* scouting organizations; his experience with the *Bünde* and with the *Bündische* ideological concept is what motivates his critiques and criticisms in this chapter.

§ The '*Heerbann*' was originally the official call to arms in the Holy Roman Empire by which a King or Lord would rally landowners to a military campaign, alerting them of the need to fulfil their feudal duties by taking up arms in service of a higher authority. Later the meaning of the term was expanded, coming to signify a contingent of landowners held in reserve for military service.

\*\* "AEG" = '*Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft*', or 'General Electricity Company'. A major electronics producer and power company.

# Reformed National Socialism?

Some time ago there came from the press an announcement of the founding of a 'German-Socialist Party'\* which had set itself the goal of uniting the miscellaneous National Socialist splinter-groups and secessionists and, as a kind of purified National Socialism, to honor the promises not fulfilled by Adolf Hitler and to re-occupy the political position he had abandoned – anticipating that the true National Socialists, after recognizing the betrayal of their previous leaders, would turn instead to the reformers.

The claim to represent 'true National Socialism' is not new. Both the Fighting Community of Revolutionary National Socialists – which constitutes the core of the 'Black Front' led by Dr. Otto Strasser (actually, both the shell and the core are identical!†) – as well as the Independent National Socialist Combat Movement of Germany of Captain Stennes, make such a claim.

The numerical weakness of these groups is not an argument against their political capabilities. The evolution of the Hitler-party has made one sufficiently sceptical of the superiority of the 'Big Boys' against the 'splinters'.

But following from the political and societal function of such front-formations, what remains is the basic inquiry into, and following that the search for, the historical departure point for a 'reformed National Socialism'.

The main reason why every attempt at reform (an approach which puts their mission in the wrong from the very beginning) involves turning against the NSDAP is due to the accusation of personal inadequacy against the old Party leaders, of the leaders' deviation from the old (and in principle correct) 25-point line, as well as their pursuit of the wrong tactical measures.

They all want to be National Socialists, those who turn against the unsatisfactory Hitler, against the influence of the big shots‡ [*Bonzokratie*], against the creeping bourgeois mentality, against the Brown House, against the incorrect 'legal' measures of the Party leadership, each believing themselves to be the one in possession of the true ring§. Otto Strasser has to that end provided the framework of a 'Worldview of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century'; Captain Stennes appeals to the revolutionary sentiment and yearning of the SA-members; the German-Socialist Party is turning away from the incorrect measures of the last quarter.\*\*

And here is the breaking-point of all these attempts. Being an opposition group can be valuable. The fate of the various oppositions within the Marxist camp, however, shows clearly enough that the most auspicious fate awaiting an opposition is that its arguments (three quarters of which are only ever in respect to tactical differences)

will one day be silently accepted, with the ‘conscience of the party’ thereupon, without any further ado, shedding its entire reason for existence.

If, however, the real failure of the Hitler-party is not due to the inadequacy of its leading personalities, but is based instead in the party’s fundamentally poor decisions, then any such reformer misses the core issue and becomes a miniature copy of the bigger brother, never the bearer of historical laws.

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### *Translator’s Notes*

\* The term ‘German Socialism’ was often used interchangeably with ‘National Socialism’ – both were intended to denote a socialism that was the antithesis of the internationalist, ‘un-German’ ideology of Marx and Engels. One of the earliest National Socialist parties in Germany was called the ‘German Socialist Party’ – founded in 1918 (a few months before Anton Drexler’s German Workers’ Party), it was for a brief period the largest and most prominent NS party in the country, fêted by National Socialists in Austria and the Sudetenland, before its eventual absorption into the NSDAP in 1922. The party Paetel is actually referring to here was a fairly minor group which had split off from the NSDAP sometime around August 1932: the German Socialist Workers’ Party (*Deutsche Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei*, DSAP), occasionally also referred to as the ‘German Socialist Party’ or ‘German Social Party’. Its leaders, Arno Franke and Wilhelm Klute, had both been active NSDAP members (although Franke had started off his political career as a Social-Democrat) and both had become bitterly disappointed with the Party over time, particularly with its organizational structure and with what they perceived as the poor qualities of its local leadership. The DSAP was intended to advance a more pronounced socialist line while avoiding the corruption and authoritarianism which Klute and Franke alleged was dragging down the NSDAP; its leaders thus hoped that it would draw in all those of National Socialist disposition who were nonetheless wary of Hitler or other prominent Party figures. The group at its peak never had more than 2000 members, and its activity was concentrated solely within Berlin and parts of Saxony. Like the other National Socialist splinter-groups (of which there were many in the early ‘30s), the DSAP was banned after Hitler assumed power. Klute survived past the end of the War, but Franke was arrested in 1933 and likely died in a concentration camp.

† In German, ‘*Bonzen*’ means ‘bosses’ or ‘bigwigs’. ‘*Bonzokratie*’ thus means something like ‘rule by big shots’ or ‘influence of the bosses’, or more simply ‘bosssdom’. It is also occasionally translated as ‘oligarchy’; this in my opinion is inaccurate, as it removes some of the deeper significance behind the word, which had particular meaning for National Socialists. Criticisms from within the Party against the leadership (typically made by members of the SA against Party functionaries) would often involve throwing around the term *Bonzen*, implying that the leaders were out-of-touch, snobbish, and high-handed, no better than the capitalists who National Socialism claimed to be fighting against.

‡ Likely a reference to the ‘Ring Parable’ of Gotthold Lessing’s play *Nathan the Wise*. In the play, the character Nathan relates a story to Saladin about a father who left his sons three rings, only one of which was magical; the others were physically identical but mundane copies. The three brothers quarrelled over ownership of the ‘real’ ring, until finally set straight by a wiser man. The story is intended as a parable about religious faith, but Paetel here is using it as an analogy for the squabbling of National Socialist splinter-groups over who is the bearer of the ‘real’ National Socialist doctrine.

§ The mention of Otto Strasser here is a reference to his 1929 book *National Socialism – Worldview of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* [*“Der Nationalsozialismus – die Weltanschauung des 20. Jahrhunderts”*]. Captain Walter Stennes was a former leader of the Berlin SA who in March 1931 led a Brownshirt rebellion (the ‘Stennes-Putsch’) against the NSDAP leadership, before leaving to form his own group, which after some factional troubles of its own eventually took the name ‘Independent National Socialist Combat Movement of Germany’ [*“Unabhängige Nationalsozialistische Kampfbewegung Deutschlands”*].

# The Fascist Mistake

The disastrously misjudged historical mission of that which quite justifiably might have been called ‘national-socialism’\* can already be seen in the Hitler-party’s first months of work in 1919, in which the anti-statist resentments against Berlin (which are practically a philosophy of life on the other side of the ‘Main line’<sup>†</sup>, where it is preferred to look to Rome rather than to the land of the ‘Prussian Gau’) were underlined by a pronounced historical mistake, a mistake which definitively rejected the character of the ‘Germanic uprising’ against Paris.

At the moment when those under Versailles alone were capable of making history, the slogan of rebellion against Versailles was supplemented by the domestic-political slogan “Against Marxism”, turning on its head the willingness to, in the Party’s name, take the side of the destitute or homeless, the Fatherland-less, in order to create for them a homeland<sup>17</sup> via radical change to societal and economic life. Upon realizing that the demand of the hour was “Through Socialism to the Nation”, the calculation of the fascist propertied-bourgeoisie became: “Beat Marxism – and you eliminate Volk-destructive class-stratification!”

Thus the principle that the NSDAP committed itself to was false from the start, which therefore dooms to failure every attempted renaissance of its spirit which reaffirms that same principle.

A look at the development of Italian fascism demonstrates the inevitable, obligatory lawfulness of such a fighting position. In recent months Dr. K.A. Wittfogel<sup>‡</sup> was unequivocally able to prove, on the basis of old ideological texts<sup>18</sup>, that the first fascist programmes bore a thoroughly revolutionary socialist character, roughly equivalent to the German USPD. So long as the *Fascios* stood by these demands, they simply remained one among many troublemaking frontline fighters’ associations. At the moment, however – just as occurred in Germany in 1919 – in which the bourgeoisie, menaced by the “Bolshevik wave”, recognized the chance to deploy these militant forces for its own security, then fascism emerged theoretically and

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<sup>17</sup> Moeller van den Bruck put it perfectly in *The Third Reich* [“*Das dritte Reich*”] (Hanseatic Publishing House, Hamburg): “It is intolerable that the nation should have permanently under its feet a proletariat that shares its speech, its history and its fate, without forming an integral part of it... The younger proletarians are already beginning to prick up their ears when they hear talk of a country of their fathers which the sons must conquer if it is to become the possession of their children.” Bebel too formulated it well at the 1907 ‘International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart’: “What we are fighting is not the Fatherland itself, which belongs to the proletariat far more than to the ruling classes, but the conditions which prevail in the Fatherland in the interests of the ruling classes.” And even Bismarck recognized this very well. In all his political speeches we see again and again the need to defend himself against the reproach of “State Socialism.”

<sup>18</sup> *Der Rote Aufbau*, 1932, Nr. 16.

practically as an anti-Marxist force and unambiguously assumed a societal function as a security organization for the establishment.

When on the first of May the cells of fascist railwaymen made it impossible to carry out a general strike for the first time in Italy; when the fascist fighting-leagues, with clandestine support from the government, liquidated the syndicalist occupation of the factories; then had Mussolini, completely ignoring the old radical points of his programme, created the psychological conditions for the anti-Bolshevik forces to more or less gladly clear the way for the establishment of 'Peace and Order'.

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### *Translator's Notes*

\* '*national-socialism*' – In German the term 'National Socialism', i.e. the ideology of National Socialism as championed by the NSDAP, is written as a single word: '*Nationalsozialismus*'. Paetel in the German very deliberately uses in this sentence a two-word alternative instead, '*Nationaler Sozialismus*'. Both have the exact same translation in English, but the different ways they are written conveys a different sense of meaning – Paetel here is drawing a clear distinction between the *concept* of a 'national-socialism' (which he obviously approves of) and the formal *ideology* of National Socialism as propagated by the NSDAP. To make Paetel's distinction clearer, I have written the term in a slightly different style.

† The 'Main line' ('*Mainlinie*') is the line between North and South Germany, which historically demarcated the political spheres of influence of Austria and Prussia within the old German Confederation. By the time of Paetel's writing the term was used to refer to the division of political, cultural, religious, etc. differences between the North of the country (dominated by Prussia) and the South (dominated by Bavaria). Paetel's remark that those in the South "preferred to look to Rome" is a reference to Bavaria's Catholicism, a religion seen by some radical nationalists as a foreign imposition (sometimes referred to as "the Black International", as opposed to the "Red International" of Marxism and the "Gold International" of capitalism) with an alleged pernicious, centralizing, authoritarian political and cultural impact.

‡ Karl August Wittfogel was a playwright, sociologist and Sinologist, and one of the Communist Party of Germany's more prominent intellectual figures. He was a frequent contributor on cultural issues to a number of Marxist journals, and was the author of several successful, socialist-themed expressionist plays. Wittfogel was considered an expert on China, a nation he spent much time in as a researcher; his experiences in China in part influenced his eventual break with communism around 1939-40. By the Cold War period he had become stridently anti-communist.

# The Historical Error of the NSDAP

The parallel is obvious. The seven-man-council in Munich, as an anti-Versailles force and likewise through its 'alignment' (the emotional anticapitalism of "breaking the bondage of interest", only attractive to the uprooted, revolutionary layers of radicalized front-soldiers, students, etc.), became a piece on the chessboard of sluggishly reviving bourgeois politics at the moment it became clear that from them (with the bourgeoisie's gracious toleration of their youthful exuberance in expressing radical feelings) the forces could be formed that would be able to push back against the advancing Marxist working-class and, possibly, be in the position to eliminate them.

In a situation where the urgent decision to be made on the class forces was increasingly clear-cut, whoever took up the slogan "Against Marxism" in the battle between Capital and Labor had to remain willingly or unwillingly indifferent out of necessity, in order to be able to side with those who had every interest in repudiating Marxism's political and economic claims to power.

Finance-capital and large landowners, jobless officers and restoration-obsessed feudal lords, all could at that moment overlook a few programmatic blemishes, since they still demonstrated the NSDAP's possibilities for returning the distribution of power in German politics back to its old state.

The blame for this development does not lie with the incapable Osaf Herr Stennes, Herr Strasser, or even with Herr Schulze\*, who were likewise powerless to escape from the internal dynamic.

One may reject certain points of the Marxist program, one may maintain that its worldview is deficient and out-of-date, but one will refute it neither by coaxing nor with Stormtroopers.<sup>19</sup> It can only be overcome from within itself. Russia shows that. As a nationalist, one's thinking on German politics today must be in terms of forces, not ideologies.<sup>20</sup>

On the one hand, there is today a government whose domestic policies signify the darkest Reaction; the further intensification of class distinctions; the creation of a living 'subhumanity' under the state of exception<sup>†</sup> in which the national unity necessary for achieving sovereignty is thoroughly weakened; a foreign policy directed towards France, with Christian intentions of intervention; and the fascist movement

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<sup>19</sup> "One cannot kill Marxism with a rifle-butt, but must give the Volk a new idea!" (General Ludendorff before the court, 1924)

<sup>20</sup> The recognition that today the egotistical age of liberalism is being superseded by socialist communitarianism is undoubtedly correct. But to make a straightjacket out of a 'law' calculated in annual figures demonstrates only a complete inability to think historically.

as the exultant trustee of the bourgeois legacy, united with the propertied middle-classes and incapable of national liberation as well as of socialist revolution. – And, on the other hand, there are the revolutionary working-classes, organized in and with the KPD, negating the fundamental principles of foreign-policy-enslavement from Versailles to Young, and ready for the revolutionary deed which will transfer the economy into the hands of the whole, making the Fatherland-less the stewards of the new Fatherland that will create the nation...<sup>21</sup>

With such a clear and hopeless separation between the two, revolutionary nationalism cannot wait around as a ‘Third Front’ until both are rendered obsolete and internally overcome – otherwise the ‘Third Front’ will become, as per Hans Zehrer, the ‘Front of Last Authority’, the Reichswehr<sup>‡</sup>. Revolutionary nationalism must take sides. In other words, to unambiguously be a fighting-comrade, to be with the anti-Versailles forces, to be with the formations that want to fight for the Socialist Fatherland of tomorrow, one must therefore belong at the side of the KPD where the struggle for work, the nation, and socialism is being fought, where the class-struggle is affirmed as the path to revolution.<sup>22</sup>

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### *Translator’s Notes*

\* ‘Osaf’ is shorthand for ‘*Oberste Sturmabteilung Führung*’ [‘Supreme SA Leadership’], the SA general staff – Paetel here is referencing Stennes’s previous high position of command within the Stormtroopers. “Herr Strasser” is Otto Strasser rather than Gregor, who by this point had resigned all his Party offices and was a backbencher on the verge of complete retirement. The identity of “Herr Schulze” is less clear. Possibly Paetel means Karl Schulz, leader of the German National Socialist Workers Party (DNSAP) in Austria. The DNSAP was older than the NSDAP, and had split in the mid-’20s over the question of whether or not to submit itself to Hitler’s leadership. The pro-Hitler forces left the DNSAP, which Schulz then headed unopposed. By the time of the *Manifesto*’s publication the DNSAP had dwindled to a shadow of its former self, unable to compete against the vitality and popularity of the Hitler-movement, but Schulz still maintained some cachet with National Socialists in German-speaking territories as the last remaining representative of pre-Hitlerian National Socialism.

† The ‘state of exception’ is a political concept devised by Carl Schmitt, an influential jurist and political scientist with strong National Socialist and conservative-revolutionary leanings. Schmitt’s writing on the state of exception was intended to provide a theoretical explanation for what was often regarded as a juridical anomaly: the capacity of a supposedly absolute legal system to contain within itself the means of its own suspension (i.e. martial law, a state of emergency, etc.). Paetel’s use of the term here is likely a reference to Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution, which allowed the President to rule by decree and had been a constant in German political life since the time of Brüning’s chancellorship.

‡ Hans Zehrer was a social-nationalist intellectual and the editor of *Die Tat* [“The Deed”], a widely-read conservative-revolutionary intellectual journal. Zehrer rejected the concept of political parties and had been one of the behind-the-scenes intellectual architects of General Schleicher’s attempts to create a broad coalition (the ‘*Querfront*’, i.e. ‘cross-front’) between the army, trade unions, and the followers of Gregor Strasser. For Zehrer, enduring institutions like the Reichswehr had far more claim to form the political basis of the state than squabbling, transitory political parties.

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<sup>21</sup> Karl Radek, “The Comintern’s Struggle against Versailles and against Capital’s Offensive” [“*Der Kampf der Komintern gegen Versailles und gegen die Offensive des Kapitals*”], 1922:

“This Republic does not have the guts to say: ‘We cease to be a nation, we are a colony of European capital,’ and even less does it have the guts to tell the masses: ‘Today we must submit, but we want to make ready for battle.’ The German working-class will never come to power if it is not able to give the broad masses of the German people the confidence that they will fight with all their might to shake off the yoke of foreign capital.”

<sup>22</sup> That will only be possible, however, if one puts aside such ‘witty’ descriptions as A.E. Günther’s: “Marx has constituted the proletariat as a secularized ghetto, thus implanting in it the subversive character that is effective in the class struggle.”

# Nationalist Communism

From the beginning, a succession of relatively small 'far-right' groups have kept their distance from the NSDAP (their spokesmen never having associated with the Party), which today consciously stands against them because they are "national-communist" and anti-fascist.

The more apparent it becomes that Adolf Hitler is unable to honor his promises, the promises with which he today holds the columns of idealistic anticapitalist youth (the young, already thoroughly sociologically-uprooted bourgeoisie) under his banner alongside the crowds of people anxious to safeguard their own interests, the closer the hour comes when in Germany the long-mocked and long-scorned position of

## National Communism

can be realized.

Today we are still 'Utopians'. But the far-sighted among the 'conservative' Grail-keepers already see the danger for them approaching on the horizon. Albrecht Erich Günther<sup>23</sup>, the co-editor of the *Deutsche Volkstum*, wrote: "In the national-revolutionary youth, which provides momentum to the 'national opposition', a deep suspicion sets in: shall we one day be led as 'white' storm-columns against a 'red' flood? These and other insights awaken mistrust against the foreign policy of credit-hungry business groups, so it stands to reason to decide against 'white' – that is, for 'red': National Bolshevism... If we are on the right track in this attempt at interpretation, so can we also predict that, the moment the exponents of economic reason gain influence over the national opposition and bring them not economic relief but instead a new subjugation to France, the National Socialist masses undergo a transformation in their state of being. They become National Bolsheviks. National Bolshevism will then attain the same fervour as that of National Socialism, but it will also be directed against German entrepreneurship, perhaps by a different ecstatic 'Drummer'." <sup>24</sup> This analysis, written at the time of the Brüning government, is still valid. It particularly applies to Hitler's situation. \*

And the conservative politician who "expects a lot from National Socialism" already knows what it portends for bourgeois-nationalist politics when he beseechingly continues:

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<sup>23</sup> Günther may like to be reminded of the time he wrote to the National Communist Wolffheim that he: "would have in mind a policy that is in no way contrary to your aims" and "still profess myself to the views that you have expressed." (September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1920)

<sup>24</sup> From the *Deutsches Volkstum*, December 1931, "Between White and Red."

“The strength of National Bolshevism cannot be discerned from the membership of a party or group, nor from the circulation of periodicals. One must have a feeling for the youth’s willingness to decide for National Bolshevism in order to grasp how suddenly such a movement can spring from a circle of sectarians into the Volk.”

If the failure of the Hitler-party becomes clearly obvious – following from its renunciation of economic restructuring and socialist construction, and following from its readiness to leave the Treaty Series<sup>†</sup> untouched<sup>25</sup> – then the activist, revolutionary forces who will be freed from it as a result will not be able to be maintained with half-measures, as the ‘oppositions’ offer, but will want to go completely over to the side of socialism.

The largest percentage of the people however will not go over to the KPD, out of the deep suspicion that its national sentiment is mere tactics and not grounded in its innermost being.<sup>26</sup>

Here then is the mission of German National Communism: to form the cadres who are prepared, for the sake of the nation, to sever all bourgeois ties, who no longer have any relationship with the values and judgements of their fathers since they were plucked from their jobs, studies, and careers and turfed out onto the street – and who, for precisely that reason, want Germany, a Germany that is their own.

The mission of the national-revolutionary groups is to be the rallying-point of those who, in a fighting-community with the Marxist KPD, form a front of those revolutionaries and socialists who as non-materialists avow the nation as the ultimate value, but who are also ready for a radical revolution for the sake of the nation, because only that creates the preconditions for nation-building.

Three different things make this political position politically effective:

Consistent will: To be socialists in the truest sense of the word.

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<sup>25</sup> That Adolf Hitler has solemnly and repeatedly declared this is well known. But even the representative of the ‘Left NSDAP’, the socialist Gregor Strasser, has explicitly said: “We recognize private property. We acknowledge our debts and our obligations to pay them. We are against the nationalization of industry. We are against the nationalization of trade. We are against planned economy in the Soviet sense. We are against inflation. We are for the gold standard. When we come to power there will be no violent changes. We are against absolute autarchy.” (Strasser to Knickerbocker, *Vossische Zeitung*, no. 479 of 9<sup>th</sup> October, 1932)

<sup>26</sup> Paul Levi, the then-head of the Central Committee, declared at the founding day of the party in December 1920 in Berlin: “KPD and USPD could have found each other in Moscow. It is necessary to awaken the whole fighting power of the broad masses. And there is no doubt that the head of this great body is Soviet Russia.”

To become aware of oneself as non-Marxists: To be nationalists of faith and knowledge.

And the fundamental rejection of any desire and attempt to reform National Socialism.

Not reformed National Socialism, but a bloc of uncompromising young-nationalist forces in Germany, with steadfast socialist will, unwavering nationalist faith, recognition of the practical situation conferred through Versailles, fighting-comradeship with the KPD.

Only in this way (and not in the fashion being muttered about today by those who, in reality, only mean National Socialism without Hitler, and who want to pull the rug out from under the KPD) is the formation of an organized German National Communism worthwhile. The KPD will become its compatriot, and fascism and quasi-fascism will find in it their most dangerous opponent. It will have to step forward when the time is right.

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#### ***Translator's Notes***

\* *"Another ecstatic Drummer"* is a reference to Adolf Hitler. In the early years of the National Socialist movement, before his position as Führer became unassailable, Hitler was frequently referred to (including by himself) as "the Drummer": i.e. not necessarily the leader of the nationalist revolution, who was still yet to emerge, but the one 'sounding the drum' and rallying the German people to the cause.

† *"Treaty Series"* – in German *"Vertragsferien"*. The League of Nations officially published the full text of every international treaty signed by its member-states – including the Treaty of Versailles – in what was known as the 'Treaty Series', a practice still kept up by the United Nations. Hitler immediately after coming to power adopted a very cautious foreign policy, declaring that he had no intention of rocking the boat in regards to the international agreements signed by previous German governments, which is perhaps what Paetel is referring to.

# The Face of National Communism

In outline, German National Communism proclaims that:

We recognize the necessity of the German socialist revolution. It is the spiritual transformation that determines the economic, political, and cultural features of our time; it is in effect the revolution of the workers, peasants, and proletarianized middle-classes.

We commit ourselves to the nation. It is our last political value as a fateful expression of völkisch\* community.

We commit ourselves to the Volk as the natural ethnic<sup>†</sup> cultural community, in contrast to ethnically-destructive Western civilization.

We commit ourselves to the intrinsic meaning of German folkdom<sup>‡</sup>.

We commit ourselves to a socialist planned economy which, after breaking the capitalist order, binds Volk and Nation into an organic economic structure and as a social economy constitutes the foundation of state sovereignty.

The fulfilment of our aims is the Free Greater-German<sup>§</sup> Peoples' Council-State as the expression of the self-government of the productive Volk.

The means of production are to be transferred to the nation as common property, and the nation's fundamental ownership of land and soil to be declared.

Consequently:

Nationalization of all large-scale and medium-scale industrial enterprises.

Immediate, extensive settlement of the East<sup>\*\*</sup> with expropriation of the large estates.

Partial awarding of smallholdings to second and third peasants' sons and to farm-workers as Reich Entails.

Partial socialization of state-goods.

Replacement of Roman private law with German common law.<sup>27</sup>

State monopoly on foreign trade. Nationalization of the monetary system. For the transitional period after the revolution, autarchy of the economic region of Russia-Germany; German autarchy as the ultimate goal.

The situation today calls for:

Ruthless struggle against all foreign-policy enslavement-treaties, from Versailles to Young, until they are torn to shreds.

Struggle against all aspects of the Weimar system and its sanctioning of external servitude, from Hilferding to Hitler, until it is annihilated.<sup>28</sup>

Struggle against Roman politics in German territory.

Struggle for a racially-appropriate religiosity attuned to the German people as a pre-condition for völkisch unity.

A policy of alliance with the Soviet Union.

Supporting revolutionary movements to create a united front of all oppressed classes and nations.

The situation today necessitates:

The most severe execution of the class-struggle of the oppressed against all who represent the private-capitalist dogma of the sanctity of private property.

That is the only way to the German sovereign socialist nation.

To safeguard the revolution against seizure by International Capital and against counter-revolutionary aspirations, the revolutionary Peoples' Militia [*Volksheer*] shall

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<sup>27</sup> In contrast to Roman Law's basically unrestrained, subjective concept of property, which treats land and soil as a commodity, Germanic thinking recognizes only the clan, the family, the cooperative-community [*Markgenossenschaft*] as responsible administrators of property. Even in the broader sense of the law, the Germanic conception is always bound to the community [*gemeinschaftsgebunden*], not subjectively individualistic.

<sup>28</sup> Adolf Hitler in the *Daily Express*, London 9670, 4<sup>th</sup> May 1931: "I do not demand the restoration of the German pre-war borders. I do not ask for Germany's colonies back!"  
Weimar Constitution §178: "The provisions of the peace treaty concluded at Versailles on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1919 are not affected by this Constitution."

replace the mercenary army at the moment of revolution<sup>29</sup>, and the indivisibility of Greater Germany is to be proclaimed upon the establishment of the socialist state.

To achieve these goals, this is what is necessary today:

A fighting-community of revolutionary nationalism with the class-party of the revolutionary proletariat, the KPD.<sup>30</sup>

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### *Translator's Notes*

\* The actual word Paetel uses here is 'volkhafter', not 'völkisch'. As is the case with many völkisch terms, there is no direct translation of 'volkhaften' in English; a literal translation would be something like 'folk-adhering' or 'folk-clinging'. It is variously rendered by other translators as 'tribal', 'popular', 'national', 'folk-like', 'folkish', 'racial', none of which is entirely accurate. The word 'völkisch' usually receives the same range of translations, and to German ears both denote an earthy, populist sense. I have chosen to render the word as 'völkisch' as a compromise for English-speaking readers.

† 'Natural ethnic' – In the original German the word used is 'artgemäßen', which translates roughly as 'species-appropriate' or 'nature-accordant'. In German it is a word used most commonly in a biological-agricultural sense, particularly in the fields of animal husbandry, beekeeping, etc., often to describe either animal behaviour or species-specialized feeding, caring, and breeding methods. The term was adopted by völkisch thinkers and in such writings has racialist connotations, which is how Paetel is employing it. 'Natural ethnic' is a very inelegant translation (also considered were 'homogeneous' or 'racially-appropriate', neither of which is much better). Unfortunately, völkisch and related terms rarely lend themselves to easy solutions in English.

‡ 'Folkdom' – 'Volkstums' in the German, another völkisch term. 'Folkdom' is the common translation in English, although 'folklore' is also occasionally used. The meaning here is more well-defined – 'Volkstum' refers to the combined völkisch spirit, character, and wisdom of an organic ethnic community, their unified racial essence and shared, inherited knowledge, culture, and folkways.

§ The concept of 'Großdeutschland', 'Greater Germany', dates back to the 1848 revolution – it is the ideal of uniting all German lands under a single German state. The concept was popular across the political spectrum at various times, although it became a central propaganda aim of the nationalist movements in the inter-War years. Among these groups the ideal of Greater Germany was typically invoked in opposition to the Versailles Treaty, summoning up images of regaining German greatness by reclaiming the lands lost in the War and adding to them all areas where Germans formed a sizeable portion of the population, such as Austria and the Sudetenland.

\*\* It is very unlikely that Paetel means Russia or the Ukraine when he refers to "settlement of the East" considering his pro-Russian sentiments. This is possibly instead an indirect reference to the 'Ostflucht' ('flight from the East') of the late 1800s, which saw a heavy migration of Germans out of the country's eastern territories and into central and western Germany. In the late Imperial period and in the Weimar Republic there were numerous attempts by the state and by NGOs to counteract Ostflucht by encouraging 'inner colonization' of Germany's sparsely-populated eastern territories; there were also plans to resettle Germans in those areas lost due to the Treaty of Versailles (West Prussia, Upper Silesia, the Memelland, and also the cities of Posen and Danzig) if provided the opportunity. There is also the possibility, suggested by his comments in the chapter "Revolutionary Foreign Policy", that Paetel may be referring to Poland.

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<sup>29</sup> The idea of arming the populace to complement a cadre army, stridently rejected by the capitalist-bourgeois state (along with the idea of labor-conscription) as abuse and corruption, is likewise a self-evident demand of the socialist nation.

<sup>30</sup> That the theory that "Marxism is the invention of that same Judaism which constitutes capitalism, invented in order to render harmless the protest of the proletariat" is unmitigated nonsense (and which incomprehensibly comes from so clever a mind of that of Count Reventlow in his *German Socialism* ["*Deutscher Sozialismus*"]) probably needs no proof.

# Why Not KPD?

As these theses demonstrate, revolutionary nationalism and the communist movement today are unquestionably on the same side of the political frontline in the struggle against fascism and capital and for socialism and national liberation.

Why are we not in the KPD?

Revolutionary German nationalism strives for, as its ultimate political goal, the sovereign German nation, existing in a community of free states of peoples [Völker] independent from one another.

Revolutionary Marxism – the KPD – strives for, as its ultimate goal, the classless society, which (through the slow death of the state and the amalgamation of nations) unites the peoples into a higher unity.

Revolutionary nationalism affirms the class-struggle as an organic upheaval in the leadership of the body of the Volk, which by replacing the obsolete ruling-classes reorients the youthful new state to a leadership based on the political and social functions of the whole.

Revolutionary Marxism views history as a succession of class struggles, with victorious participation in such struggles as the means by which the international proletariat can overcome international capitalism with international socialism. It recognizes the bondage of class over the boundaries of the primary reality that is the folkdom.

Some today are fighters for national freedom and class-fighters for the sake of the nation, others are both for the sake of a classless society.<sup>31</sup>

Revolutionary nationalism strives for the implementation of a socialist planned economy on the basis of autarchy (for the transition to a German-Russian autarchy!), for the elimination of private ownership over the means of production, and for the nationalization of land and soil, all as a precondition for the sovereignty of the nation to be created by the revolution.

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<sup>31</sup> J. Stalin says in "Leninism and the National Question" (*Problems of Leninism*, Literature & Politics Publishing House, Berlin): "The national question in the period of the Second International and the national question in the period of Leninism are far from being the same thing. They differ profoundly from one another, not only in their scope, but also in their intrinsic character... Leninism broadened the conception of self-determination, interpreting it as the right of the oppressed peoples of the dependent countries and colonies to complete secession, as the right of nations to independent existence as states... The national question is part of the general question of the proletarian revolution, a part of the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Revolutionary Marxism strives for the planned economic organization of the world, negating autarkic economic areas by eliminating private ownership of the means of production and socializing land and soil. Socialist construction in a country (Russia) is only conceivable as a preliminary stage.<sup>32</sup>

Revolutionary nationalism does not believe in the possibility of eternal peace, in a humanity capable of nullifying the antagonisms between different peoples (friend-enemy-principle\*).

Revolutionary Marxism strives for a pacified world, guaranteed after the abolition of economic antagonisms.

Revolutionary nationalism strives for an appropriately German solution to the peasant question [*Bauernfrage*]. It is of the conviction that an integration of the small peasants into the planned economy through a private-property-abolishing fief-system must preserve the 'eternal category of the peasant', and must be utilizable by the state as a reservoir of power.

Revolutionary Marxism strives to liquidate the 'regressive class' through collectivizing and rationalizing farming operations, with the end goal being a synthesis with the worker into a higher, 'classless' human type. (Russia)

Revolutionary nationalism understands the potency of the Idea, the need for religious renewal and the existence of irrational forces; it sees in the idea of the nation its ultimate goal and in folkdom a fatefully imminent power. All political and economic imperatives are the means of giving this idea form and reality.

Revolutionary Marxism, building on historical materialism, interprets the processes of human history from their economic conditions and assigns the 'ideological superstructure' to the secondary role. Belief in the irrational is to be (and certainly will be) overcome.

Revolutionary nationalism is anti-fascist because fascism, aside from its racially-alien characteristics [*fremdvölkischen Zügen*], does not understand how to incorporate the leadership of the proletariat; in its economic order is only a reform of capitalism; and in its corporatist state-form is a camouflaged dictatorship over the working Volk which thereby perpetuates the division of the nation into ruler and ruled.

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<sup>32</sup> The plan for a Greater Economic Zone in the south-east (Austria, Hungary, the Balkans, Yugoslavia, Romania) is unworkable, insofar as the countries concerned do not agree with it, moreover they also have strong financial ties to France.

Revolutionary Marxism sees in fascism a militant self-defence movement for the structure and interests of the capitalist system, directing the movements of the petit-bourgeois masses with pseudo-ideologies formed for the purpose of its own preservation.

Revolutionary nationalism strives for a political and economic alliance with the Soviet Union, as the only European opponent of the Versailles system and as a socialist neighbouring-state – on these grounds it fights against any intent of intervention against Soviet Russia.

Revolutionary Marxism calls for the “Defense of the Soviet Union” as the “Fatherland of the Working People” and the beginning of world communism.

Revolutionary nationalism rejects any intention of acquiring colonies, in recognition of the fundamental rights of oppressed peoples to national freedom and in accordance with its own watchword of national sovereignty. On the path towards a community of free peoples it hails the liberation movements of India, China, Egypt, etc., as allies in the fight against the signatory-powers of Versailles, just as it hails the international struggle of the proletariat against international fixed capital.<sup>33</sup>

Revolutionary Marxism hails the national-revolutionary movements of colonial- and semi-colonial peoples as precursors of the proletarian world-revolution.

Revolutionary nationalism resists the use of the racial-question [*Rassenfrage*] for the establishment of a born-to-rule master-race; rejects race-dogmatism as a criterion for foreign-policy; and in the construction of socialism demands as evidence for the value of race not entitlement but achievement.

Revolutionary Marxism sees in race an economic category that receives its true meaning in a classless society, and rejects its usage in forming political slogans.

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<sup>33</sup> The fundamental difference here has been noted in Marxist counter-criticisms as early as 1920: “The inner essence of so-called National Bolshevism is quite aptly characterized in that it emanates ‘from the basic concept of the nation’. The nation is first to it; communism’s position is clear. Communism should be subordinated to the nation, the means to save it. Internationality itself should be built up on the free peoples, internationality should be the sum of national interests.” Which is rejected!

From *Against National Bolshevism* [*Gegen den Nationalbolschewismus*], 1920, Karl Radek & August Thalheimer, published by the KPD (Spartakist). Thalheimer: “Communism, Nation, and War” [*Kommunismus, Nation und Krieg*] (first published in *Rote Fahne*, May 1920); Radek: “The Foreign Policy of German Communism and Hamburg’s National Bolshevism” [*Die auswärtige Politik des deutschen Kommunismus und der Hamburger nationale Bolschewismus.*] (first published in *Die Internationale*, I., 17/18, 20/12/19).

Revolutionary nationalism sees in the council-structure the self-government of the productive Volk, the guarantee of political accountability and economic control of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, presaged in the early forms of Germanic rule.

Revolutionary Marxism strives, through the council-structure's division into executive and legislative powers, to move towards the eventual superfluity of the state.<sup>34</sup>

Already in these few comparisons, and putting aside more detailed descriptions of their individual points (the number and scope of such examples can be supplemented as needed), it follows that the world-goals of nationalism and of Marxism are thoroughly different. It nonetheless also follows, however, that the necessities of today's politics yield a range of demands and insights from Marxism and nationalism which coincide (class-struggle, revolution, socialism, councils, foreign-policy, anti-fascism – although their rationales for them are different).

Young Nationalism, however, has a mission for tomorrow extending beyond this front today. It is: unity of faith and blood with the political principles of formation.

Under this insight, the small cadres of 'National Bolshevik' nationalism are formed today alongside and not within the KPD. Nevertheless they affirm their affiliation with it, because notwithstanding the differing objectives, the Communist Party in Germany today is the only mass-factor<sup>35</sup>:

Against the Versailles System – Against the Roman Counter-Reformation – Against the drive to intervene against Russia – Against the fascist deception of the people – For the socialist revolution – For Greater Germany!

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<sup>34</sup> Lassalle, however, despite his oft-stressed affirmation of Marxism, on this issue adhered to a different position: "It is the state whose function is to carry on the development of the human race until its freedom is attained. The state is this unity of individuals into a moral whole, a unity which increases a million-fold the strength of all individuals incorporated in this union." ("The Workers' Program" [*Arbeiterprogramm*"], 1862)

The analysis according to which the state itself withers away upon taking over the means of production is outlined by Engels in *The Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science*, by Lenin in *State and Revolution*.

<sup>35</sup> Especially since the 'Aufbruch-circle'<sup>†</sup> – organized in the spirit of Lieutenant Scheringer and under the direction of the old Freikorps Oberland leader, Beppo Römer – is working on consolidating the slogan issued on 14<sup>th</sup> September 1930 for the 'National and Social Liberation of the German People', and is (unfortunately with still too little effect) striving to overcome the internationalist scheme of Luxemburgism.

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### ***Translator's Notes***

\* Another reference to the political philosophy of Carl Schmitt, in this case to his work *The Concept of the Political*.

† The “Aufbruch-circle” refers to the circle of writers, intellectuals, and revolutionaries who contributed to the *Aufbruch* (‘Departure’), a journal which took ex-nationalist Richard Scheringer as its figurehead. Scheringer, a former junior officer of the German Reichswehr, had been jailed along with two friends for spreading national-revolutionary propaganda among their fellow soldiers. In jail Scheringer was converted to Communism, and afterwards became a willing propaganda tool with which the KPD attempted to win over converts from the NSDAP and other nationalist groups. Many of these converts (including Josef ‘Beppo’ Römer, a Freikorps leader) were in part brought to Marxism by the ‘Programme for the National and Social Liberation of the German People’, the KPD’s 1930 party programme which deliberately adopted nationalist ideas and terminology in order to compete with the NSDAP.

# War and Peace

War and peace can never in themselves be judged, per se. The denial or affirmation of their value and status is decided only in relation to the requirements of völkisch life [*völkischen Lebens*], the national will to self-determination, and those unique personal decisions that affect the national destiny which dominates the lives of individuals. Those unwilling to see and address every problem from the perspective of their individual experience will only be able to pass such a judgement when their relationship to this aspect is clear. War can only be approved of when it is definitively established that it is essential and unavoidable for the future, freedom, and viability of a Volk, only if its squandering of the Volk's substance [*Volkssubstanz*] is justified by a greater and more secure future for the *Volksgemeinschaft* itself.

But a Volk that, as in Germany today, is merely an object of the politics of other states, can know only one alternative: first freedom, then peace.

A war for the sake of freedom always receives – and the invention of gas weapons has changed nothing from the times in which death was brought by sword and spear – its inner sanctification. But never will nationalism itself be able to frame the struggle between peoples in such a fashion; it is earnest in attributing the supreme nation [*Absolutum Nation*] as the source of everything that it does. “War is the continuation of politics by other means” – this quote from Clausewitz demonstrates that the question of the affirmation or rejection of war cannot be posed abstractly, but must derive from the meaning, the legitimacy of politics – whose “continuation” it is. Only that communicates the essentials.

Dr. Kurt Hiller\*, for example, accuses me<sup>36</sup> of letting the “frivolous” position of Ernst Jünger (of whom I quoted something<sup>37</sup> without refuting it) not be given a sufficiently sharp differentiation.

Ernst Jünger is and will remain a beloved example of the daring ‘new nationalists’. He has given us, as the author of *The Adventurous Heart*, an eternal breviary of the nationalist faith. But his rationale for war in “fire and blood”, in which he expressly rejects sourcing the justification for war from anywhere (not even in the nation) but instead derives its *raison d'être* from the unique, great, intoxicating opportunities for adventure it provides in fulfilling the laws of the earth – we leave no doubt that this must be rejected. Just as little can we accept Jünger's much too non-committal political demand for the state, which should be “social, defensive, and authoritarian”. The question of war and peace, of which the revolutionary pacifist<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> “Left People from the Right” [*Linke Leute von Rechts*], *Die Weltbühne*, no. 31, 1932.

<sup>37</sup> In “The Spiritual Face of the National Youth.” [*Das Geistige Gesicht der Nationalen Jugend*]

<sup>38</sup> Only one response would be possible towards such ‘pacifists’ as F.W. Förster, who deigns to write: (12<sup>th</sup> Dec., 1930) “The Treaty of Versailles... not in the least an act of revenge... must not be

senses “no hint of a distant sound” in our country, cannot be posed in absolute terms at all, and can only be answered in the context of “What for?”<sup>39</sup>

As national-revolutionaries we stand for the nation as the “ultimate value”. Its existence and sovereignty is the political criterion. Only from this position can everything that happens be appraised, even the question of war and peace. Carl Schmitt<sup>40</sup> has taught us one thing:

“For as long as a people exists in the political sphere, this people must, even if only in the most extreme case – and whether this point has been reached has to be decided by it – determine by itself the distinction of friend and enemy. Therein resides the essence of its political existence.”

Schmitt, the author of one of the best books on ‘political romanticism’, builds on Adam Müller’s<sup>†</sup> thesis: “Eternal peace cannot be the ideal of politics. Peace and war should complement each other like movement and repose. Mutual relations

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undermined!” and (24<sup>th</sup> July, 1923) “ I wish someone had marched on Berlin... Oh, the French policy is but a half-measure... Someone must bring an end to this pig-sty!” To specify what that response might be would make one liable for the threat of murder.

<sup>39</sup> The same insight also appears in “Crisis of Social-Democracy” (aka the *Junius Pamphlet*) of Rosa Luxemburg, 1919 ed., p. 81:

“Yes, Social-Democrats should defend their country in great historical crises, and here lies the great fault of the German Social Democratic Reichstag faction. When it announced on 4/8/14, ‘In this hour of danger, we will not desert our Fatherland,’ it denied its own words in the same breath. For truly it has deserted its Fatherland in its hour of greatest danger. The highest duty of social democracy toward its Fatherland demanded that it expose the real background of this imperialist war, that it rend the net of imperialist and diplomatic lies that covers the eyes of the people. It was their duty to speak loudly and clearly, to proclaim to the people of Germany that in this war victory and defeat would be equally fatal; to oppose the gagging of the Fatherland by a state of siege; to demand the necessity of immediate popular armament and that the people alone decide on war and peace; to demand a permanent session of parliament for the period of the war, to assume a watchful control over the government by parliament, and over parliament by the people; to demand the immediate removal of all political inequalities, since only a free people can adequately govern its country; and finally, to oppose to the imperialist war, aimed at the preservation of Austria and Turkey, i.e., the war-program directed by the most reactionary forces in Europe and Germany – to oppose against it the truly national program of patriots and democrats of 1848, the program of Marx, Engels, and Lassalle, the slogan of a united, Greater German Republic.

“That was the flag that should have waved over the country. That would have been truly national, truly free, in harmony with the best traditions of Germany and the international class policy of the proletariat.”

To this the socialist historian Rosenfeld says:

“This program of how ‘a free people can effectively defend their country’ is, as Rosa Luxemburg rightly stresses, in total harmony with Friedrich Engels. It was, however, pushed back by a utopian radicalism in the daily agitation of the Spartakist League.” (Rosa Luxemburg wrote the *Junius-Pamphlet* in Berlin Prison in April 1915. Lenin’s review of the *Junius-Pamphlet* (1916) can be found: “Against the Storm”, Lenin-Zinoviev, 1921, p.415.)

<sup>40</sup> *The Concept of the Political*, published by Dunkler & Homblot, Munich.

between states are the pre-requisites for growth and prosperity.” That means simply that the sovereignty of the socialist nation is the only benchmark according to which the actions of one revolutionary socialist state can be assessed against another. The Young Socialist Professor Heller<sup>‡</sup> admits this, for example, when he avows the “national self-determination of the German people” to be the immutable goal of our “contemporary foreign policy decisions”.<sup>41</sup> The implicit respect between socialist nations excludes neither the necessity nor the possibility of military confrontation. Choosing to position oneself to others as friend or foe connotes that, as Carl Schmitt correctly infers:

“War is only the most extreme consequence of enmity. It does not have to be common, normal, something ideal, or desirable. But it must nevertheless remain a real possibility for as long as the concept of the enemy has meaning.”

And thus this notion of the Enemy will not be able to vanish even in a socialist aggregation of free peoples, so long as state-sovereignty is demanded, so long as its safeguarding through living-space and its own laws of life [*durch Lebensraum und eigene Lebensgesetze*] must always be guaranteed anew.

Even among those of us outside this aggregation, no one sees in war simply an alarm clock, a means of awakening creative impulses. Not personal opportunities for adventure but the collectivity’s law of life determines the decision. Revolutionary nationalism thinks politically, not ideologically. Hence that is why it does not believe, so long as the concept of the political becomes a reality from the sovereignty of the state, that the decision by a people to be the friend – or enemy – of another can be done away with.

That also means, ultimately, affirming the existence of war as *ultima ratio*<sup>§</sup>: not as a ‘value in and of itself’, but as the last resort for the safeguarding of state sovereignty.

The acid test will be the – today outdated – question of space [*Raumfrage*]. The socialist state, which unlike in capitalism will not artificially restrict the biological power of a Volk (abortion), will some day find itself facing a surplus of humanity – ‘People Without Space’<sup>\*\*</sup>. What then?

The Marxist answer that, as a consequence of amicable agreement, the population surplus could be settled in other, less populated parts of the Earth – perhaps Siberia – contradicts utterly the nationalist conception of the inseparability of the völkisch organism.

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<sup>41</sup> *Socialism and Nation*, Rowohlt Publishing House.

Here then will this *ultima ratio* be demonstrated: either the Volk freely receives its Lebensraum, or it takes it for itself.

Even a socialist nation will here make a decision: friend or foe.

Highest above all is the Volk's right to exist.

Even in socialism.

For everything that is required of us happens for the sake of Germany's eternal meaning, whose manifestations change, but whose core is immutable; the state of the Germans, as a generational succession of German people (one of Adam Müller's true, basic principles), is a state of fate<sup>††</sup>.

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### ***Translator's Notes***

\* Dr. Kurt Hiller was a German-Jewish socialist, writer, and pacifist activist, as well as a frequent contributor to left-leaning newspapers and publications. Hiller was also openly homosexual, and was active in the Weimer-era gay rights movement. After 1933 he spent time in a concentration camp before fleeing to Prague and London, eventually returning to Germany after the War.

† Adam Heinrich Müller was a Prussian-born political theorist who lived between 1779 and 1829. Müller was critical of liberalism and drew inspiration from feudal organizational structures. He conceived of "real nationality" as the source of "true freedom and independence", and further developed an ideal economic theory in which private property would be held in common, with all decisions regarding wealth, production, and consumption being made in consideration of their impact upon the state. He is thus generally considered a philosophical forerunner of National Socialism and related movements.

‡ The "Young Socialist Professor Heller" is Hermann Heller, a German-Jewish lawyer and lecturer in constitutional law. Heller was a member of the 'Hofgeismarer-Kreis', a circle of unorthodox Social-Democrats who sought to develop a nationalist-oriented Social-Democracy which would centre left-wing socialism in state and nation rather than in class and international. The appellation 'Young Socialist' is a reference to Heller's position within the Young Socialists ('Jungsozialisten' or 'Jusos'), the youth group of the Social-Democratic Party.

§ 'Ultima ratio' – Latin for 'last resort'.

\*\* "People without Space" – in German 'Volk ohne Raum', the name of a bestselling 1926 novel by nationalist author Hans Grimm. The book concerns a young German man who, disillusioned by conditions in Germany, seeks his destiny in colonial settlement in Africa. The novel promoted the *Lebensraum* concept and its title became a popular slogan among völkisch groups, including the NSDAP, inferring that Germany was overpopulated, the Germans a 'people without space' whose opportunities to settle their excess population in colonies and expanded territory had been swindled from them through the Treaty of Versailles.

†† "The state of the Germans... is a state of fate" – Possibly a reference to the German term "*schicksalsgemeinschaft*", 'community of fate'. Although not an explicitly nationalist or völkisch term, at the time of Paetel's writing '*schicksalsgemeinschaft*' was commonly used in the national-revolutionary movement and by the NSDAP. A 'community of fate' denotes a people bound tightly together, awakened to the awareness of their common identity and shared destiny, usually by their recognition of some shared adversity or circumstance (such as the Versailles Treaty). Paetel here is possibly inferring that the German state is an extension of the same idea – people, community, state, and destiny all eternally intertwined.

# Happiness or Freedom?

On the point of whether decisions should be oriented from the individual or from the collective, another of Dr. Hiller's questions will be answered. Hiller in his work on social-revolutionary nationalism quotes the sentence (which, incidentally, does not originate from Ernst Jünger like the quote before, but is a comment of my own\*): "We stand on the side of the insurrectionary proletariat for the sake of the nation, not for the sake of few ideas of humanitarian happiness." He then asks:

"These bringers of misery, these outspoken brutes, these monsters who do not hide that they are monsters, does their ideal nation require that its members be miserable?"

No, Dr. Hiller, no! However: In Saint-Just's<sup>†</sup> speech against Danton, for example, there is a passage which shows what we mean:

"The love of Fatherland is a great and terrible thing. It is without mercy, without fear, without respect for the individual when it comes to the public good. This love brought Regulus to Carthage and Marat to the Pantheon."

We are socialists. We support the revolution, the class-struggle, the socialization of the means of production, the nationalization of land and soil, a state structure on the principle of self-administration.

Why? Because we see in these demands – which represent the political position of an enslaved, proletarianized Volk, a semi-colony of the foreign imperialists – the only path forwards for carrying out the integration of the oppressed, disenfranchised, homeland-less proletarians, which is necessary for the restoration of the nation's sovereignty. For the sake of the nation, for the sake of its people: Socialists! That does not mean the lunatic wish to see these proletarians miserable in their new state of affairs. But indeed, we do demand from the individual, as Saint-Just demands, as is done in Russia, a sacrifice of happiness and affluence for the development of the community, which, through its freedom and power, will again be capable of giving happiness and freedom to its members.

We want to smash economic liberalism to pieces, to free the economy for the totality: the nation. As the socialist nation liberates its members, the path towards cultural assets as well as to political rights and workers' participation in the economy – in the context of the 'We' – is conceived of as being for rather than against the individual. Only we echo Saint-Just: When the call sounds that "The Fatherland is in danger", then these 'rights' are handed back to the nation, everyone divesting himself of them.

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### ***Translator's Notes***

\* Paetel here is gently mocking Hiller. In the previous chapter Paetel mentions how Hiller accused him of not sufficiently differentiating his own ideas from Jünger's when quoting the nationalist writer, so now he somewhat wryly makes the distinction as obvious as he can.

† Louis Antoine Léon de Saint-Just was a Jacobin, one of Robespierre's key allies during the events of the French Revolution and a major figure behind the Reign of Terror. Saint-Just distinctly radical, being of the opinion that the right to property and the individual's desire to live a comfortable life were both superseded by the needs of the nation ("*la patrie*"). The speech Paetel quotes from here was made by Saint-Just in March 1794 to the French National Convention, with Saint-Just's intention being to convince the government of the necessity of arresting and executing fellow-revolutionary Georges Danton.

# The Nation as the ‘Highest Value’

In a passage from the previously-discussed article by Hiller (we remain with this topic because it is symptomatic of the dispute with the ‘Left’ in general), it is said of the national-revolutionaries that they “come over to us from nationalism as something that needs to be overcome”; elsewhere, approvingly, he says that: “they don’t relinquish one jot of the ‘golden core’ of their national sentiments (something alien to those with crippled souls).” These two quotes appear to be contradictory, but in reality they are quite related. Hiller, like Marx, respects the nation as existent today, and is even willing to concede to the continued existence of its ‘golden core’, i.e. its cultural aspects, language, customs, sense of homeland; however, exactly as Lenin so clearly said in his essays on the ‘National Question’, parallel to the withering away of the state there is to be an amalgamation of the nations into a higher unity.

There is also Jaurès’s view<sup>\*</sup>, which does not exhaust the political meaning: “The nation is that treasury of human genius and progress, and it would be wicked for the proletariat to smash those precious vessels of human culture.”

The concept of sovereignty is alien to him, as it is alien to Lenin and Stalin, in an otherwise superb analysis of the nature of the nation.<sup>42</sup>

But we know that there is an innate meaning ingrained within folkdom; that here, as Ernst Jünger formulates it, is the ‘magical zero-point’<sup>+</sup> from which politics and economy, life and form derive their order. We know that ‘central value’ of the nation, as the fateful expression of this völkisch community, does indeed abide within all material forms of manifestation, that nation-building itself is also a very concrete affair. But we also know that this ‘ultimate value’ has an existence in itself which is not worth affirming today, but is reactionary and worth overcoming tomorrow.<sup>43</sup>

It is beyond the determinations of space and time when exactly racial, geopolitical<sup>44</sup>, economic, and other components of the Volk emerged, but at some point something ‘happened’ amongst a group of people and they became the historical phenomenon

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<sup>42</sup> In contrast to the medieval doctrine of the ‘two swords’ of God (Church and Reich), which assigns supreme authority to the Church, the doctrine of sovereignty implies that the state is entitled to independent authority over its territories and its politics. (Originated by Jean Bodin, 1530-1596)

<sup>43</sup> “Our Fatherland is not simply to be found at that place in which things prosper for us. Our Fatherland is much more with us, in us. Germany lives in us: we exhibit it, whether we like it or not... We are founded upon it from the beginning and cannot emancipate ourselves!” (Leopold von Ranke, *Political Dialogues* [“*Politisches Gespräch*”])

<sup>44</sup> That geopolitics as “the doctrine of space [*Raum*] which shapes history around the Volk” itself admits to only explaining roughly a fourth part of history, is explicitly stated by Haushofer in his *Geopolitics* [“*Geopolitik*”].

that is the German Volk (in Germany likely as a result of specific incidents between the six tribes: Franconian, Swabian, Bavarian, Thuringian, Saxon, Frisian)<sup>45</sup>.

Spengler has rightly determined that peoples [*Völker*] are born – i.e. they can appear and perish in historical terms, but never suffer an ‘evolution’ and suddenly become something else tomorrow, like a ‘human race’. Lagarde’s<sup>‡</sup> expression: “Every Volk is a thought of God,” makes it clear that this faith in the fateful basis of *völkisch* existence [*völkischen Dasein*] is beyond discussion on a purely rational level.

It is therefore a misconception on the part of Marxists when they frequently deem our political ‘radicalization’ to be the sign of an evolution towards their position, that one day we shall also overcome our today somewhat troublesome metaphysical childishness and thus our ‘idolatry’ of the nation.

That belief is the very basis of our being. End of discussion.<sup>46</sup>

Everything that we want politically – all our efforts on the level of practical politics to master reality with its own laws, which are on account of (not in spite of!) our metaphysical reasoning – are a consequence of our position of faith in the laws of ‘eternal Germanness’ [*ewiger Deutschheit*]. Because and only because we know that these real values are inalienable, are we as nationalists (and not in spite of that fact!) able to disengage ourselves from the economic and political foundations of our sociological homeland.

Faith and will are not opposites, but polarities. Only where nonsense is pushed on religion at the political level does irrationality become absurdity; only where one hides one’s half-hearted involvement in the issues of the day behind metaphysics does one arrive at Hanussen and Weissenberg<sup>§</sup>, instead of at the proletariat and the class struggle. The ‘ultimate value of the nation’ certainly seems to us better suited with the latter than with the former.

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<sup>45</sup> The historian Johannes Haller, for example, correctly states in his *Epochs of German History* [*Epochen der deutschen Geschichte*] that, “The German Volk is not natural, but a unity stemming from a historic process.”

<sup>46</sup> However, this must never serve as a pretext for nationalism to avoid concrete political questions. Georg Quabbe, the author of the only true authoritative monarchist-conservative book in Germany alongside the works of Hans Blüher<sup>\*\*</sup>, once rightly said (*The Last Reich: Nature and Change of a Utopia* [*Das letzte Reich: Wesen und Wandel der Utopie*], Felix Meiner, Leipzig): “To feel like a German is a very good thing, but if you want to teach that feeling to sixty-million people you do so not by looking deeply into their eyes, but by expressing oneself clearly – and if the political spirit of our nation is to appear, it won’t be conjured up with table-tapping.” Evading political demands with references to ‘bipolarity’ is nothing more than table-tapping<sup>††</sup>.

Objective but in themselves substantiated comparisons demonstrate that: today the revolutionary-left groups of the class-conscious proletariat, including Marxist and core but non-Marxist liberal outsiders like Hiller, are following the same path as the national-revolutionary movement in the anti-capitalist, anti-fascist front-line.

It is in the goals for tomorrow where opinions divide. The goal of a 'higher unity' of mankind where the idea of the state and the concept of sovereignty are called into question is juxtaposed on the one hand against the concept of a community of nationally-separate, independent, free socialist peoples on the other. A concept where the socialist nation is regarded as a nationally-sovereign form of life, unable to negate basic political principles (the friend-enemy-principle) which, as a consequence, makes the fiction of 'eternal peace' appear totally implausible. A concept where in the socialist state an individual's expectations of happiness are conditional upon national and state demands. Where the universal, self-consuming nature of German nation-building will be tamed through the polarity of the Prussian principles of militant state life (to be Prussian is a matter of will, not of birth certificates). Where the nationalism of the cell of the Volk, the family, the basis of the state, provides the *Bund* of men who make history.

We cannot accept what Engels wrote to Bebel<sup>††</sup> in the 1875 'programme letter': "Now, since the state is merely a transitional institution of which use is made in the struggle, in the revolution, to keep down one's enemies by force, it is utter nonsense to speak of a free people's state; so long as the proletariat still makes use of the state, it makes use of it not for the purpose of freedom, but for the suppression of its enemies, and as soon as there can be any discussion of freedom, the state as such ceases to exist!"

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### *Translator's Notes*

\* Auguste Marie Joseph Jean Léon Jaurès was the first leader of the French Socialist Party and a major figure in the history of French Social-Democracy. He was assassinated in 1914 for his anti-war policies.

† A reference to Ernst Jünger's book *Adventurous Heart*, mentioned by Paetel in the previous chapter. For Jünger the 'magical zero-point' [*Magische Nullpunkt*] was absolute chaos, that point of heightened disorder and socio-political collapse from which a new order of adventure and human greatness would emerge.

‡ Paul Anton de Lagarde was a 19<sup>th</sup> century German theologian and orientalist. Lagarde had a strong völkisch orientation, with his writings focused primarily on subjects relating to nation, faith, and anti-Semitism. In particular he advocated a racially homogeneous Greater Germany, united under a 'purified' Germanic Christianity shorn of all Jewish elements. Lagarde's writings were fairly popular within German-speaking territories from his death in 1891 until the end of WWII – like Adam Müller, he is generally considered to have provided some of the philosophical foundations on which National Socialist theory was later built.

§ Erik Jan Hanussen was a German-Jewish con-man who made a career presenting himself to the public as a Danish clairvoyant and occultist. He had some apparent ties to senior figures in the NSDAP, although his exact relationship with National Socialism (and with Hitler in particular) tends to be sensationalized by modern popular histories. Hanussen was murdered in 1933; the SA is generally considered responsible for his death.

Joseph Weissenberg was a German religious reformer and spiritual healer who claimed to experience visions of angels and of Christ, and who built up a following through faith-healing and demonstrations of other miraculous acts. He founded his own evangelical church and a religious settlement in Brandenburg based on his ideas, the 'Peace City'. Weissenberg and his religion were tabloid fodder throughout the Weimar and National Socialist eras, and he experienced harassment from the NS-state – his church was banned and Weissenberg himself briefly jailed. Weissenberg died of natural causes in 1941, but his Johannische Church was refounded after the War and is still active in Germany.

\*\* Georg Quabbe, a lawyer and writer, was one of the more moderate conservative-revolutionary philosophers. A member of the bourgeois-nationalist DNVP, Quabbe represented a more ‘liberal’ strain of national-revolutionary thought than others in the movement, rejecting both racialism and all aspects of *völkisch* thought, while still maintaining a deep, spiritual commitment to the principles of anti-materialist conservatism and elitism. His book *Tar a Ri* (“Tar a Ri” was said to be an ancient Irish expression meaning “Come, oh King!” – allegedly the source of the word ‘Tory’) was one of the most celebrated works of conservative-revolutionary literature at the time, exhibiting both philosophical insights and a wry sense of humor.

Hans Blüher was also a prominent conservative-revolutionary writer and philosopher, although Blüher’s focus was largely centered on sexuality, morality, and the *Wandervogel* movement. Blüher was a staunch monarchist, a man who preferred elitism and aristocracy to democratic principles, and like Quabbe he was another conservative-oriented thinker who – despite his influences on National Socialism – came to have deep distaste for the NSDAP. In early life a nihilistic atheist, Blüher later moved towards the Evangelical Church

†† ‘*Table-tapping*’ – ‘*Tischrücken*’ in German. A form of séance in which participants would gather round a table with their hands resting upon it. As the table began to tilt in one direction or another under the supposed guidance of a spiritual presence, the participants would discern from its movements a message from the spirit world.

‡‡ The ‘programme letter’ refers to a piece of correspondence which Engels sent to August Bebel (a leading German socialist of the period) in March 1875. The letter could be seen as a ‘prequel’ to Marx’s *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, which was published two months later – both largely concern themselves with the same subject, namely criticising the proposed party programme of the nascent Social-Democratic Party of Germany. The section of the letter quoted by Paetel deals specifically with Ferdinand Lassalle’s ideals. Lassalle, a German-Jewish socialist and a highly influential figure within the Social-Democratic movement, is generally regarded as one of the fathers of the concept of ‘state socialism’. Unlike Marx, who saw the state as a structure existing purely to preserve class stratification, Lassalle believed that the state was essentially ‘neutral’ and could serve as a powerful tool for social reform if placed into the right hands – such as those of the workers.

# Marxism and the National Question

That Lenin in any event saw this as a future goal is inarguable. He expressed it clearly and unambiguously: “It is with pride that we can say: at the First Congress we were in fact merely propagandists; we were only proclaiming our fundamental ideas among the world’s proletariat; we only issued the call to fight; we were merely asking where the people were who were capable of taking this path. Now the advanced proletariat is everywhere. Everywhere there is, albeit often poorly organized, a proletarian army, and if our international comrades will now help us to organize a united army, then nothing will prevent us from accomplishing our task. That task is the world proletarian revolution, the creation of a world Soviet republic.”<sup>47</sup>

Trotsky, too, in his pamphlet “Against National Communism” clearly puts forward the slogan of the “United Soviet States of Europe”.

Or, as Lenin puts it: “The socialist movement cannot triumph within the old, national framework. It creates new, higher forms of human coexistence, in which the legitimate needs and progressive aspirations of the working masses of each nationality will, for the first time, be satisfied through international unity, provided existing national partitions are eliminated.”<sup>48</sup>

Lenin further says: “In the era of imperialism, there can be no other salvation for the majority of the world’s nations than through revolutionary actions undertaken by the proletariat of the Great Powers, spreading beyond the bounds of nationality, smashing those boundaries, and overthrowing the international bourgeoisie. If this overthrow does not occur, the Great Powers will continue to exist, i.e. the oppression of nine-tenths of all nations in the world will remain. But if the bourgeoisie’s fall does occur, it will enormously accelerate the downfall of each and every national partition...”<sup>49</sup>

In the Sessions of the 16<sup>th</sup> Congress (1930, June/July), Stalin expressed himself unequivocally on the issue of the future of national languages:

“But as far as the future prospects of national cultures and national languages are concerned, I have always been and will always remain of Leninist opinion that, at the time of socialism’s victory on a world scale where socialism will

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<sup>47</sup> “The International Situation and the Task of the Communist International”, speech at the 1<sup>st</sup> session of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Congress of the Comintern, Leningrad, 19<sup>th</sup> July 1920.

<sup>48</sup> “The Position and Tasks of the Socialist International”, *Sozialdemokrat* no. 33, 1/11/14.

<sup>49</sup> “The Main German Opportunist Work on the War” (Eduard David, *Social-Democracy in the World War [Die Sozialdemokratie im Weltkrieg]*), written in May-June 1915, first published in *Pravda* no. 469 on 27/7/1924.

infuse and strengthen the way of life, national languages must merge into one common tongue; although this tongue will neither be Great-Russian nor German, but something new.”

In contrast, a line of dialectical idealism can be drawn from Fichte through Hegel to von Ranke\* :

“The relationship of the individual to the Spirit of the people [*Volksggeist*] is that he appropriates this substantial existence, that this becomes his character and ability, that he may be something. For he finds the being of his own Volk as a wide, established, firm world before him, with which he has to incorporate himself.” (from Hegel’s *Lectures*). Or as Hegel formulated in his *Foundations of the Philosophy of Right*:

“The march of God in the world, that is what the state is; its reason is power, actualized as will. In considering the Idea of the state we must not have our eyes on particular states, nor particular institutions; instead one must consider the Idea, this actual God, by itself.” And Leopold von Ranke (*Political Dialogues*) states that:

“All the states in the world that count for something are suffused with their own special tendencies. It would be ridiculous to interpret them as little more than protection agencies for individuals who’ve banded together to protect their private property, for example. On the contrary, those tendencies are of a spiritual nature, and the character of all their fellow-citizens is thereby determined, indelibly imprinted upon them.”

Moeller van den Bruck refers to this avowal in his *The Eternal Reich* [*“Das ewige Reich”*]: “Every Volk embodies a special thought that belongs to it, just as it itself is an indivisible whole belonging to itself. It is born with this thought. With this thought it breaks away from the bosom of race and earth and hurls itself into historical space.”

But Lenin quite clearly says the opposite in his articles on “The National Question”:

“Marxism is irreconcilable with nationalism, be it even the fairest, purest, most civilized brand of nationalism. Marxism substitutes internationalism in place of all forms of nationalism, the amalgamation of nations into a higher unity, a unity that is growing before our eyes with every mile of railway line built, with every international trust, and with every workers’ association formed (an association that is international in its economic activities as well as in its ideas and aspirations).

“The proletariat cannot support any consolidation of nationalism; on the contrary, it supports everything that hastens the abolition of national differences and the removal of national barriers, everything that makes the ties between nationalities closer and closer, everything that leads to the merging of nations.”<sup>50</sup>

Against these hypotheses, which as predictions are, of course, based on faith rather than knowledge, we position another:

Assuming the Marxist thesis to be correct that being determines consciousness (more likely, there may be interplay between the two<sup>51</sup>), we are of the belief that a new socialist being will also shape a new consciousness, insofar as that sense of attachment to the values of homeland, soil, and Volk (absent from the capitalist being) will restore itself, and of itself restore a strengthening of the national character – but the drive towards assimilation, towards a withering away, will never arise. On the contrary, the outcome instead will be an ever-growing awareness of national distinctiveness, an ever-growing involvement in the German historical tradition, an ever-growing consciousness of one’s own formative principles, i.e. the will to live as a sovereign, socialist nation.

It is however but a simple dilettantism of Otto Strasser’s, not much improved by its backwards-looking pathos, when he always reduces the debate with Marxism in his excitable ‘disputations’ down to the set formula:

“We and you want socialism! But the path is different. You want it on an international basis, we on a national one! The first is impossible because of every country’s different economic maturity, and because experience shows that the Comintern has achieved nothing.”

Strasser, if he were to read Marxist writings, would find that sentiment far better expressed in them, such as in the “Programme of the 6<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the Communist International” (46<sup>th</sup> Session, from 1<sup>st</sup> September 1928):

“Unequal economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. It is exacerbated even more acutely in the epoch of imperialism, hence it follows that the international proletarian revolution cannot be conceived as a single event occurring simultaneously world-wide. At first socialism may be victorious in a few, or even in a single country alone. But every such proletarian victory broadens the basis of the world revolution and consequently further intensifies the general crisis of capitalism. The capitalist

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<sup>50</sup> Compare Grosse’s “National-Bolshevism”, in *Socialist Nation* 1-2, volume 1.

<sup>51</sup> As is admitted, for example, by the Young Socialist ‘New-Marxist’ Eduard Heimann<sup>†</sup> in *Capitalism and Socialism* [“*Kapitalismus und Sozialismus*”], (Protte, Potsdam).

system in this way approaches its final collapse. The dictatorship of finance capital breaks apart.”

The second of Strasser’s claims is not proven in all instances, the Russian Revolution being based for example on the here-denied ‘international’ way. So there is no split between the fronts at all: There is nothing contradictory in the way nationalist socialism<sup>‡</sup> can be quite international, working together with all those other forces seeking to take down the same adversary.

The final goal, however, is achieved by separation.

That Marxism rejects the socialist nation is proclaimed by Lenin: “The idea of the juridical separation of nations from one another (the so-called ‘national-cultural autonomy’ of Bauer and Renner<sup>§</sup>) is a reactionary idea.”<sup>52</sup>

This is the same goal – whereby the different nature of the current practise of Russia’s nationality-policy is by no means misunderstood – as Trotsky describes:

“Marxism takes its point of departure from the world economy, not as a sum of national parts but as a mighty and independent reality created by the international division of labor and the world market, and which in the present epoch holds sway over the national markets.

“The productive forces of capitalist society have long outgrown the national powers. The imperialist war was an expression of this fact. Compared to capitalist society, socialist society must represent a higher stage in respect to technique of production. To aim at building a nationally isolated socialist society means, in spite of all passing successes, to pull back the forces of production even as compared with capitalism.

“Attempting to realize – independent of the geographical, cultural, and historical conditions of the country’s development, which constitutes a part of the world unity – a self-contained proportionality of all branches of the economy within a national framework means pursuing a reactionary utopia.”<sup>53</sup>

But Nationalist Communism (before Marx, incidentally, a man in the French Revolution had already put forward entirely communist demands for the sake of the nation: Fouché in the Lyons “Instructions”) \*\* knows that with this goal a *Fata Morgana*<sup>††</sup> is placed before the German people, knows that it can only mean:

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<sup>52</sup> *Socialism and War*, August 1915.

<sup>53</sup> *The Permanent Revolution*, Wilmersdorf, 1930.

Communism? – Yes! – But as a German duty of order, within the boundaries of the nation. That is what calls us, not the world economy.

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### *Translator's Notes*

\* Johann Gottlieb Fichte (b. 1762, d.1814) was a philosopher of the idealist school. Fichte, a German cultural-nationalist, was an early advocate of a closed, autarchic, self-contained economic system, a kind of planned corporatism in which production and trade would be supervised by the state. His ideas provided later inspiration to the National Socialists, as did those of Leopold von Ranke (b. 1795, d.1886). A historian and one of the founders of modern historiography, Ranke saw history as an interplay between states rather than economic forces, with a transcendent nationalist spirit in large part guiding and determining the actions of states and their significant actors. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (b. 1770, d. 1831) was also a German idealist, one of the most well-known and influential philosophers in history.

† Eduard Heimann was a Jewish-German economist and social-scientist, as well as a member of the ‘*Hofgeismarer-Kreis*’, a nationalistically-oriented Social-Democratic intellectual circle. Heimann’s roots were in the Youth Movement, and he had during the Great War published articles in support of the ‘War Socialists’ (‘*Kriegssozialisten*’), the pro-War wing of the Social-Democratic Party which saw in WWI a revolutionary opportunity to develop socialism in Germany. As a member of the Hofgeismarer-circle, Heimann – unusually for a Jew – advocated the merging of socialism with völkisch ideals, arguing that, “...socialism is only possible as a community of a Volk that feels as a Volk, just as Volk is unthinkable in terms of class, but only in terms of socialist organization.” He was also a proponent of a form of market socialism, and his adopted Christian faith provided some of the inspiration for his passion for social reform. Heimann emigrated from Germany in 1933 and did not return until after the Second World War. (For source of quote see: Steven Vogt’s “Strange Encounters: Social Democracy and Radical Nationalism in Weimar Germany”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 45(2), pp. 253-281)

‡ ‘*Nationalist socialism*’ – In similar fashion to his writing in the chapter “The Fascist Mistake”, Paetel here very deliberately uses the expression ‘*nationalistische Sozialismus*’ (‘nationalist socialism’) instead of ‘*Nationalsozialismus*’, the name for the formal ideology of the NSDAP. His choice of words is intended to make clear to the reader that the nationalist socialism he advocates for is not related to that of Hitler’s party.

§ Otto Bauer and Karl Renner were leading members of the Social-Democratic Workers’ Party of Austria (*Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei Österreichs*, SDAPÖ) as well as representatives of different wings of the ‘Austromarxist’ tendency which dominated that party. The Austrian Republic after WWI had inherited some of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire’s ethnic diaspora, making the resolution of the ‘national question’ a significant issue to the Austrian Social-Democrats, who in the pre-War years had experienced a number of splits and intra-party tensions over the issue of ethnic relations. Bauer’s theory was that capitalism’s allegedly deleterious and oppressive effects were arousing the national consciousness of minority ethnic groups, inspiring them into seeking national autonomy for themselves. Both he and Renner believed this process would develop into a supra-national socialist federation along ethno-linguistic lines – sovereign states divided by nationality, yet working together in the cause of proletarian internationalism.

\*\* Joseph Fouché was a politician in the French Revolution, notable for his fanatical anti-Christian sentiment, his enthusiasm for mass executions, and his revolutionary approach to morality: “Everything is permissible to those who are working for the revolution.” His 1793 pamphlet “Instruction de Lyon” is a very early example of a communist manifesto, predating those produced by Karl Marx or Jorge Buechner. It is a remarkably radical document, demanding even the surrender of personal property to the revolutionary “defenders of the nation”.

†† A ‘*Fata Morgana*’ is a term used in multiple languages, including English and German, to denote a complex mirage or illusion, something that confuses or tricks the eye – in other words, something that appears to be one thing, while actually being another. The term is Italian in origin (meaning ‘Morgana the Fairy’) and named for Morgan le Fey, the Arthurian enchantress.

# Rural Revolution?

The new nationalism, born in the hearts of those who no longer have any connection to the bourgeois lifestyle out of clear recognition that no political dynamism can be expected from it, is beginning today to turn its hopeful gaze over the forces of the revolution towards the Landvolk\* movement – that from there, where the strength and substance of the German people are still rooted, tomorrow shall be built.

And a romanticism begins to unfold which, nourished by the myth of the black flags<sup>†</sup>, nourished by the legendary myth of the name Claus Heim<sup>‡</sup>, disdainfully turns itself away from the uprooted metropolitan masses, disdainfully turns itself away from the materialistic slogans of the proletariat, believing in the new rebirth of völkisch life from the soil, and reckoning that it can dispense with worker, city, and asphalt.

But that perspective completely overlooks that the driving forces behind the will to resist, especially in the case of the peasantry and the Landvolk's every attempt at self-help, are actually in the end derived solely from the personal plight of the individuals in question.

There, where peace is driven from the farmyard, the lease collected under compulsion, the farmer reaches for the scythe and drubs the bailiffs from the yard. There, where the Jew fleeces the individual, völkisch self-assertiveness awakens.

It is in large part the same misery that also unites the proletarian under the revolutionary banners. His will, too, that things should be different, better, cannot be separated from the misery that preys on his mind. But there is something more there which the peasants' resistance, wherever it is organized, is still missing today, but which has left the worker a fifty year worker's movement in his blood: a sense of mission. When the '*Internationale*' begins to sound amidst the march of the metropolitan columns, then the hard-driven prole [*Prolet*] feels within himself the burning desire that he may someday fare better, the dogged certainty that he himself is the bearer of a historical trend, a member of a history-shaping force. The peasant, however, is – still today – revolutionary only out of hardship, not out of sense of mission. The battle against the revolution, therefore, will be made within the metropolis.

But certainly never against the peasants. A 'white ring' of the country, under fascist flags, would be the starvation of the revolutionized city<sup>§</sup>.

The object therefore is to procure the peasants as the second wave of the revolution – and also, of course, to interest them economically.

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### *Translator's Notes*

\* The '*Landvolkbewegung*', or 'Rural Peoples' Movement', constituted a loosely-organized revolutionary movement among the peasant farmers of Schleswig-Holstein, the northern-most German province. Under the banner of the Landvolk movement, the region's peasantry – motivated by a shared völkisch-nationalist, anti-republican, anti-capitalist ideology – banded together in the midst of Germany's interwar economic hardship to fight back against what they perceived as an alien, unappreciative, uncaring state apparatus. Runaway inflation and the republican government's opening up of German borders to foreign agricultural imports, among other perceived problems, led in the late '20s to a volatile campaign of civil disobedience by the Landvolk. What started with a coordinated refusal by farmers to pay taxes soon evolved into forms of organized, boisterous protest against police and officials – and from there eventually progressed to terrorism, most notoriously a string of explosives attacks against government buildings. Many communist and nationalist activists moved to the province in the '28-'33 period to aid the Landvolk in their revolutionary resistance against the Weimar system – both the 'far-left' and the 'far-right' viewed the peasants' struggle as a huge opportunity for their respective causes, and Schleswig-Holstein became a hotbed of radicalism as a result. I have chosen to leave the term 'Landvolk' untranslated in the text, since it is commonly used in English histories of the movement.

† Black flags were very popular as symbols of German resistance during the Weimar period. Initially flown on occasions where occupying Entente forces or the republican government had banned the imperial colors, or as a symbol of mourning protest against the Versailles Treaty, they were swiftly adopted by Freikorps brigades and later by political paramilitaries (such as the Wehrwolfbund) as well as by more moderate nationalist youth groups. The Landvolk also flew a black flag, which is what Paetel is referring to, although adorned with a white plough and red sword (thus completing the old Imperial colors). The black flag could be seen as the nationalist equivalent of the socialist red flag, a symbol of bitter resistance against Germany's current position, as demonstrated by Moeller van den Bruck in his book *The Third Reich*: "Over Germany, today only one flag is flying, the token of mourning and the symbol of our life: only one flag which tolerates no colour near it and robs the people who move below its sable folds of all their joy in merry pennons and in gaudy standards: only the black flag of need, humiliation and an utter bitterness... a banner of revolt for Germans who are resolved to fling back deceit in the teeth of the deceiver, to rescue their nation and to preserve their Empire."

‡ Claus Heim the 'peasant-general' was, along with Wilhelm Hamkens, one of the leaders of the Landvolk movement. Highly-respected by both the peasants and the political revolutionaries, Heim by the end of the Weimar era had attained an almost legendary stature among radicals of all stripes. Heim was associated with more revolutionary, terroristic tactics than the slightly more moderate Hamkens, although both indulged in radicalism, and both were jailed at times for their anti-state, pro-peasant activism. After his final release from prison in 1932, Heim returned to farming and refused any involvement in the National Socialist movement, which he found distasteful. He lived until 1968.

§ The 'white ring' here is a reference to the White Army of the Russian Civil War. The color white was often employed by communists as a symbol to indicate counter-revolutionary tendencies, in contrast to the nobler intentions of the 'Reds'.

# The Peasant Question in Germany

National Communism cannot consider preaching a 'reformed National Socialism', but nor can it consider preaching a reformed Marxism. The suggestions that nationalism offers on the subject of the peasant question are only in regards to the necessity of not destroying the eternal category of the soil-bound peasant; never can they undermine socialist economic planning.

But Dr. Rosikat<sup>54</sup> is right when he states\*:

"The German peasant thinks not at all of voluntarily relinquishing his self-sufficient economy. His ideal is not like the proletarian's: self-abolition as a social stratum. On the contrary, his is: autonomy at any price! The advantages that communism promises him hold no selling power over his desire to work independently on his own soil.

"The communists like to refer to Russia. There the peasants followed Bolshevism, so why not also one day in Germany? To answer, I may be permitted to point to the following differences:

"1. In Russia the peasantry has been won by an enormous gift of land. In Germany this gift can only turn out poorly. (Compare the "Programme of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International", IV, 8, sec. 4).

"2. In Russia the peasantry did not know – in contrast to today's Germans – that this gift was only of a provisional nature.

"3. Russia under communism remains, in contrast to Germany, agriculturally self-sufficient. Its farming as such is not endangered.

"But is the peasantry not in any case doomed to be merged into large-scale enterprises because they are technically superior?

"Answer: Not in Germany. The sheer superiority of large farms can really only be demonstrated in extensive grain-producing and livestock-farming areas (for example, America, Australia, Russia). In the expansive low-mountain areas of Germany they are not at all effective. In the intensively-cultivated German lowlands they are present in areas of arable crops, although not to such an extent that they would not be more than compensated for through the voluntary overtime that the peasant performs in the interest of his own self-sufficiency."

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<sup>54</sup> *Socialist Nation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> vol., issue 8/9.

The peasantry is capable of agreeing to a social order which fulfils the total elimination of capitalist class-rule without necessarily having to sacrifice itself. It can help establish a socialism in which the means of production of all capitalists and large-landowners, in addition to the entire transportation, finance, banking, and wholesale sectors, are socialized; foreign trade is monopolized; and voluntary, state-subsidized cooperatives flourish in the non-capitalist economic sector. The German peasantry is furthermore well on its way to overcoming the liberal conception of property, and to comprehending its right of possession to the soil as the mandate of the nation; it is entitled furthermore to exercise these rights of possession, turning them towards the fulfilment of large-scale tasks. Here an independent development occurs in the peasantry, a progression towards a communal-economic mode of thought, which unfortunately, because it retains the form of the individual economy, is misunderstood by Marxism as reactionary and feudalist.

An order which exhibits the above-mentioned characteristics may justifiably, and without the distortion unfortunately so common today, be described as “socialist”. It means not only the breaking of capitalist class-rule, the eradication of the contradictions between oppressive and oppressed classes, but also the rule of the ideals of Plan and Community – because the working nation holds every commanding height of the economy firmly under its control.

Thus is the small peasant farm, maintained within the framework of the planned economy, cooperatively bound, with second and third farmers’ sons, farm laborers, and settlement-craving city-dwellers on the expropriated estates<sup>†</sup> of the big landowners (alongside state-owned farms, but not collectives<sup>55</sup>, required partly due to the soil properties of the land, as in Russia), the demanded German form of farming enterprise in socialism.

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### *Translator’s Notes*

\* Dr. Erich Rosikat was, before Walter Darré joined the Party in 1930, the NSDAP’s pre-eminent expert on rural issues and its major proponent of rural policy and propaganda. Rosikat was relatively high-ranking within the Party, being the Breslau local leader and the Deputy Gauleiter of Silesia. Closely linked to Otto Strasser, he contributed to Otto’s newspaper *NS-Briefe* and edited Otto’s peasant-oriented journal *Völkische Bauernschaft*. Rosikat left the NSDAP in 1927 and in 1928 began to publicly distance himself from the Party, arguing that Hitler had betrayed its members and was transforming it into a fascist rather than a socialist movement.

† There was an ongoing public debate during the Weimar era over what should be done with the estates of the German aristocrats deposed during the course of the November 1918 revolution. In 1926 a practical attempt at resolving the issue was initiated by the Communist Party, who sponsored a referendum on whether the estates should be expropriated by the state without compensation to the owners. The Social-Democrats and some segments of the bourgeois parties warily offered

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<sup>55</sup> Ludwig Renn in “Russian Travels” [*“Rußlandfahrten”*] (pg. 92):

“The collective economy occurs through the combination of farmland with joint management, while the Soviet economy is established as a ‘grain factory’. The more perfect is the collective economy that arose from the erstwhile large estates, or if it was developed on new territory from the outset, the more similar it will become to the Soviet economy and shall eventually disappear as a special type.”

their support, but the NSDAP's response was more uncertain. The referendum caused some internal conflict within the NSDAP, with radical segments of the Party advocating public backing for the Communist proposal and others (including Hitler) arguing that they should abstain out of fear of jeopardising their middle-class support. The referendum ultimately failed; although there was a majority vote in favour of expropriation, the result was rendered invalid as less than 50% of the population had participated. Despite the failure of the referendum, the idea of expropriation remained a common feature of Communist, National-Bolshevist, and left-NS political programs.

# Council-State or Corporate-State?

The basic demand for the economy in national-revolutionary socialism can only be: All power in the hands of the nation. So too is there the parallel, concrete demand for the state-structure: The state is the sovereign nation, its legislative and executive organs are the mandataries of the Volk.

Which means in consequence: the council-state.

The principle of self-government expressed within it is in no way 'racially-foreign' ["*Volksfremd*"] or typically Russian, rather it is the old 'Germanic democracy'.

Even the German-National politician Martin Spahn\* says about it<sup>56</sup>:

"The council-idea strives to bring spirit and active living back to our völkisch existence [*völkisches Dasein*] once more...

"It is consciously a construction from below. Those who live together and who work together, all who know one another and have common horizons, should lay the foundation of its administration; and only those involved in laying these foundations should afterwards help build the floors and finally may assist in placing the keystone.

"This is what Baron von Stein<sup>†</sup> intended. Through this he promised the beneficial outcome of the Volk's participation in the state."

Elections to the councils (council-assemblies), which take place in an indirect form, staggered from the local council up to the Greater German Council Congress [*Großdeutschen Rätekongreß*], breaking up the parties, forming the administration agencies authorized to the executive – this alone provides a true reflection of the peoples' will [*Volkswillens*], irrespective of distinctions of economic interest.

All working people are eligible to vote. The foundation is the working-district, i.e. the enterprises [*Betriebe*], while for the 'free' middle classes (who in Germany constitute a larger social layer) it is the residential-district. The plural voting system which prevails in Russia to the detriment of the peasants is therefore unfeasible.

The council formations establish special committees (peasant-chambers, worker-chambers) on an occupational basis. All elected delegates in them, the council parliaments, and the executive bodies, are recallable at any time; are each at any

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<sup>56</sup> "From Constitutionalism to the Council-Constitution" [*Vom Konstitutionalismus zur Räteverfassung*"], *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*, vol. 16, issue 5.

time accountable to the forum responsible for their mandate; and have an income which is no higher than that of their previous profession.

In primary elections, the village councils, city councils, and district councils are elected. The process is run by administration agencies. The next highest council-assembly is not directly elected by the primary elector, but comprises delegates of the respective lower council parliaments in each Gau<sup>‡</sup> – which, on the basis of tribal classification, will replace the current dynastic states [*dynastischen Länder*]. The highest formation is the Greater German Council Congress, which fulfils legislative functions and commissions the government.

The Council Constitution, which through its Greater German foundation involves every working German in the fate of the nation, is to be straightforward and logical, without any literary flourishes<sup>§</sup>. As for the bureaucracy being wound up at all, it will be liquidated. The ‘civil servant’ type perishes. The economic interests which hitherto have been fighting one another in the guise of ‘ideological parties’ (the role of syndicates in the parties) will be eliminated from the state body, the organizational apparatus of the parties shattered. (A goal, incidentally, employed by the Young German Order<sup>\*\*</sup> in its own state-building, obscured only by the somewhat romantic terms “neighborhoods”, “cure”, “chapter”.)

An entirely new social body thus arises, that which finally, as a real *volonté générale*<sup>††</sup>, represents the unity of the nation, sprouting from life and its bearers, the generational line of the people, not falsified through party and caste, but tied to the state.

Councils in the sense demonstrated here have already been formed before, in Cromwell’s armed formations. Lenin’s model was above all the Paris Commune. And Gustav Landauer<sup>‡‡</sup> rightly pointed to the old Germanic Thing<sup>§§</sup> as an inspiration.<sup>57</sup>

Today, however, it has become fashionable among many ‘national’ groups to proffer the ‘corporate state’ as the successor to moribund parliamentarism.<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

For that reason an entire ‘universalist worldview’ – of distinctly Catholic characteristics, by the by – has been crafted by Othmar Spann. And yet, just as little as his revolutionary-biological Epigones understood the fact that the organic, inherited Estate of the Middle Ages cannot be replaced today by the occupation, was he able to conjure away or cover up the anti-state thinking contained therein.<sup>†††</sup>

The ‘corporate state’, in being established on the occupations – and thus on the earning interests of its elected representatives – signifies only the perpetuation of

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<sup>57</sup> “The United Republic of Germany and its Constitution” [*Die vereinigte Republik Deutschland und ihre Verfassung*], *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 12<sup>th</sup> April 1919.

‘interest groups’ upon the transformation of the state’s outward form, a new opportunity for making the ‘economy’ the fate of völkisch life. It is conceivable that for some ‘estates’ answers may be found – but it is also certain that no sovereign state policy can be advanced, even if production is functioning; that, above all, the shared public responsibility for the nation will be smothered in a tangled mass of corporate organizations. The state here is, in essence, only a manufacturing company.

From here, too, the problem of leadership acquires no new meaning. Socialism and the council-structure, however, do not want to negate nor destroy leadership, merely to integrate it into service to the whole. Who will lead is whoever works most for the community, whoever works best for them. The possible starting point in the competition for proof of worth and commitment must always be the same; the result will always be different. Corresponding to aptitude and achievement, there will be leaders and led in the future, too. But this designation will provide to them the law of life and qualification, not an arbitrary separation by caste. Even the question of ‘Nordic leadership-substance’ could only be decided like so: through performance for the struggle of the entire Volk. If Nordic blood is indeed the creative, state-building, heroic element in the German Volk, then the revolution undoubtedly clears the way for it to prove its leadership capabilities for itself.

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### *Translator’s Notes*

\* Martin Spahn was a German historian and, at the time of Paetel’s writing, a leading figure within the conservative-nationalist German National People’s Party (DNVP). Both a devout Catholic and fervently völkisch, Spahn had been a Reichstag delegate for the DNVP since 1924, making him, alongside party-leader Alfred Hugenberg, one of the DNVP’s more prominent members. In June 1933 he supported the absorption of the German National Front (*Deutsche National-Front*, the name the DNVP took after it reinvented itself in May 1933 in recognition of the “end of the age of parties”) into the NSDAP, arguing that he could not serve two leaders and that the DNF as an organization had no further use or purpose. Spahn promptly joined the National Socialists, maintaining his Reichstag seat as an NSDAP member until the collapse of the government in 1945.

† Baron von Stein (Henrich Friedrich Karl Reichsfreiherr von und zum Stein) was a Prussian statesman and political reformer. Stein was responsible for the emancipation of the peasantry, as well as for introducing other major reforms to German civil and political life. In addition to his liberation of the rural folk, Stein’s organization of the provincial diets on the basis of the German estates (nobility, landowners, city-dwellers, and peasantry) made him a popular figure with later German corporatists, National Socialists, and national-revolutionaries, who regarded him as a political forerunner.

‡ ‘Gau’ is an old medieval Germanic term for ‘region’, its meaning roughly analogous in terms of its subjective, cultural associations to the English terms ‘shire’ or ‘county’. The idea that the German states then-existent were ‘artificial’, or were inadequate for the needs of a modern German nation due to their historical relationship to the aristocratic dynasties, was fairly commonplace amongst the nationalist and communist movements. Within the nationalist movement the idea of re-organizing the German states along old tribal lines was a popular one, as they were considered more sufficiently ‘Germanic’. The National Socialists themselves structured their Party branches along the lines of ‘Gau’ rather than the existing German states, and later abolished the *Länder* in favour of their Gau system with the 1934 *Law for the Re-organization of the Reich*.

§ ‘...without any literary flourishes’ – In the German this is ‘ohne jede Schreibtischkonstruktion’, which translates literally as ‘without any writing-desk-construction’.

\*\* The Young German Order (*Jungdeutscher Orden*, aka ‘Jungdo’) was a paramilitary organization modelled on the Teutonic Order, drawing some of its inspiration from the *Wandervogel* movement, and representing a national-liberal political stance. It was fairly moderate in comparison to other nationalist paramilitaries, although it at times employed anti-Semitic propaganda and was an advocate for imperial restoration (though under democratic administration rather than a monarchy or dictatorship). In pursuit of its political goals the Jungdo openly involved itself in electoral politics, its membership supportive of the liberal-democratic parties closer to the centre. As Paetel infers, the Jungdo’s own internal

organization was heavily regimented and hierarchical, with members organized into ‘neighbourhoods’ and ‘chapters’, and undergoing a ritual called a ‘cure’ to gain rank – terminology all apparently borrowed from the Teutonic Knights.

‡‡ ‘*Volonté générale*’ – A French philosophical term for ‘the general will’, i.e. the collective will of the people or the masses as a whole.

§§ Gustav Landauer was a Jewish-German anarchist and pacifist, whose body of work dealt largely with anarchism and its relationship to individualism, mysticism, Buddhism, and metaphysical concepts. He was for a brief period active as a minister in the short-lived Soviet Republic in Bavaria, and was murdered by Freikorps troopers after the republic was overthrown.

\*\*\* A ‘*Thing*’ is an old Germanic word for a governing assembly where free men would gather to make collective decisions as equals. Things were present in all Nordic societies in one form or another (including Greenland and the British Isles) and are generally considered to be an early, prototypical form of later European democratic structures.

††† The German word for ‘corporate state’ is ‘*Ständestaat*’, lit. ‘estates state’. The German term makes direct reference to the old ‘Estates of the Realm’ which, as the major sectors of socio-economic life within European feudal society, formed the basis for pre-Enlightenment political and economic organization. Typically the four Estates constituted the nobility, clergy, peasants, and burghers, although there were regional variations. The winding historical-intellectual link between 20<sup>th</sup>-century corporatist ideology and earlier medieval/feudalist ideals (occupational franchise, the guild system, maintenance of social & political stability through economic stratification, etc.) is thus far clearer in the German language than it is in English.

††† Othmar Spann was a German-Austrian economist and academic and one of the most famous theorists of the corporate state outside of the Mediterranean region. His ideas were widely-influential in German-speaking areas, with significant support stemming from the Austrian *Heimwehr*, the Austrian-oriented wing of the *Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront*, and the corporatist wing of the NSDAP. The “Epigones” Pactel refers to (“Epigones” is a Greek-derived term defined as an ‘unimpressive successor or follower of a greater figure’, an ‘inferior imitator’) is likely a jab at these groups, and possibly also at the *Spannkreis*, the circle of intellectuals in Austria inspired by, and promoted by, Spann.

# Socialism

We recapitulate:

We are socialists.

That means:

At the moment of revolution, we demand:

1. Nationalization of land and soil.  
Distribution of the large estates. All land-ownership in the future will be the mandate of the nation.
2. Transfer of all large-scale and medium-scale enterprises of industry, banking, department stores, mineral resources, mining, and transportation into the hands of the Volk.
3. State-planned economy with a monopoly of foreign trade.
4. Weapons in the hands of the whole: establishment of a Peoples' Militia [*Volksheeres*].

Any doctrines of profit-sharing and private management which guarantee, even partially, the private ownership of the means of production and the commodity character of land, are semi-fascist diversionary manoeuvres.

A planned economy like that demanded by Werner Sombart\* in his *Future of Capitalism* [*Zukunft des Kapitalismus*], which envisages "private property and social property, private economy and social economy", is one of the many half-measures desired today, for all intents and purposes, only as a last resort – including by the *Tat*† people.

This includes primarily Strasser's 'German Socialism' – but also for example the 'Possedism' of the Wehrwolf.‡

The fundamental law of true nationalist socialism remains: the economy in the hands of the nation.

This law applies as much to industrial enterprise as to the question of property, but above all, however, does it serve as justification for autarchy and the monopoly over foreign trade.

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### *Translator's Notes*

\* Werner Sombart was a prominent German Marxist, economist, and social scientist responsible for a number of influential theoretical works on capitalism. From the time of WWI onwards Sombart began to grow more and more nationalistically inclined, gradually drifting into the orbit of the Conservative Revolutionary intellectuals. By 1933 he had officially embraced National Socialism and become a supporter of the NSDAP, although his personal brand of National Socialism was never entirely orthodox. His 1934 work *Deutscher Sozialismus* ('*German Socialism*') attempted to provide National Socialism with a solid philosophical, metaphysical foundation, although its contents (which contains unreserved praise of both Otto Strasser and Hans Zehrer, as well as a fairly moderate approach to the 'Jewish question') suggests a line of thinking guided more by intellectual flexibility than by rigid dogmatism. Sombart lived relatively comfortably in the Third Reich, although he encountered difficulties with the state at times. He died in 1941.

† *Die Tat* ('*The Deed*') was probably Germany's most prominent nationalist intellectual journal. Founded in 1909 as a non-sectarian publication for the discussion of theological concepts, by 1929 it was being edited by national-revolutionary intellectual Hans Zehrer and its circle of contributors (the '*Tatkreis*', or Tat-circle) were well-known in the German radical milieu for their advocacy of elitism and autarchy, their critiques of democracy and capitalism, and their mixed feelings towards the National Socialist movement.

‡ The Wehrwolf was a nationalist paramilitary founded in 1923 by teacher and journalist Fritz Kloppe, originally as a splinter-group from the Stahlhelm's youth movement, the Young Stahlhelm ('*Jungstahlhelm*'). Members used as symbols the death's head, the wolfsangel, and the letter 'W', all of which adorned their field-grey uniforms and black flags. The Wehrwolf was both strongly völkisch and more overtly anti-capitalist than other, similar nationalist paramilitaries; it was for a period nominally part of Otto Strasser's 'Black Front' umbrella organization, and its leadership maintained links with the 'right-bolshevist' Freikorps Oberland and to Ernst Niekisch's '*Widerstand-kreis*' (the circle of frequent contributors to Niekisch's journal, *Widerstand*). The Wehrwolf presented its own economic doctrine (devised by Kloppe) as an alternative to both capitalism and socialism: 'Possedism' ('*Possedismus*'), derived from the Latin verb 'possedere' (to possess, to own, sometimes translated as 'Ownerism'). The Wehrwolf and its youth organization, the *Jungwolf*, agreed to be absorbed into the SA and the Hitler Youth in 1933.

# Prussia as a Principle

There is one thing socialism cannot ignore: the reality of Prussia.

There indeed, as both Oswald Spengler and Moeller van den Bruck identified within the 'Prussian style', is the type of state socialism which we have demanded arise within the German territories; it already exists in them in embryonic form. There has that choice for 'We' over 'I', for unity in polarity, already manifested itself (in contrast to the Marxist conception of society) a creative self-existence, grounded in blood and steel – and experienced as a demand, not as some special opportunity.

Of course, one must keep in mind that there is another side to these things: it is no coincidence that the synthesis became 'Prussianism and Socialism'<sup>\*</sup>, e.g. Spengler's glorification of the 'human carnivore'. Even the Prussian principle is today in danger of being misused.

Only Prussia is historically capable, seeing itself always as the correlate of the Eternal German; only Prussia, which incorporates the old Junker tradition, meets the demands of Baron von Stein to involve the Volk in the responsibility of the state.

Never, however, should the veneration of that Old Prussianism which is popular in some circles – such as we see reflected in the writings of A. Ludwig von der Marwitz<sup>58</sup>, with their unbelievable invective towards the 'youth leagues', their contempt for the liberation of the peasants, for self-government reforms, and even for the 'Jacobins' of 1813<sup>†</sup> – be answered with anything other than a declaration of war. Not such transitory forms of Prussian statehood, unconditional antagonisms from a period of upheaval, but instead the plea to be a 'servant of the state', as lived and embodied by Frederick II – that is the formative power that cannot be renounced and which instead forms the basis of state power, as indeed Russia has well taken note of. That Prussia of which the knightly orders dreamed when they erected the massive battlements of Marienburg<sup>‡</sup> – and one must be clear about this, too – is another source of will, and one that is unacceptable if one is not ready to accept the foundation of faith behind the vows which shaped the people, nature, and histories of the Teutonic Knights and determined the direction of their will: Christianity.

The unifying rationale for today's 'heathen' idea of the state is not to be drawn from Hermann von Salza<sup>§</sup>, nor from Ludwig von der Marwitz; only from the Potsdam of Frederick the Great can one make the leap over the philosophers of Hegel's total state and his Marxist inversion to reach the socialist statehood of tomorrow.

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<sup>58</sup> "Prussian Nobility" [*"Preußischer Adel"*], by Korn, Breslau.

For this nationalism is unchristian [*unchristliche*], then and now. The personal fate of the Prussian officer Trenck\*\* shows what it's all about: Personally plunged by the King into the most painful depths, this former favorite of the King and beloved of the King's sister, after nine years of inhuman suffering in the casemates of Magdeburg, dedicated at the end of a ruined existence his life's confession to "the spirit of Frederick the Unique."

This clearly illustrates that in Prussia no oath is subject to recall.

Only through this ethos, which uniquely and irrevocably is able to bind the Germans of tomorrow to the socialist nation, will Germany live. And therefore:

Prussia must be.

Prussia as an attitude.

Prussia as a principle.

Prussia as a spiritual reality.

As Moeller van den Bruck put it:<sup>59</sup>

"Germany cannot do without Prussia, because it cannot do without Prussianism.

"Prussianism, that is the will to the state and the recognition that historical life is a political life in which we must act as a political people."

It goes without saying, of course, that this is not about the country of Prussia – which will have to be subordinated to the organic, decentralized unity-concept through the council-structure of the tribal regions (the ancestral heartland of Prussia indeed did not establish a biologically distinct but historically existent 'new tribal concept') – but Prussia's impulse of will. One could also say that it is about Germany's 'Prussianization'.

Socialism will transform German 'citizens' into appendages of the German state; the contradictions between Nation, Volk, and State will be abolished by it and refashioned into a new synthesis.

It is obvious that the old medieval 'imperial idea' [*Reichsidee*] of the supranational Christian ruler, which the German emperor still embodies à la Dante<sup>††</sup>, has nothing to do with this. Its end-goal, too, the "pacification of the world by the sceptre-bearer of the Imperium", has faded away into irrelevance. Socialist Germany is of a different essence entirely.

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<sup>59</sup> "The Prussian Style" [*Der Preußische Stil*], Piper & Co. Publishers, Munich.

And yet it represents the Germans all the same.

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### *Translator's Notes*

\* A clear reference to Spengler's work *Prussianism and Socialism*, which also argued for a synthesis of socialism with Prussian ideals, although from a more conservative standpoint than that advocated by Paetel.

† Friedrich August Ludwig von der Marwitz was a Prussian general, politician, and vociferous political opponent of Baron von Stein. His heart lay with the old Prussian nobility, which he saw as the basis of the Prussian state – as a result he was ardently opposed to the wide-ranging political reforms sponsored by Stein, which (while still aiming to preserve Prussian tradition and an anti-Enlightenment sentiment) broke up some of the state's absolutist structures, reduced the powers of the nobility, and made citizens theoretically equal before the law. "The 'Jacobins' of 1813" is a reference to a number of military reforms implemented in that year, specifically the abolition of nobility privilege (i.e. promotion based on background rather than ability) and the introduction of compulsory military service (conscription). Marwitz was opposed to these changes and was fond of calling their backers 'Jacobins' in reference to their supposed radicalism.

‡ The 'Ordensburg Marienburg', today located in Poland, is the world's largest castle, a massive medieval fortress originally built by the Teutonic Knights sometime around 1300.

§ Hermann von Salza was the leader of the Teutonic Order between 1210-1239. He was a confidante of Emperor Frederick II and acted as a diplomatic intermediary between the Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire. His expansion of the Teutonic Order into the areas north of the Vistula river, a crusade to force by the sword the conversion of the region's pagans, laid the foundations for the establishment of what eventually became Prussia. Paetel here is rejecting the two separate visions of Prussia which he claims Salza and Marwitz represent – one knightly and Christian, the other aristocratic and elitist. Paetel instead suggests that National Bolshevism's Prussian inspiration should be sought in the legacy of Frederick the Great.

\*\* "The Prussian officer Trenck" is Prussian nobleman and writer Friedrich von der Trenck. Trenck, an officer in the armies of Frederick the Great, was imprisoned in 1745 on unclear charges – possibly due to accusations of espionage, possibly due to his alleged infidelity with Frederick's sister, Princess Amalie. Trenck escaped from prison and spent a number of years as a mercenary, until he was captured again in 1753 and sentenced by Frederick to incarceration within Magdeburg Citadel. Trenck spent nine years confined in Magdeburg, bound in chains inside a casemate – a tiny, fortified chamber beneath the ramparts, intended for sheltering stores and archers in times of siege. He was eventually freed due to the intercession of Holy Roman Empress Maria Theresa. In the following years he became a writer and trader in wines, until in 1794 in Paris he was arrested by the French revolutionary government on charges of spying and executed via guillotine. Paetel here is quoting from Trenck's memoirs, written while imprisoned in Magdeburg, which begin with the dedication: "To the spirit of Frederick the Unique, King of Prussia, my Life."

†† Paetel is probably referring to Dante Alighieri's three-volume political treatise *De Monarchia*. Dante's *Monarchia* argued for the separation of Church and State, but also valorized medieval conceptions of the Emperor (partly by way of approving reference to the Holy Roman Emperor) as the source of absolute power and authority and the guarantor of divine order.

# The Class Struggle as a Nationalist Demand

The class struggle is not an invention of the 'Jew Marx.'<sup>60</sup>

It is a fact of daily life, reflecting the labor contract between employer and employee, as well as the functions of press, state, and cultural life.

It is a battle line established by those who are in possession of the economic means of power, imposed on those 'below', who respond with fury. It does not require a moral judgement but instead a stated decision on which side we want to fight.

The class struggle is not some artificial construct. As everywhere in the life of cells, new, young life replaces the old and feeble; so too in the body of the Volk [Volkskörper] is the old leadership class, after fulfilling its function for the community over a certain period, replaced by new forces – usually with violence.

Thus is the class struggle, irrespective of the fact that this process is playing itself out amongst all peoples, a course of events in the life of the Volk [Volksebens], a process of reversal against the leadership forces within a folk-organism.<sup>61</sup> [Volkorganismus].

Just as every previous revolution had its sociological bearer – the clearest example being the 'bourgeois' French Revolution – so too does the revolution in which we are situated. The working class, which is today pounding at the gates of German history, will have to battle out the class struggle with the current holders of the economic resources and instruments of power so that it can have both transferred into the workers' hands at the moment of revolution, thus being ready to declare itself a nation and to replace the old leadership.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Incidentally: The Jewish question cannot be resolved at all without being incorporated into the overall racial question – and not at all in a purely negative fashion. Marx's analysis ("On The Jewish Question") that the entrepreneurial, usurious, exploitative 'Jewish spirit' can be liquidated only at the moment when it is deprived of the basis of the capitalist order is correct. In socialist Germany the Jews will face the decision to emigrate or to productively integrate themselves as a 'national minority' into the process of national construction (settlers, artisans). In völkisch-cultural life, like all minorities, their influence will be weak, represented only by a few men who have demonstrated their pre-eminence; for example, Friedrich Gundolf's work on Goethe, Gustav Landauer's writing on Hölderlin, or Maximilian Harden's *Heads* ["Köpfe"] have proven their authors possible exceptions. In the political arena, like all minorities, they will have the right to vote in and stand for elections to the legislative organs, but not the right to stand for the executive. Rather, they will only be delegable to council meetings in their own cultural representative bodies.

<sup>61</sup> Compare also August Winnig's\* "The Belief in the Proletariat" ["*Der Glaube an das Proletariat*"] and "Liberation" ["*Befreiung*"]. Winnig has in the meantime made it clear for everybody in his book *From Proletariat to Workerdome* ["*Vom Proletariat zum Arbeitertum*"] and with his essays in the Berliner Börsen-Zeitung that he has since moved into the camp of the propertied bourgeoisie.

<sup>62</sup> Even Karl Marx in the "Communist Manifesto" states:

The class struggle is quite clearly grounded in nationalism, and – to make use of a word too often misused by charlatans – absolutely “organically”, as Ernst Krawehl<sup>†</sup> puts it<sup>63</sup>:

“The nation appears to us as a universal collection of divisions that are characterized through their discordant stratification (horizontal-vertical, religions, professions, ideologies, and so on). One of its most significant structural principles is that of horizontally tiered layers, whose higher points are distinguished by attributes not considered suited to the lowly (tax exemption for the clergy, university education for the bourgeoisie, privilege to political offices for the nobility, economic excess for the capitalists). Each of these national strata develops its own special societal customs and mores – yes, they even form their own separate realm of life (proletarians marry only proletarians, nobles only nobles).

“But the entirety of these strata only latently belong to the nation. It is a historical law that, at any time, the nation is represented only by one specific group. Every action by this group, all of which serve only its own interests, are suddenly placed into a different light and maintain the most crucial significance for the entire nation.

“The ratio of stratification, as it presents itself at any given point in time – today, for example – was always based originally on the value and power relationship underlying the stratification’s structure. The group that is in power once incarnated the essence of the nation; it earned its position. Through the biological process, however, the ruling stratum always loses its vitality and its authority to represent the nation more quickly than it does its privileges, while at the same time drawing up new strata from below, to fulfil by itself the destiny of the nation. The ruling stratum has to return to dormancy, it has to become the wood and trunk of the nation, in other words, to go down in history while new cells are formed that assume the function of the life-giving rings. (This analogy seems a good one; it demonstrates that the formation of the wood is as essential as the steady growth of the bark; it also demonstrates the revolutionary act of infusion with fresh sap in spring, of bursting buds, followed by a period of peaceful growth).

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“The Communists have further been reproached with wanting to abolish fatherland, nationality. The workers have no fatherland. One cannot take from them what they do not have. Since the proletariat must first of all conquer political supremacy, elevate itself to a national class, must constitute itself as the nation, it is itself still national, though by no means in the bourgeois sense.” However, when one reads on... Marx writes that later the nation will nonetheless be overcome.

<sup>63</sup> *Socialist Nation*, II/10.

“The lower stratum should on principle demonstrate its strength by infusing itself alone – something which it is dependent on, in most instances. Its fight against the old stratum, which refuses to give up the armchairs of power, is class struggle in the true sense of the term. It embraces all areas of völkisch life: cultural and economic.<sup>64</sup>

“Our present ascendant class, in whose hands lies the destiny of the nation, not only has the ever-present obstacles to overcome (acquiring education, entry into ‘good society’) but is also hindered by a certain objective state of affairs imposed over its young life: capitalism. This sets against every best intention an insurmountable obstacle.

“This class must therefore be given at least the ‘chance’ to prove itself, regardless of whether it proves useful or not; this should go unsaid. This can only be achieved through the elimination of capitalism. Only a new economic system can provide the guarantee for a völkisch life. That is to say that the struggle of the proletariat for those things that are all-encompassing – culture and economy – is in its modus a purely economic one. (Which is not to say that the prospective economy then from itself gives birth to a new culture; no, it only sets free the forces for its potential development.)

“But since capitalism, against which the fight for the proletarian class is directed first and foremost, is superbly held by the sinking bourgeois class (and, conversely, holds fast to the bourgeois class in turn), so is every struggle against the bourgeoisie (against their morality, art, religion, ethics) a struggle against capitalism, and at the same time a struggle for the proletariat. (Which is again not to say that capitalism necessarily conditioned or created this morality, art, religion, or ethics.)

“Through this version of the concept of class and class struggle it is not feasible to see any other outcome than that the proletariat, subsequent to its own time and economic system, is superseded by something new in the struggle. If it is possible to completely eliminate class divisions and bring about new strata which no longer have a class character, then it will be within these new social bodies that the class struggle continues, which is nothing but the

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<sup>64</sup> To legitimize the worker’s claim to power merely as a “Gestalt”, consciously ignoring sociological origin, as Ernst Jünger undertook in his magnificent book *The Worker* (Hanseatische Verlaganstalt), is a visionary and not a political point of view. The ‘new relationship to the elemental’ which separates ‘the Typus’ from the bourgeois says too little about concrete historical tasks.

Quite apart from the fact that, within the framework of the ‘planetary planning’ at the head of which the ‘Typus’ is placed, the nation immediately vanishes.

The Jüngerian portrayal, which is of the highest rank artistically and intellectually, is not a political but a psychological analysis, and therefore not capable of shaping history.

struggle of ascending and descending life – a cycle that will never stop, except when the world finally stops.”

The justification by which every semi-fascist rejects the class struggle is a simple conjuring trick: “The class struggle is the reality of capitalism, the *Volksgemeinschaft* the reality of socialism.” To operate under this statement is nothing more than an intellectual dishonesty. For it is precisely because socialism is supposed to become a reality that the *Volksgemeinschaft* can only be preached as a goal, never as a slogan for whitewashing the prevailing capitalist world as it exists today. To conclude: “We are socialists, hence against the class struggle,” is simply illogical, because one cannot abruptly assign a criterion of ‘tomorrow’ to ‘today’, cannot employ a goal to negate what is existent.

Even the opposing slogan of the 97% used by the ‘Tat-circle’ and the ‘Black Front’ is a fiction<sup>‡</sup>. Even provided that Fried’s<sup>65</sup> wealth and income statistics are correct, these 97% do not possess a shared consciousness<sup>§</sup>. The fight is led by those who want it. Of the statistically ‘disinherited’, as the politics of the day hourly prove, a large part of the 97% willingly defends the 3%. The slogan of the 97% is fantasy, the class struggle is fact.

There are also the comments made by the *Archive for Politics and History*<sup>66</sup> as early as March 1925:

“The fundamental reality of today’s European social order is that the rift, the polarization from which socialist doctrine emanates, no longer passes through the nation’s bourgeois society, but instead runs through world society, through the nations of Europe, indeed it splits the whole world down the middle.

“The proletarian primal experience of bondage and slavery is in today’s Germany the national social experience – or at least it should be.

“Today there is no longer simply a politically free, economically and socially unfree, exploited proletarian class and alongside it an eternally oppositional class of exploitative, privileged property owners; or rather, this antinomy is relative to the world-historical polarization process of which we have been witnesses and victims, i.e. it has become secondary according to the ranked order of historical values.

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<sup>65</sup> Ferdinand Fried, *The End of Capitalism* [“*Das Ende des Kapitalismus*”], Diedrichs, Jena.

<sup>66</sup> A. Salz: “Nationalism and Socialism in Contemporary Germany”. [“*Nationalismus und Sozialismus im heutigen Deutschland.*”]

“Instead there are now proletarianized and non-proletarianized nations, and this in the midst of Europe, which in the course of its long history never before knew this kind of antagonism, and at any rate would not stand for it in the long run.

“The momentous, world-historical document which has established or legalized this new status for Europe is the Versailles ‘Peace Treaty’.

“It is therefore essential to finally raise this new condition into the clarity of consciousness, so it can be made the basis of experience which determines our whole outlook upon the world.”

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### *Translator’s Notes*

\* August Winnig was a German trade-unionist and political writer of the interwar era, a figure well-known for his ideological journey from ‘far-left’ through to ‘far-right’. Initially a union organizer and a Social-Democratic journalist, Winnig during the Great War was a supporter of the ‘War-Socialists’, thus adopting a position at the nationalist end of the Social-Democratic political spectrum. Entering into a number of government posts after the War, in 1920 he was expelled from his offices and his membership of the Social-Democratic Party after expressing public support for the nationalistic Kapp-Putsch. From there Winnig followed a course roughly analogous to that of Ernst Niekisch – first to the Hofgeismarer-circle, then into the nationalist-social-democratic Old Social-Democratic Party of Saxony, until finally settling firmly into the national-revolutionary camp. Although never a member of the NSDAP, Winnig initially welcomed the Hitler regime, and there is evidence that at times the National Socialist government turned to him for advice on industrial issues and worker-state relations. Nonetheless, he grew increasingly sceptical of National Socialism in the 1930s, particularly as he became more and more religious. After the War Winnig joined the West German CDU.

† Ernst Krawehl was a member of Paetel’s Group of Social-Revolutionary Nationalists and a contributor to the GSRN’s journal *Socialist Nation*. The article of Krawehl’s which Paetel extensively excerpts in this chapter was originally published in the *Socialist Nation* of November 1932 (vol. II, issue 10) under the title “The Class Struggle as a Nationalist Demand” [“*Der Klassenkampf als nationalistische Forderung*”] – the same title as this chapter of the Manifesto, which explains the length of the quotation. Some of Krawehl’s ideas are very briefly explored in Louis Dupeux’s book *National-Bolschewismus in Deutschland 1919-1933*, which unfortunately does not yet have an English translation.

‡ “*The slogan of the 97%*” – The idea that, rather than there being a division of socio-economic conflicts along lines of class as identified by Marx, it is instead 97% of the population (including many members of the middle-classes, property-owners, etc.) who are being exploited and divided against one another by the 3% at the top of the economic pyramid. This theory of economic exploitation appears occasionally in nationalist writings from the period; it was intended to extend the ideal of socialism beyond the proletariat, making its observations and demands both applicable and attractive to white-collar workers, public servants, artisans, and small-businessmen. The concept is referenced somewhat obliquely within the 1931 “Manifesto of the Black Front”: “The essence of today’s class system and of parliamentary democracy is that of the people’s artificial stratification based on the power of money, creating a selective system in which profession and vocation are in conflict with each other in 97 out of a hundred cases. This unnatural stratification creates ever-increasing tensions within the organism of the people, who are forced to focus all their energy externally, thus ensuring the inevitability of the condition of the nation’s bondage.”

§ ‘Fried’ refers to Ferdinand Fried, the pseudonym of Ferdinand Friedrich Zimmerman, a journalist and economist who became well-known through his contributions to the national-revolutionary journal *Die Tat* (making him a part of the so-called Tat-circle, ‘*Tatkreis*’). Fried’s writings dealt in large part with the imminent demise of capitalism, which as a radical conservative he welcomed. His most famous work was the book *The End of Capitalism* [“*Das End des Kapitalismus*”]. In it Fried not only critiqued capitalism and outlined the reasons why he believed it would collapse, but also proffered his own ideas on an alternative economic model. Fried’s proposed system was a planned, autarchic economy in which business cartels and trade unions would be subordinated to the state, thus forming part of a vast, interlocking government bureaucracy. Foreign trade would still exist, but would be totally controlled by the state and would be regulated by extremely high tariff barriers. Fried’s economic ideas were regarded as largely synonymous with those of the Tat-circle as a whole. Unlike many other frequent contributors to *Die Tat*, who viewed National Socialism with mixed feelings, Fried made his peace with the NS regime and joined the NSDAP after 1933.

# Versailles

The enemy of revolutionary nationalism remains:

**Versailles!**

There is little we have to say thereof, but always remember: that is the boulder that weighs down upon Germany's freedom.

The path to nationhood,  
The path to socialism,  
The path to revolution,  
leads only through the tearing-up of all treaties and pacts  
from Versailles to Young!

Anyone who betrays this realization by snivelling for revision betrays the German future, betrays the socialist nation of tomorrow.

The path to the sovereign German nation  
leads only through the restoration of Greater Germany, i.e. solely and exclusively  
through the ruins of the system of Versailles!

The Frenchman Jaurès<sup>67</sup> shows us the right response:

“The fatherland is not an idea that has outlived its usefulness; the concept of the fatherland evolves and deepens itself. I have always been convinced that the proletariat in its innermost being cannot accept any doctrine of national renunciation, of national servitude. To revolt against the despotism of kings, against the tyranny of the ruling class, yet let the yoke of conquest and the rule of a foreign militarism be imposed without any resistance, is such a childishly pathetic contradiction that at the first alarm of invasion all forces of instinct and reason would have to be swept away for it to make sense. That the proletarians, who are not liberated from capital by the conqueror, should consent furthermore to be a tributary, is a monstrosity... The reality, however, is this: wherever there is a fatherland, that is, a historical group that is conscious of its unity and continuity, then any attack on the freedom and independence of this fatherland is an assassination attempt against civilization, a relapse into barbarism.”

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<sup>67</sup> Jaurès's "Fatherland and Proletariat", in a reprint from *The New Army* ["*Die Neue Armee*"], Diedrichs, Jena.

# Revolutionary Foreign Policy

The revolutionary-nationalist conception of foreign-policy is therefore clear:

A front against Versailles, which means a front against the West and its eastern and southeastern satellites. Which involves taking up the old slogan of Brockdorff-Rantzau: "Against capitalism and imperialism."\* A slogan for which the words of Moltke<sup>†</sup> cannot hold true: "It is a hard lot to be a patriot in Germany, for one is... forgotten." – Yet he is, nonetheless, the wayfarer of our insurrectionary will.

It means forming a fighting-community with the adversary of the Versailles world: Russia. Only in league with Russia, which as the first socialist world-power will be a natural ally for a socialist Germany, can the German Eastern Question be resolved – which at the same time will determine the existence of Poland.<sup>68</sup>

The same front includes all the oppressed peoples of the Earth [*alle unterdrückten Völker der Erde*]. In place of a colonial policy, the 'League of Oppressed Nations' will be brought under German leadership<sup>‡</sup>.

These are the political frontlines – all while the NSDAP is in racial sympathy with England, full of resentment and romanticism, its anti-Russia policy a capitalistic mercenary attitude, its exclusive Italian agenda suggestive of dogmatic obsession.

So exist the fronts in the world today, created by the class-struggle of nations.

The foreign-policy of a Volk is invariably conditioned in part through that struggle; what the others do or not do is never doctrine – but instead always a question of

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<sup>68</sup> On the question of Poland, compare for example Engels's letter to Marx, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1851: "The more I think about history, the clearer it becomes to me that the Poles are a dissolving nation [*eine nation fondue*], who can only continue to serve a purpose until Russia itself has entered the agrarian revolution. From that moment on Poland will have absolutely no *raison d'être* anymore. The Poles have never done anything but play at idiotic – if daring – pranks. Nor can a single moment be cited when Poland successfully represented progress or did anything of historical significance in comparison with Russia... Fortunately, in the *Rheinischen Zeitung*, we did not assume any positive commitments towards Poland... Conclusion: To remove the Poles in the West, fob them off with promises of Riga and Odessa and, in the event the Russians are to be mobilized, to ally with them and compel the Poles to yield. Every inch of the frontier between Memel and Krakow that we cede to the Poles completely ruins this already miserably weak border militarily, and will leave exposed the entire Baltic coast as far as Stettin [*Szczecin*]."

- Riazanov, p. 184, "Karl Marx and Engels on the Polish Question" [*"Karl Marx und Engels über die Polenfrage"*] Archive f.d.Ge.D.Soz.B.6.

expediency.<sup>69</sup> Therefore this policy cannot be made by a Germany of Hindenburg or Hitler, but can only arise from a Revolutionary Germany.

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### *Translator's Notes*

\* Paetel is quoting from Brockdorff-Rantzau's letter of resignation to President Ebert on 20 June, 1919: "The clear, unambiguous espousal of a policy of democratic self-determination and of social justice will in the future be the *raison d'être* of the German people; this *raison d'être* and the declaration of uncompromising war against capitalism and imperialism, whose handiwork is the proposed peace of our enemies [Versailles], vouchsafe it a great future."

† Paetel here is quoting a remark which General Helmuth von Moltke the Elder made in an 1841 essay "The Western Boundary" ("*Die Westliche Grenzfrage*") about Don Dietrich, Mayor of Strasburg. Moltke the Elder was (and still is) a famous German military figure – Chief of the Prussian and German General Staffs, he was responsible for a string of military victories through the mid-to-late 1800s and made significant intellectual contributions to the fields of military strategy and theory.

‡ The 'League of Oppressed Nations' (sometimes 'League of Oppressed Peoples' – Paetel in the German uses "*Bund der unterdrückten Nationen*") was an alternative approach to foreign policy advocated in some circles of the nationalist movement. In contrast to the idea of a colonial policy (whether directed towards Germany's old acquisitions in Africa and Oceania, or towards "the East"), advocates of a 'League' instead argued that Germany as a victim of 'Western imperialism' (i.e. through the Versailles Treaty) should form an international alliance with other oppressed nations, thus uniting the 'proletarian nations' of the oppressed parts of the world against the 'plutocratic nations' of the West. Typically the 'League' concept included those peoples and nations currently colonized by the Western powers, such as China and Egypt, with the implication being that Germany's support for non-European national liberation movements would thus have the additional effect of weakening the strength of imperial nations such as Britain and France. Another implication, admitted openly by Paetel here, is that Germany would be a natural leader for such a group. The concept had a fairly long history – Hitler discusses it dismissively in Vol I., Ch. 14 of *Mein Kampf*, relating that it was a popular subject of discussion in *völkisch* the 1920-21 period. Gregor Strasser also advocated for a 'League' until his foreign policy convictions began to shift after 1926, and the idea continued to remain popular among anti-imperialist nationalists, such as in the circles around Otto Strasser and Ernst Niekisch.

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<sup>69</sup> Russia's non-aggression pacts are indeed anything but gratifying for Germany, but they are completely the fault of the Western-oriented German foreign policy. An alliance-ready socialist Germany alone is capable of liquidating them.

# The New Faith

Brüning, rightly described as the greatest German Chancellor since Bismarck, governed not only by virtue of the bureaucratic and organizational leverage of the state he represented, not only because finance capital bestowed all its support upon him as a solid advocate against social revolution. This Roman Chancellor of the German nation was the master of Germany because he is one of the few men of our day who lives from faith, who acts from faith, who is supported by a spiritual reality: faith in Eternal Rome. And faith can always and can only be overcome by a new faith, never through negation, never through scepticism. Eternal Rome will only disappear from the German regions when faith in Eternal Germany replaces it.

Rome, and with it all of Western Christianity, can with utmost tranquillity face the trite pseudo-enlightenment of the free-thinking circles, the tasteless invective directed against the priesthood. By virtue of its faith it will be able to master such mere 'anti' tendencies.

Yet with all the disquiet and unrest today, Rome is already confronted with the beginnings of a new faith, the approach of a German renaissance. And from here it is understandable if, for example, the work of Rudolf Pannwitz or Stefan George<sup>70</sup> is branded dangerous by the Christian intellectual circles which Ludwig Klages bitterly fought against<sup>\*</sup>; if, on the edges of today's politics, the still unfinished attempts of the circles around Ludendorff<sup>†</sup> to work on a new German faith are answered with hate and scornful vilification.

Here, where the outline of a new paganism shines forth, a new cosmic religiosity centered in blood, soil, and race, rooted in the divine breath of worldly life – here do the first axe blows fall upon the edifice of the Oriental faith which overshadows the people.

And if German nationalism has a deep spiritual and religious sense, then it is that (as Rosenberg recognized, but then recanted under the pressure of his Catholic master<sup>‡</sup>) of an insurrection of the Germanic way of life, poisoned and suppressed since the days of Charlemagne the Saxon-slayer, against the foreign infiltration of Christianity. The new paganism, the renaissance of a German faith, will be the living justification and the power source of the German revolution.

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<sup>70</sup> That Döblin, in his *Knowledge and Change* ["*Wissen und Verändern*"], skates around George's stature in a few arrogant remarks; that a Herr Leschnitzer treats it with arrogant Marxist glosses; that the Hörising-adherent<sup>§</sup> Dr. Ewalt in *George or Spitteler* ["*George oder Spitteler*"] believes his narrow-minded schoolmaster antics to be a sufficient "refutation"; this says nothing about George, but plenty about his critics. If one rejects him, one should at least do it on the level of Friedrich Franz von Unruh. (*Neue Rundschau*, October 1932)

Only if one succeeds in “calling the Gods back home” will the mission of unity of form, faith, and blood be set into motion.

There is still little to declare today in regards to its actual content. But one thing must be made clear in a period where Wilhelm Stapel’s Christianization of politics is ever more insistently praised as the “theology of the new nationalism”, where Hans Blüher’s sharp pen is regrettably and ever more noticeably put into the service of Christian regeneration<sup>71</sup>: Politics has established its own laws within German faith once more.

Ethics have none of their own in that area, but nor do they have any business having any.

It is worth repeating:

The German transformation which we are in the midst of today is influential in all areas.

It shapes our century politically, economically, culturally; it transforms the individual in his spiritual structure and in his attitude towards his surroundings. This German revolution is thus in itself a great totality, encompassing the whole of life and asserting itself in life’s every aspect; in its justification it is not only on the religious level a struggle against a passionless, corrupted, distorted Church, but also an uncompromising struggle against the essential substance of Christianity, which at its core is alien and disastrous to the German nature. We have to grasp Ludendorff’s merciless observation, “Christianity is the poison by which peoples perish [*die Völker sterben*],” as we begin to recognize the political tendency of the ‘Main line’ as the most dangerous adversary.

Often, however, a fatal misconception becomes active within the resolution of religious problems, unsatisfactorily blending them together with the political task.

The rebirth of the religious life of our time and the fulfilment of the German political mission are two things that demand a clean and honest separation!

And he who is called primarily to the one, has no business applying the valuations of that task to the field of the other. Who understands both may draw strength from that, but may not distort the borderlines between them. Here a clean division is required.

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<sup>71</sup> W. Stapel, “The Christian Statesman” [*Der Christliche Staatsmann*].

Hans Blüher, “Israel’s Uprising against the Christian Good” [*Aufstand Israels gegen die christlichen Güter*], Hanseatic Verlagsanstalt.

And also self-restraint, and awe.

From today's strife we seek to mold the German Reich of tomorrow, in all fields of human activity. That is our task. Its guarantee is socialism. Its promised Gestalt is the political unity of a free nation. Its path is the struggle for power, revolution. On this path the slogan of the "coming parish of those who are in awe of the Eternal"<sup>\*\*</sup> has no place.

God's Kingdom and the Realm of the Gods, both demand service and readiness. "His Kingdom is not of this world. However, it is not greater than the Holy Kingdom of the Earth, merely another! Your faith in God must not break your service to the Gods; as you enter through God into the Kingdom which is not of this world, you need the Gods still, so that the Kingdom of this Earth does not perish!

"And you know now what it means to be a guest of two Kingdoms, a wanderer between both worlds, to have a share in the graces of each, graces which both act as connections to the forces of life!"<sup>72</sup>

It is precisely this that must be recognized by those who partake of grace in order to know both worlds, and only they will ultimately be able to bear responsibility for their decision. It is their personal tragedy to witness the impossibility of crossing between the two.

Woe to them if they, who are guests of both Kingdoms, wanderers between the two worlds, frivolously seek to infringe the borderlines between them; if they want to replace the political, suprapersonal values of communal 'freedom' and 'will to power' with Christian ranting about the Sermon of the Mount; if they adulterate the slogan "Everything for Germany" with the addendum "Germany for Christ."

The religious transformation of our Volk and of the entire Western world goes side by side with its political restructuring: the priestly people responsible for the first, the heroic for the second.

Both are a task set before the men of our type. Each man must feel the call, that which calls to him above all else.

And those who have a sense of both should not lose sight of the autonomy of both these processes, otherwise they will end by betraying each one. As Max Weber<sup>††</sup> says, and his is a practical conclusion which demonstrates this realization for everyday life:

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<sup>72</sup> "Leonardo", G.S. Faber, Voggenteiler, Potsdam.

“All ethically oriented action can be classed under two different maxims, it can be an ‘ethic of ultimate ends’ or an ‘ethic of responsibility.’” (That is, it can be dictated by the ‘Kingdom of God’ or by the ‘Kingdom of this World’!)

“The absolute ethic of the religious man does not question the harmful consequences of action.” (It has to do with one’s own purity.)

For the politician, however, the principle holds true: “Thou shalt resist evil by force, or else you are responsible for the evil winning out.”

“Also the early Christians knew full well that the world was ruled by demons, and that he who engages in politics, that is, with power and violence as a means, enters into a pact with diabolic powers, and that for his actions it is not true that only good can come from good and only evil from evil, but often the opposite. Anyone who does not see this is, indeed, a political infant.”

Nationalism demands political action. The watchword is Germany, only Germany.

For this goal we are prepared to give up everything, yes everything, even our own ‘clean slate’, even, religiously, our own salvation; prepared to become guilty – for the sake of the goal.

And only those who are ready for this self-sacrifice, only they may be involved in politics. Because only they are allowed to make demands.

The priest, however, responsible for building the future faith, must himself remain pure. Both are a divinely-ordained destiny.

He who as a person lives religiously, must be aware of this divide and try to resolve it within his own life. But once again: do not blur the boundaries when acting!

“Everyone must serve these two masters, because he is human – and when he leaves one, he receives a thorn in the flesh!” (Faber’s “Leonardo”)<sup>‡‡</sup>

Only then will he be able to shape German politics.

And that is the situation today.

One will come when the hour is ripe, and will be mercy.

The other, however, is duty.

But we will never accept Christianity's claim to absolute right, which it must by its very nature elevate and extol, as the Catholic *Hochland*<sup>§§</sup> demonstrates, for example:

"...So, then, as against the National idea as the only possible attitude, the first priority is the preservation of the Christian religion and the intimate communion of all Christians; only afterwards comes the preservation of the individual nationalities, meaning that even relatively valuable things, being of lesser worth, have to give way if they will endanger the unparalleled value of Christianity.

"It must always be kept in mind, however, that while it may not be the task of Christianity to preserve nationality, the influence of Christianity will always be to support the valuable assets of the nation.

"What is true of the National also applies to cultures; they are not an autonomous factor separate from and independent of Christianity, but a subordinate and dependent whole subsumed within the Christian idea overall."

Here there can be no bridge – here only war applies!

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### *Translator's Notes*

\* Rudolf Pannwitz, Stefan George, and Ludwig Klages were all German writers. Pannwitz and George were poets, Klages a philosopher and psychologist. Pannwitz was left-leaning, while George and Klages were both associated with the conservative-revolutionaries – George advocated for a kind of spiritual elitism, while Klages's writings dealt extensively with criticisms of morality and modernity. All three were contemptuous of the NSDAP, although the ideas of George and Klages had some influence on National Socialist philosophy.

† A reference to the '*Deutschvolk*', a völkisch-religious organization founded by General Ludendorff and his wife Mathilde, intended as the spiritual counterpart to the Ludendorffs' political movement, the '*Tannenbergbund*'. The *Deutschvolk* advocated an aggressively anti-Christian, pantheistic religious worldview in which Faith and Race were considered an inseparable unity – for *Deutschvolk* adherents, religiosity is inherited through blood, with folklore and folkways a spiritual expression of intrinsic racial faith. The *Deutschvolk* was banned in 1933, but was refounded in 1937 as the '*Bund für Deutsche Gotterkenntnis*' ('League for German Knowing-of-God'), which is still an active (if tiny) religious movement in Germany today.

‡ The "Catholic master" Paetel refers to here is Hitler, a reference to the religion Hitler was born into as well as to the controversy caused by the publication of Alfred Rosenberg's intellectual work *The Myth of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* in 1930. Rosenberg's 'Mythus' is a broad review of the historical and philosophical roots of the National Socialist worldview, in which the 'myth' of blood (race) is taken as the driving force of civilization. Its critical view of Christianity created some controversy within sections of the NSDAP, and resulted also in a number of attacks from prominent religious figures of both major denominations who declared the book proof that National Socialism was an atheist or heathenist movement. Rosenberg himself responded to the controversy with several articles intended to both justify his position and to nullify some of the more inaccurate or outlandish criticisms. In his *Memoirs*, written while imprisoned after the end of WWII, he is candid about the difficulties his book created for the Party: "...as looked upon from the perspective of high political expediency, I was somewhat of a burden to the movement."

§ By 'Hörsing-adherent' Paetel means a follower of Otto Hörsing, a Social-Democratic politician. Hörsing in 1924 had founded the Reichsbanner Black-Red Gold, a pro-republican and pro-democratic force intended to act as a counterweight to the various nationalist and communist paramilitaries. Although nominally a cross-party organization, in reality the Reichsbanner was heavily dominated by the Social-Democrats, and largely served as the protection force for the Social-Democratic Party. Hörsing, like many Social-Democrats, experienced considerable difficulty after 1933, and maintained links with underground Social-Democratic currents. He died in 1937.

\*\* Possibly a reference to the 'League of Köngener' ('*Bund der Köngener*'), an alternative, non-traditionalist Christian youth association that for a period had strong organizational links with the *Deutsche Freischar* of which Paetel had once been a leading member. *The Coming Parish* ('*Die kommende Gemeinde*') was one of the League's journals and was used by it as a slogan. The League, under the direction of its leader Jakob Hauer, actually began moving slowly away from Christian theology in the early '30s. Hauer in 1933 ended up founding the German Faith Movement, which sought to replace Christianity completely with an Aryan-Germanic National Socialist faith. This move inevitably resulted in a split within the League, with some members leaving to follow Hauer into his new spiritual organization.

†† Max Weber was a German sociologist and economist whose writings have become particularly influential in the post-WWII era. Paetel here is quoting from Weber's 1918 essay "Politics as a Vocation" ("*Politics als Beruf*"), which deals with Weber's conceptions of the state, leadership, and political legitimacy.

‡‡ The work "Leonardo" which Paetel quotes from here and on the previous page is by G.S. Faber, an English theologian. This particular quote is a Biblical reference to 2 Corinthians 12:7-9: "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, to torment me." To receive a 'thorn in the flesh' is to be dealt an ongoing misfortune, a kind of trial or test from God. The German is "*den Pfahl im Fleisch*", a "stake in the flesh" – 'stake' is also apparently used in the original Greek.

§§ The *Hochland* ('*Highland*' in English) was a Catholic cultural magazine, one of the most prominent Catholic publications in pre-WWII Germany. It represented a more 'liberal' Catholic perspective than could be found in certain elements of the Centre Party, with the majority of its well-known contributors being supporters of democracy and the Weimar system. Despite its position, the journal managed to put off being banned by the National Socialist regime until 1941.

# The Order of the Nation

Whoever fights today for nationhood through the socialist revolution cannot – the grounds for this have been set out here – aim for the destruction of the Marxist mass-party, nor for a ‘settlement with Marxism’ from the outside. He can probably well believe that völkisch reality permeates the revolutionary act, as opposed to false or half-true doctrines, which Russia shows to be a concrete possibility; he will have to leave that judgement, however, up to life and its laws.

Revolutionary Marxism is already marching for revolution and socialism today. The new order which emerges from the swell of this upheaval will be, in our opinion, not the universal humanity anticipated by its theorists, but the community of sovereign socialist states.

Not the path, but the signpost is wrong.

The forces over on the other side, engaged under the red swastika flags in a ten-year struggle for ‘freedom and bread’ with all the fervour of their hearts, who with glowing faith likewise stand in the military camp of the German Revolution, they must be unfastened from their fascist and semi-fascist straightjackets. Involving them alongside the marching red battalions in the decisive battle for a socialist Germany remains the task of Nationalist Communism. It will have to prove itself to them.

That will never, however, include those masses who today follow the ‘Drummer’ from Braunau – they expect only the salvation of petit bourgeois existence. The few will be instead the indispensable, the socialists, the activists, the proletarianized Volk whom the class-struggle of the nation never returns to the private sphere; they will be the fighters sought from the Hitler-front. It is all about them. To fashion them as an Order of the Nation, inextricably sworn to the watchword of Eternal Germany – belonging only to it, in voluntary allegiance to the red flag with hammer, scythe, and sword; committed to the political front of workers, peasants, and soldiers; as the crack troops of the national revolt in Germany; that is what needs to be tackled, the duty of revolutionary nationalism to be proven in infinitely detailed work.

A mass base – in parallel with the NSDAP – is for such a task naturally impossible.

One of the preconditions, however, which National Communism is able to resolve: the unification of the national-revolutionary groups it represents!

And we hereby demand from the German public that the groups, leaders, and circles in today’s Germany who ideologically and practically occupy the fighting-positions sketched out here in this broad outline finally put aside all personal and

organizational reservations and, instead of working out the nuances of the theses described here, take steps towards practical cooperation.

We call for:

Werner Lass and the Confederates,  
Jupp Hoven and the Young Prussian League,  
Ernst Niekisch and the *Widerstand*-circle,  
Rolf König and the *Jungen Kämpfer*,  
G. Schild and the German Socialist Combat Movement,

we call for:

the *Kommenden* and the circle around Friedrich Hielscher and his *Reich*,

we call for:

The *Graue Korps* and the *Gegner*,\*

to take in hand with us and with all the groups and individuals who fundamentally share this position the preparations for a

### **unified National Communist movement.**

Aloof from the sympathy or antipathy of leaders,  
Aloof from organizational egoism of all kinds,  
Aloof from theoretical hairsplitting,  
the nature of the response to this demand – submitted on behalf of an unlimited number of ‘sympathizers’ – will be able to prove the hardness of our will and the authenticity of our decision.<sup>73</sup>

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#### ***Translator’s Notes***

\* Due to the sheer number of references made here, they will all be covered in a single footnote, although in separate paragraphs:

Werner Lass was a German journalist, a former National Socialist (he was expelled from the NSDAP in 1929 for non-payment of fees), and a prominent figure within the German Youth Movement. His group ‘*Bund der Eidgenossen*’ (‘League of Confederates’) was founded in 1929 not long after he left the NSDAP, advocating for a “new nationalism and German Socialism” and adopting a line that was avowedly National-Bolshevist. Lass and the *Eidgenossen* developed links with the KPD and with the right-oppositionist Communist Party Opposition as well as with Jünger, Paetel, and elements of the NSDAP. Arrested in early 1933 for possession of explosives, Lass later drifted back into the National Socialist camp, working for a time in the Reich Press Office. He survived the War and lived until the 1990s.

The ‘Young Prussian League’ (‘*Jungpreußischer Bund*’) was a youth group which had originally split off from the *Schilljugend*, a *Bündische* youth organization with strong ties to the Freikorps. It was another minor National Bolshevist organization which, like Paetel’s, supported KPD leader Ernst Thälmann’s candidacy for President in 1932. Jupp Hoven, one of its leaders, established links in the early ‘30s with revolutionary nationalists (including the IRA) in Ireland. Later, during

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<sup>73</sup> The *Vorkämpfer* [“*Champion*”] has unfortunately excluded itself from this fighting-community through its capitulation to the KPD which it published in January 1933. Regrettable not so much for the political decision, which remains commendable, but rather for the form in which it was expressed.

the years of the NS state, he worked as an espionage agent for the Abwehr (military intelligence) in the British Isles, using his ties to Irish groups to gather information for the German government.

Ernst Niekisch is today one of the more well-known National Bolsheviks, although he never used that term to describe himself. Niekisch began his political career as a Social-Democrat, writing in socialist journals and working as a secretary in the Textile Workers' Union. In the early '20s he began to adopt a more noticeably nationalist position, bringing him into contact with the Hofgeismarer-circle. The backlash against Niekisch's nationalism led to his resignation from the Social-Democratic Party; from there he briefly became a leading ideological light, along with August Winnig, of the nationalist-social-democratic Old Social-Democratic Party of Saxony. From 1926 onwards Niekisch began publishing *Widerstand* ('Resistance'), the 'Journal for National-Revolutionary Politics'. Niekisch used this as a platform to advocate a radical nationalist, anti-capitalist position, one which merged veneration of Prussian values (such as militarism and discipline) with a deep hatred for the exploitative effects of capitalism. *Widerstand* attracted a number of prominent national-revolutionary authors who became known as the 'Widerstand-circle' – Ernst Jünger, Friedrich Georg Jünger, Ernst von Salomon, Arnolt Bronnen, Hartmut Plaas, etc. *Widerstand* was banned in 1934, and Niekisch arrested. He was tortured so terribly in prison that his vision was permanently damaged. Freed by the Red Army in 1945, he converted back to Marxism and took a seat in the East German Volkskammer (parliament). Eventually, however, he became disillusioned with the DDR – particularly after the suppression of the 1953 East German uprising – and in 1963 he left to live in West Germany.

The *Junge Kämpfer* ('Young Fighter') of Rolf König was a small social-nationalist political magazine with ties to the Fighting Community of German Revolutionaries, a splinter-group from Otto Strasser's Fighting Community of Revolutionary National Socialists.

The German Socialist Combat Movement (*Deutsche Sozialistische Kampfbewegung*, DSKB) was founded in December 1931 by Gotthard Schild, formerly a follower of Otto Strasser and an NSDAP district councillor in Wedding (a working-class district in Berlin, known colloquially as 'Red Wedding' due to its reputation as a communist stronghold). The DSKB positioned itself towards the more radical end of the National Socialist political spectrum, demanding government by councils, a socialist planned economy, autarky, state monopoly over foreign trade, and the separation of Church and state. Industry and land were to be socialized while small business and the peasantry would be left intact. The DSKB achieved its largest share of notoriety when its leader attempted to sue Adolf Hitler for fraud over the NSDAP's use of the term 'socialism'. After 1933 Schild was imprisoned by the National Socialist regime, before he managed to flee into exile in England.

The *Kommenden* ('Coming') was a weekly newspaper associated with the nationalist segment of the Youth Movement, which advocated against liberalism, reaction, and capitalism, and in support of a revolutionary nationalism which was sympathetic to the proletariat. At various points the *Kommenden* was edited by Ernst Jünger, Werner Lass, and Paetel.

Friedrich Hielscher was a prominent conservative-revolutionary intellectual, particularly noted for his detailed and complex religious theories. He wrote a well-regarded philosophical work, *Das Reich*, and from 1930 published an intellectual journal of the same name.

*Das Graue Korps* ('The Gray Corps') was another social-nationalist Youth Movement journal. The *Gegner* ('Adversary') was a literary magazine founded by communist writer Franz Jung and edited by the Young German Order member Harro Schulze-Boysen – Boysen was later executed during the Second World War for his involvement in the Red Orchestra opposition movement. The *Gegner* was more liberal in its orientation than the other publications and groups Paetel has listed here, but it nonetheless exhibited nationalist qualities and had some organizational ties to national-revolutionary writers and intellectuals.

# Can Wait

We have become sceptical of the many revolutionary strategists who immediately predicted the German Revolution.

True, the objective preconditions for it are indeed present in this period of increasingly clear economic crisis.

But it lacks all the more subjective preconditions. Hunger alone is not sufficient.

Today there is no dynamic force in Germany acting as an engine of revolution; that must, as bitter as it is, be recognized.

Some will be discouraged,  
Some will therefore go astray.

They do not matter.

In Germany today it is up to the few thousand young people who can wait, who, because they are aglow with the myth of 'Germany', can prepare themselves for the day that the steadily-emerging

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is clearly visible, hoisting the banner of Eternal Germany that was rolled up by their fathers and forming the columns of German Nationalist Communism in the camp of the revolution.

They call to us! These pages apply to them.

They belong to us.

We are certain that they will find their way to us.