

**Background:** On the occasion of the first Nuremberg Rally that followed Hitler's 1933 takeover of power, Goebbels gave a speech discussing the bad press Germany was receiving because of its racial policies. Goebbels claims that the Jews are making a mistake in attacking Germany, since by doing so they run the risk of putting Nazi views on the agenda for discussion. He suggests many in the world will as a result come to agree with the Nazis.

**The source:** "Rassenfrage und Weltpropaganda," *Reichstagung in Nürnberg 1933* (Berlin: Vaterländischer Verlag C. A. Weller, 1933), pp. 131-142. This was the illustrated volume put out by Julius Streicher to commemorate the rally.

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## The Racial Question and World Propaganda

by Joseph Goebbels

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The National Socialist revolution is a typical German product. Its scale and historical significance can only be compared with other great events in human history. It would be false and misleading to compare this revolution to other transformations in recent European history. True, it shares their impulses, their energy, and perhaps even their methods, with some exceptions. But its foundations, causes, and therefore results are entirely different. It could not have happened without the war and the November Revolt, at least in its speed and power.

The Versailles treaty of non-peace stood in its way. Need, unemployment, desperation and decay accompanied it through all its ups and downs. An over-refined democratic parliamentarianism, which today seems almost grotesque, found its last and highest expression. It provided the stage on which National Socialism rose to power. We told our opposition often enough that although we were using its weapons and rules for our purposes, we had nothing intellectually or politically in common with them. To the contrary, our goal was use these means to put and end to them and their methods, to finally eliminate their theories and policies. Both in theory and practice, National Socialism opposes liberalism.

Just as liberalism after the French Revolution had various effects on every nation and people, depending on their nature and character, the same is true today for the forces that oppose it. German democracy was always a particular playground of European liberalism. Its innate tendency towards excessive individualism was foreign to us, which lost it any connection to real political life after the war. It had nothing to do with the people. It represented not the totality of the nation, but turned into a perpetual war between interests that gradually destroyed the national and social foundations of our people's existence.

National Socialism was able to overcome this condition of continual spiritual, economic, and political crises only because the German people themselves regained their composure, and found a political idea and organization that corresponded to the character of the German nation. National Socialism is a completely German phenomenon. It can only be understood in the framework of German conditions and forces. Like Mussolini once said about Fascism, "it is not for export."

Nonetheless, we see the National Socialist revolution as an event that affects the entire world. Besides, the solution of the German Question cannot be without consequences for the future constellation of Europe. It is a warning for the entire liberal world that Germany has replaced democracy by an authoritarian system, that liberalism broke under the blows of the national uprising, that parliamentarianism and the party system are outdated concepts for us.

The past three years have proven that the strength of a new idea is stronger than the resources of an outdated worldview, even when it defends itself with the instruments of state. A new kind of authority has been established in every area of public life in Germany.

The insane belief in equality that found its crassest expression in political parties is no more. The principle of personality has replaced the notion of popular idiocy. A united German nation was born, despite all the labor pains. It is not surprising that those who benefited from parliamentarianism struck their tents when they saw that National Socialism was firmly established. They decided to take up their activity beyond our borders. That does not mean they have given up on Germany. They believe their hour may not be near, but that it will eventually come.

They do all they can to cause the Reich domestic and international difficulties. These pacifists from head to toe do not even hesitate to urge bloody war against Germany in the foreign papers that are not yet wise enough to refuse them space.

One cannot make sense of this situation without understanding the significance of the racial or Jewish Question.

The National Socialist government also cannot ignore it. Our laws suffer hard and often unjustified criticism abroad, above all from International Jewry itself. But one should not forget that dealing with the Jewish Question through legal means was the best approach. Or should the government have followed the principles of democracy and majority rule and let the people themselves solve the problem?

History has never had a revolution less bloody, more disciplined and more orderly than ours. In attempting to deal with the Jewish question and to approach the matter legally for the first time in Europe's history, we are only following the spirit of the age. Defending against the Jewish danger is only part of our plan. When it becomes the only issue when National Socialism is discussed, that is Jewry's fault, not ours. It has attempted to mobilize the world against us, in the secret hope of winning back the territory it has lost.

This hope is not only in vain, it also carries with it a series of dangers and difficulties for Jewry itself. It cannot prevent arguments throughout the world not only against our policies, but also for them. The discussing has taken on an extent that both in the immediate and distant future could have extraordinarily unpleasant consequences for the Jewish race.

Richard Wagner once called the Jews the "plastic demon of decomposition" and Theodor Mommsen meant the same when he saw them as the "ferment of decomposition." In contrast, the Aryan sees himself as a creative creature. There may be a certain tragedy inherent in the nature of the Jews, but is it our fault that this race works destructively among the peoples and is a constant danger to their domestic and international security?

The fundamental differences between the two races were responsible for the repeated explosions during the November years [1918-1933]. As long as the Jews remain anonymous, they are secure. The moment they lose their anonymity, the racial problem became acute and required a suitable solution. We certainly do not hold the Jews solely to blame for the German spiritual and economic catastrophe. We all know the other causes that led to the decline of our people. However, we have the courage to recognize their role in the process, and to name them by name.

It was difficult for a time to persuade the people of this, for public opinion was entirely in Jewish hands.

On a Berlin stage run by the Jews, a steel helmet bearing the words "Away with the filth!" was swept into the dust heap. The Jew Gumbel said the dead of the war had "fallen on the field of dishonor." The

Jew Lessing compared Hindenburg with the mass murderer Haarmann. The Jew Toller said heroism was “the most stupid ideal.” The Jew Arnold Zweig spoke of the German people as a “horde that needed to be unmasked,” as the “animalistic power of the eternal Boche,” and as a “nation of newspaper readers, a herd of voters, businessmen, murderers, marchers, operetta lovers, and bureaucratic cadavers.”

Is it surprising that the German Revolution also broke this unbearable yoke? When one further considers the alienation of German intellectual life by International Jewry, its corruption of German justice that finally led to the fact that only one out of every five judges was German, the takeover of the medical profession, their predominance among university professors, in short, the fact that nearly all intellectual professions were dominated by the Jews, one has to grant that no people with any self esteem could tolerate that for long. It was only an act of national renewal when the National Socialist revolution took action in this area.

People abroad often do not know the real causes of German Jewish legislation. The statistics are most persuasive.

Nonetheless, we held back at the beginning of our work. We had more important things to do than to take on a question of such great scope. It is entirely the fault of Jewry that things turned out differently. The boycott and atrocity propaganda they made in other countries was an attempt by International Jewry to accomplish by means of public opinion in other countries what had been made impossible by our takeover in Germany. They attempted to cause difficulties for Germany’s rebirth through a worldwide boycott campaign, and to render it ineffective.

We finally resorted to a counter-boycott during that critical period. The fact that their racial comrades still in Germany suffered loss is thanks to their racial comrades beyond our borders, who were trying to cause difficulties for us. They only caused economic difficulties for their own race. We can predict the future consequences for Jewry. We have not done anything to encourage them, they are simply the product of the times. Many clever Jews have already realized what they have done, above all to those remaining in Germany, who were the most directly affected. They shouted their warnings. But they could not overcome the radical wing, and in the end had to let things take their course for better or worse. This radical wing has delivered an extraordinarily hard blow to World Jewry and its allies. They put the Jewish Problem up for debate, and where it is debated the results can only be unpleasant. Jewry’s strength is in its anonymity; if it loses that, the results can only be harmful.

The recent Zionist Conference in Paris shows the hopeless situation World Jewry has been driven into by its radical wing. When one of the various Jewish groups is no longer united, when there are only fruitless debates, it is a sign that Jewish power is on shaky ground. That is already beginning to have consequences for Jewry.

These events reveal the racial problem in all its difficulty. It will not fade away until Europe’s peoples solve it. It will be solved when the people for their own good do what is necessary for their security.

Our country still faces a world boycott by International Jewry, even if it is not as open as it was earlier, and we are still threatened by a cleverly thought out and systematically executed world conspiracy. The fight against young Germany is a fight by the Second and Third Internationales against our authoritarian state. The countries that tolerate or promote it, sometimes in the mistaken belief that they are thus reducing troublesome German competition on the world market, are bringing upon themselves and their future a danger that we have overcome.

They can do what they want; Germany has overcome the danger. It has taken radical steps to drive out Bolshevism and its ideological content along with its racially-linked concepts.

If our battle against anarchy results in the racial problem becoming a world problem, that was not our

intention, but it is fine with us. The conspiracy being forged against Germany will not lead to our destruction, but it will inevitably open the eyes of all the peoples of the world.

Let me in closing say a few words about the measures we are taking against the world propaganda directed against us. It is clear that such a major campaign against Germany's peace and security cannot go unanswered. World propaganda against us will be answered with world propaganda for us.

We know what propaganda is, its power, and its ways and means. We did not learn it in school, but became its masters while doing practical work. Our untiring educational campaign succeeded in uniting Catholics and Protestants, farmers, the middle class and workers, Bavarians and Prussians, into a unified German people. We united the power of persuasion with the power of the idea. We depended only on ourselves, conquering the state with the power of faith and the power of the word. Who cannot believe that we will succeed in persuading the world of the integrity of our actions? A calm presentation of our case may not win love, but it will at least win growing respect. The truth is always stronger than the lie.

The truth about Germany will get through to the other nations, also in respect to the racial question. We have done what is necessary, and therefore fulfilled our duty. We do not need to fear the world's judgment.

The world is cordially invited to send its journalists and representatives to Germany so that they can see for themselves the courage and determination of the government and people to remove the last remnants of the war and the November revolt, and to introduce a balance of power that will guarantee Germany a secure existence, honor, and its daily bread. No one who sees this nation at work can have doubts about its future. The more foreigners visit us, the more friends young Germany will win.

Our foreign situation today is identical to our domestic situation when we began. Those who attended our meetings then were struck by the crass contrast between what the enemy newspapers wrote about us and what we actually are. Visitors to Germany today have the same experience. Their experiences will be the beginning of respect. Any fair, thinking and objective person, wherever he may come from, will find a people and a government trying to overcome the difficulties of the postwar period by its own strength, and who are attacking the problems they face with hard, manly pride. We need to show the world what we once showed the other parties: We never lose our nerve.

Modesty, clarity, firmness, and decency are the virtues that our kind of German thinking wants to see in the world. There is nothing that is impossible. That which seems impossible can be made possible by the power of the spirit.

Germany will not founder on the racial question; to the contrary, the future of our people depends on solving it. As in so many other areas, here we also shall be pathfinders for the world. Our revolution is of enormous significance. We want it to find the key to world history in the solution of the racial question.