

Heidelberg University in 1921. During his graduate student days he absorbed and agreed with much of the writings of communists Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Damning those he called “the money pigs of capitalist democracy,”<sup>11</sup> Goebbels in speeches and pamphlets regularly declaimed that “Money has made slaves of us.”<sup>12</sup> “Money,” he argued, “is the curse of mankind. It smothers the seed of everything great and good. Every penny is sticky with sweat and blood.” And in language that could be right out of the writings of Karl Marx, Goebbels believed fervently: “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.”<sup>13</sup>

The Nazi solution, then, is strong socialism.<sup>14</sup> The state should control the economy, organizing its production and distribution in the collective interest.<sup>15</sup>

## ***9. Nationalism, not internationalism or cosmopolitanism***

This raises a question. So far the Nazi Program emphasizes that collectivism and socialism take priority over the individual—but which collective or social grouping has priority? Here the Nazi Program emphatically defines its collectivism and socialism in nationalistic terms. Individuals belong primarily to their ethnic and racial groups, those ethnic and racial groups giving them their core identities.

<sup>11</sup> Quoted in Orlow 1969, p. 87.

<sup>12</sup> Goebbels 1929, in Mosse ed., 1966, p. 107.

<sup>13</sup> Goebbels 1932, “Those Damned Nazis” pamphlet.

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix 2 for more quotations from Nazi leaders on the socialism of National Socialism.

<sup>15</sup> This explains why the Nazi SA “staged joint rallies with the Communists and planned campaigns to win over the KDP members well into 1929 and 1930” (Orlow 1969, p. 210).

In the 1920 Program, seven of the twenty-five points speak directly to this issue. This issue is moderately complicated, because the Nazis have three enemies in mind against whom they want to distinguish themselves.

First they reject Marxist socialism or any socialism that puts economic groupings first. As much as the Nazis hate capitalism, they do not see the world as a battle between economic groups. The Marxists, as they see it, are obsessed with and too narrowly focused on money. To the Nazis money is only part of the battle—the *major* battle is between different racial and cultural groups with different biological histories, languages, values, laws, and religions. The battle is between Germans—with their particular biological inheritance and cultural history—against all other racial cultures.

Second, the Nazis reject cosmopolitanism, an ideal of Western liberals who believe that all humans are essentially the same wherever one travels in the world, and who believe that one should strive to be a citizen of the world, someone who can be at home anywhere.

The Nazis are *nationalists*, by contrast, and they reject any form of internationalism or cosmopolitanism.<sup>16</sup>

These themes explain the design of the Nazis' swastika flag, as a symbolic integration of the socialism and the nationalism. Red is symbolic of socialism, white is symbolic of Nationalism, and the swastika is, according to Hitler, representative of the Aryan struggle for racial and cultural supremacy against those who are trying to destroy the Germans.

Consequently, in the Nazi Program of 1920 we find many points about German national identity and asserting German needs and goals.

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<sup>16</sup> As Goebbels put it in his 1929 *Michael*, which sold well and went through seventeen editions: "Race is the matrix of all creative forces. Humanity—that is a mere supposition. Reality is only the Volk. Humanity is nothing but a multitude of peoples. A people is an organic entity" (Goebbels 1929, in Mosse ed., 1966, p. 106).

Point 1 demands the unification of all ethnic Germans into a greater Germany.

Point 8 demands that immigration by non-Germans be halted and that all those who have immigrated recently be expelled from the country.

Public offices can be open only to citizens, and Point 3 defines citizenship in terms of the possession of German blood.

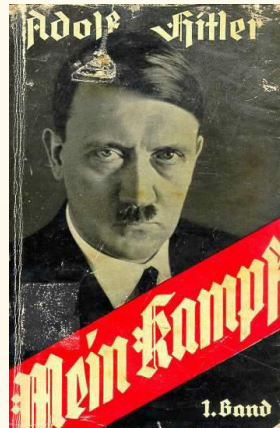
And the possession of German blood is defined carefully to reject a third target of the Nazis, those whom they hate even more than the Marxists or the liberal capitalists—and that is the Jews.<sup>17</sup>

Point 3 of the Program denies that Jews can be racial comrades of Germans, and this in combination with the other points in the Program effectively shuts the Jews out of German life.

A widely-used Nazi propaganda poster displayed a dragon with three heads wearing hats representing the communist, the international capitalist, and the Jew—the enemies the pure German warrior must defeat.

From the beginning of the Party in 1920 then, the pro-German nationalism and the strong anti-Semitic themes are, like the collectivism and the socialism, core Nazi themes.

While the 1920 Program only mentions the Jews twice and seems to advocate only that the Jews be forced to leave Germany, within a few years the Nazi leadership had clearly begun to consider harsher measures. In 1925, for example, Hitler published *Mein Kampf*, a book that sold increasingly



<sup>17</sup> Michael Mack's *German Idealism and the Jew* (University of Chicago Press, 2003) is a study of the role German philosophers, historians, and other intellectuals, including Kant, Hegel, Marx, and others, played in developing and promoting anti-Semitism. See Appendix 3 for further quotations.

well as the Nazis rose to power. Hitler variously describes the Jews as an “octopus,” as “a parasite on the body of other nations,” as a “vampire,” as a “spider” that was “suck[ing] the blood out of the people’s pores,” and as having taken over the German state. To free the German *Volk*, consequently, Hitler calls for the “elimination of the existing Jewish one” and “the end of this parasite upon the nations.”<sup>18</sup>

## **10. Authoritarianism, not liberal democracy**

So far we have three major themes in the Nazi Program: collectivism, socialism, and nationalism. The next question is: How do the Nazis believe this is to be achieved?

As early as 1920 the Nazis are clear that they are no friends of democracy, liberalism, or republicanism. They favor strong authoritarianism and centralized power.

Point 23 calls for censorship and government control of all newspapers.

Point 24 suggests limitations on religions that do not fit the Nazis’ goals.

Point 25 calls for centralization and unconditional power: “we demand the creation of a strong central power in Germany. A central political parliament should possess unconditional authority over the entire Reich, and its organization in general.”

These points in combination with the economically socialist points earlier are to give the government total control over all aspects of society.

Throughout the 1920s the Nazis are unapologetic about wanting to eliminate liberalism, democracy, and republicanism. Goebbels for example put it bluntly and publicly: “Never do the people rule themselves. This madness has been

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<sup>18</sup> Hitler 1925, pp. 623, 305, 327, 193, 453, and 327.