

That Damned Swastika! [1932] By Joseph Goebbels

Why Are We Nationalists?

We are nationalists because we see the nation as the only way to bring all the forces of the nation together to preserve and improve our existence and the conditions under which we live. The nation is the organic union of a people to protect its life. To be national is to affirm this union in word and deed. To be national has nothing to do with a form of government or a symbol. It is an affirmation of things, not forms. Forms can change, their content remains. If form and content agree, then the nationalist affirms both. If they conflict, the nationalist fights for the content and against the form. One may not put the symbol above the content. If that happens, the battle is on the wrong field and one's strength is lost in formalism. The real aim of nationalism, the nation, is lost. That is how things are today in Germany.

Nationalism has turned into bourgeois patriotism and its defenders are battling windmills. One says Germany and means the monarchy. Another proclaims freedom and means Black-White-Red [the colors of the German flag]. Would our situation today be any different if we replaced the republic with a monarchy and flew the black-white-red flag? The colony would have different wallpaper, but its nature, its content, would stay the same. Indeed, things would be even worse, for a facade that conceals the facts dissipates the forces today fighting against slavery.

Bourgeois patriotism is the privilege of a class. It is the real reason for its decline. When 30 million are for something and 30 million are against it, things balance out and nothing happens. That is how things are with us. We are the world's Pariah not because we do not have the courage to resist, but rather because our entire national energy is wasted in eternal and unproductive squabbling between the right and the left. Our way only goes downward, and today one can already predict when we will fall into the abyss. Nationalism is more far-reaching than internationalism. It sees things as they are. Only he who respects himself can respect others. If as a German nationalist I affirm Germany, how can I hold it against a French nationalist who affirms France? Only when these affirmations conflict in vital ways will there be a power-political struggle. Internationalism cannot undo this reality. Its attempts at proof fail completely. And even when the facts seem to have

some validity, nature, blood, the will to life, and the struggle for existence on this hard earth prove the falsity of fine theories.

The fault of bourgeois patriotism was to confound a certain economic form with the national. It connected two things that are entirely different. Forms of the economy, however firm they may seem, are changeable. The national is eternal. If I mix the eternal and the temporal, the eternal will necessarily collapse when the temporal collapses. This was the real cause for the collapse of liberal society. It was rooted not in the eternal, but in the temporal, and when the temporal declined it took the eternal down with it. Today it is only an excuse for a system that brings growing economic misery. That is the only reason why international Jewry organizes the battle of the proletarian forces against both powers, the economy and the nation, and defeat them.

From this understanding, the young nationalism draws its absolute demand. The faith in the nation is a matter for everyone, never a group, a class, or an economic clique. The eternal must be distinguished from the temporal. Maintaining a rotten economic system has nothing to do with nationalism, which is an affirmation of the Fatherland. I can love Germany and hate capitalism. Not only can I, I must. Only the annihilation of a system of exploitation carries with it the core of the rebirth of our people. We are nationalists because as Germans, we love Germany. Because we love Germany, we want to preserve it and fight against those who would destroy it. If a Communist shouts "Down with nationalism!" he means the hypocritical bourgeois patriotism that sees the economy only as a system of slavery. If we make clear to the man of the left that nationalism and capitalism, that is the affirmation of the Fatherland and the misuse of its resources, have nothing to do with each other, indeed that they go together like fire and water, then even as a socialist he will come to affirm the nation, which he will want to conquer.

That is our real task as National Socialists. We were the first to recognize the connections, and the first to begin the struggle. Because we are socialists, we have felt the deepest blessings of the nation, and because we are nationalists, we want to promote socialist justice in a new Germany. A young fatherland will rise when the socialist front is firm. Socialism will become reality when the Fatherland is free. Why Are We Socialists? We are socialists because we see in socialism, that is the union of all citizens, the only chance to maintain our racial inheritance and to regain our political freedom and renew our

German state. Socialism is the doctrine of liberation for the working class. It promotes the rise of the fourth class and its incorporation in the political organism of our Fatherland, and is inextricably bound to breaking the present slavery and regaining German freedom. Socialism, therefore, is not merely a matter of the oppressed class, but a matter for everyone, for freeing the German people from slavery is the goal of contemporary policy. Socialism gains its true form only through a total fighting brotherhood with the forward-striving energies of a newly awakened nationalism. Without nationalism it is nothing, a phantom, a mere theory, a castle in the sky, a book. With it is everything, the future, freedom, the fatherland!

The sin of liberal thinking was to overlook socialism's nation-building strengths, thereby allowing its energies to go in anti-national directions. The sin of Marxism was to degrade socialism into a question of wages and the stomach, putting it in conflict with the state and its national existence. An understanding of both these facts leads us to a new sense of socialism, which sees its nature as nationalistic, state-building, liberating and constructive. The bourgeois is about to leave the historical stage. In its place will come the class of productive workers, the working class that has been up until today oppressed. It is beginning to fulfill its political mission. It is involved in a hard and bitter struggle for political power as it seeks to become part of the national organism. The battle began in the economic realm; it will finish in the political. It is not merely a matter of wages, not only a matter of the number of hours worked in a day — though we may never forget that these are an essential, perhaps even the most significant part of the socialist platform — but it is much more a matter of incorporating a powerful and responsible class in the state, perhaps even to make it the dominant force in the future politics of the fatherland. The bourgeoisie does not want to recognize the strength of the working class. Marxism has forced it into a straitjacket that will ruin it. While the working class gradually disintegrates in the Marxist front, bleeding itself dry, the bourgeoisie and Marxism have agreed on the general lines of capitalism, and see their task now to protect and defend it in various ways, often concealed.

We are socialists because we see the social question as a matter of necessity and justice for the very existence of a state for our people, not a question of cheap pity or insulting sentimentality. The worker has a claim to a living standard that corresponds to what he produces. We have no intention of begging for that right. Incorporating him in the state organism is not only a critical matter for him, but for the whole nation. The question is larger than

the eight-hour day. It is a matter of forming a new state consciousness that includes every productive citizen. Since the political powers of the day are neither willing nor able to create such a situation, socialism must be fought for. It is a fighting slogan both inwardly and outwardly. It is aimed domestically at the bourgeois parties and Marxism at the same time, because both are sworn enemies of the coming workers' state. It is directed abroad at all powers that threaten our national existence and thereby the possibility of the coming socialist national state. Explanation: "The thinking worker comes to Hitler," the caption says. A communist and a socialist are accusing each other of betraying the working class.

Socialism is possible only in a state that is united domestically and free internationally. The bourgeoisie and Marxism are responsible for failing to reach both goals, domestic unity and international freedom. No matter how national and social these two forces present themselves, they are the sworn enemies of a socialist national state. We must therefore break both groups politically. The lines of German socialism are sharp, and our path is clear.

We are against the political bourgeoisie, and for genuine nationalism!

We are against Marxism, but for true socialism!

We are for the first German national state of a socialist nature!

We are for the National Socialist German Workers Party!

Why a Workers' Party? Work is not mankind's curse, but his blessing. A man becomes a man through labor. It elevates him, makes him great and aware, raises him above all other creatures. It is in the deepest sense creative, productive, and culture-producing. Without labor, no food. Without food, no life. The idea that the dirtier one's hands get, the more degrading the work, is a Jewish, not a German, idea. As in every other area, the German first asks how, then what. It is less a question of the position I fill, and more a question of how well I do the duty that our God has given me. We call ourselves a workers' party because we want to rescue the word work from its current definition and give it back its original meaning. Anyone who creates value is a creator, that is, a worker. We refuse to distinguish kinds of work. Our only standard is whether the work serves the whole, or at least does not harm it, or if it is harmful. Work is service. If it works against the general welfare, then it is treason against the fatherland.

Marxist nonsense claimed to free labor, yet it degraded the work of its members and saw it as a curse and disgrace. It can hardly be our goal to

abolish labor, but rather to give new meaning and content. The worker in a capitalist state — and that is his deepest misfortune — is no longer a living human being, a creator, a maker. He has become a machine. A number, a cog in the machine without sense or understanding. He is alienated from what he produces. Labor is for him only a way to survive, not a path to higher blessings, not a joy, not something in which to take pride, or satisfaction, or encouragement, or a way to build character.

We are a workers' party because we see in the coming battle between finance and labor the beginning and the end of the structure of the twentieth century. We are on the side of labor and against finance. Money is the measuring rod of liberalism, work and accomplishment that of the socialist state. The liberal asks, "What are you?" The socialist asks, "Who are you?" Worlds lie between. We do not want to make everyone the same. Nor do we want levels in the population, high and low, above and below. The aristocracy of the coming state will be determined not by possessions or money, but only on the quality of one's accomplishments. One earns merit through service. Men are distinguished by the results of their labor. That is the sure sign of the character and value of a person. The value of labor under socialism will be determined by its value to the state, to the whole community. Labor means creating value, not haggling over things. The soldier is a worker when he bears the sword to protect the national economy.

The statesman also is a worker when he gives the nation a form and a will that help it to produce what it needs for life and freedom. A furrowed brow is as much a sign of labor as a powerful fist. A white-collar worker should not be ashamed to claim with pride that of which the manual laborer boasts: labor. The relations between these two groups determine their mutual fate. Neither can survive without the other, for both are members of an organism that they must together maintain if they are to defend and expand their right to exist.

We call ourselves a workers' party because we want to free labor from the chains of capitalism and Marxism. In battling for Germany's future, we freely admit to it, and accept the odium from the liberal bourgeoisie that results. We know that we will succeed in bringing new blessings out of their curses. It is the right of the nations' territory to grow grain. The seed becomes grain and the grain becomes bread. The middleman of it all is labor. He who despises labor but accepts its benefits is a hypocrite. That is the deepest meaning of our movement: it gives things back their original

significance, unconcerned that today they may be in danger of sinking into the swamp of a collapsing worldview. He who creates value works, and is a worker. A movement that wants to free labor is a workers' party. Therefore, we National Socialists call ourselves a worker's party. When our victorious flags fly before us, we sing:

"We are the army of the swastika,
Raise high the red flags!
We want to clear the way to freedom
For German Labor!"

Why Do We Oppose the Jews? We oppose the Jews because we are defending the freedom of the German people. The Jew is the cause and beneficiary of our slavery He has misused the social misery of the broad masses to deepen the dreadful split between the right and left of our people, to divide Germany into two halves thereby concealing the true reason for the loss of the Great War and falsifying the nature of the revolution. The Jew has no interest in solving the German question. He cannot have such an interest. He depends on it remaining unsolved. If the German people formed a united community and won back its freedom, there would be no place any longer for the Jew. His hand is strongest when a people lives in domestic and international slavery, not when it is free, industrious, self-aware, and determined.

The Jew caused our problems, and lives from them. That is why we oppose the Jew as nationalists and as socialists. He has ruined our race, corrupted our morals, hollowed out our customs, and broken our strength. We owe it to him that we today are the Pariah of the world. He was the leper among as long as we were German. When we forgot our German nature, he triumphed over us and our future. The Jew is the plastic model of decomposition. Where he finds filth and decay, he surfaces and begins his butcher's work among the nations. He hides behind a mask and presents himself as a friend to his victims, and before they know it he has broken their neck. The Jew is uncreative. He produces nothing, he only haggles with products. With rags, clothing, pictures, jewels, grain, stocks, cures, peoples and states. He has somehow stolen everything he deals in. When he attacks a state, he is a revolutionary. As soon as he holds power, he preaches peace and order so that he can devour his conquests in comfort.

What does anti-Semitism have to do with socialism? I would put the question this way: What does the Jew have to do with socialism? Socialism has to do with labor. When did one ever see him working instead of plundering, stealing and living from the sweat of others? As socialists we are opponents of the Jews because we see in the Hebrews the incarnation of capitalism, of the misuse of the nation's goods. What does anti-Semitism have to do with nationalism? I would put the question this way: What does the Jew have to do with nationalism? Nationalism has to do with blood and race. The Jew is the enemy and destroyer of the purity of blood, the conscious destroyer of our race. As nationalists, we oppose the Jews because we see the Hebrews as the eternal enemy of our national honor and of our national freedom.

But the Jew, after all, is also a human being. Certainly, none of us doubts that. We only doubt that he is a decent human being. He does not get along with us. He lives by other laws than we do. The fact that he is a human being is not sufficient reason for us to allow him to subject us in inhumane ways. He may be a human being — but what kind of a human being is he! If someone slaps your mother in the face, do you say: "Thank you! He is after all a human being!" That is not a human being, it is a monster. Yet how much worse has the Jew done to our mother Germany, and is still doing today!

There are also white Jews. True, there are scoundrels among us, even though they are Germans, who act in immoral ways against their own racial and blood comrades. But why do we call them white Jews? You use the term to describe something inferior and contemptible. Just as we do. Why do you ask us why we oppose the Jews when you without knowing it are one too? Anti-Semitism is not Christian. That means that it is Christian to allow the Jews to go on as they are, stripping the skin from our bodies and mocking us. To be a Christian means to love one's neighbor as oneself! My neighbor is my racial and blood brother. If I love him, I have to hate his enemies. He who thinks Germans must despise the Jews. The one requires the other. We oppose the Jews because we affirm the German people. The Jew is our greatest misfortune.

It is not true that we eat Jews for breakfast. It is true that slowly but surely, he is stealing all that we have. Things would be different if we behaved as Germans. Revolutionary demands we do not enter parliament to use parliamentary methods. We know that the fate of peoples is determined by

personalities, never by parliamentary majorities. The essence of parliamentary democracy is the majority, which destroys personal responsibility and glorifies the masses. A few dozen rogues and crooks run things behind the scenes. Aristocracy depends on accomplishment, the rule of the most able, and the subordination of the less capable to the will of the leadership. Any form of government — no matter how democratic or aristocratic it may outwardly appear — rests on compulsion. The difference is only whether the compulsion is a blessing or a curse for the community.

What we demand is new, decisive, and radical, revolutionary in the truest sense of the word. That has nothing to do with rioting and barricades. It may be that that happens here or there. But it is not an inherent part of the process. Revolutions are spiritual acts. They appear first in people, then in politics and the economy. New people form new structures. The transformation we want is first of all spiritual; that will necessarily change the way things are. This revolutionary act is beginning to be visible in us. The result is a new type of person visible to the knowing eye: the National Socialist. Consistent with his spiritual attitude, the National Socialist makes uncompromising demands in politics. There is no if and when for him, only an either — or.

He demands the return of German honor. Without honor, one has no right to life. A nation that has pawned its honor has pawned its bread. Honor is the foundation of any people's community. Losing our honor is the true cause of the loss of our freedom. In place of a slave colony, we want a restored German national state. The state is not an end in itself for us, but rather a means to an end. The true end is the race, the sum of all the living, creative forces of the people. The structure that today calls itself the German republic is not a way to maintain our racial inheritance. It has become an end in itself with no real connection to the people and their needs. We want to abolish the slave colony and replace it with a people's state in freedom.

Want work and bread for every productive national and blood comrade. Pay should be according to accomplishment. That means more pay for German workers! That will stop the senseless fighting in which we engage today. First provide housing and food for the people, and then pay reparations! No democrat, no republican, has the right to complain about this demand, for it was first raised by a banner carrier of November Germany [the Weimar Republic, beginning in November 1918]. We only want to make the slogan

a reality. Provide essentials first! First, we must meet the critical needs of the people, then we can produce luxury goods. Provide work for those willing to work! Give the farmers land!

The German foreign policy that today sells what we have at below-market rates must be completely transformed and must focus radically on the German need for space, drawing the necessary power-political conclusions. Peace among productive workers! Each should do his duty for the good of the whole community. The state then has the responsibility of protecting the individual, guaranteeing him the fruits of his labor. The people's community must not be a mere phrase, but a revolutionary achievement following from the radical carrying out of the basic life needs of the working class. A ruthless battle against corruption! A war against exploitation, freedom for the workers! The elimination of all economic-capitalist influences on national policy. A solution to the Jewish question! We call for the systematic elimination of foreign racial elements from public life in every area. There must be a sanitary separation between Germans and non-Germans on racial grounds exclusively, not on nationality or even religious belief.

Down with democratic parliamentarianism! Establish a parliament based on occupations, which determines production. Policies will be determined by a political body that earns its place by the laws of strength and selection.

The return of loyalty and faith in economic life. The complete reversal of the injustice that has robbed millions of Germans of their possessions.

The right of personality before that of the mob. Germans always will have preference before foreigners and Jews. A battle against the destructive poison of international Jewish culture! A strengthening of German forces and German customs. The elimination of corrupt Semitic principles and racial decay. The death penalty for crimes against the people! The gallows for profiteers and usurers! An uncompromising program implemented by men who will implement it passionately. No slogans, only living energy. That is what we demand!