

The
New Germany
desires
Work and Peace

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Speeches by

Reich Chancellor Adolf Hitler

the Leader of the New Germany

With an Introduction

by

Dr. Joseph Goebbels

Digitized by Propagandaleiter

Printed and published by Liebheit & Thiesen, Berlin
Printed in Germany



INTRODUCTION

The New Germany desires Work and Peace

The above is the title given to this collection of the speeches which the German Chancellor, *Adolf Hitler*, has delivered since his entry into office on the 30th January 1933. That this Germany wishes for work needs no further demonstration. Nearly *five million men and women* are struggling to regain the positions they have lost in factories and offices. *Unemployment*, that terrible disease of our times, keeps them idle. The governments of the past, who, along with their system, have been superseded by National Socialism, were embarrassed and inactive when faced by this pressing problem. The Hitler Government have made their plans and *declared war* on unemployment. It is not with outside aid that they intend to overcome the evil; they are not going to the other nations of the world, as their predecessors did, to beg humbly for protection and assistance. They know that crises and despair are prevalent in every country, and for this reason they have determined to master the evil in their *own* way and on their *own* initiative. The return of *two million men and women* to work bears witness to the fact that Hitler's attempt to solve the problem of unemployment has not been without success.

But just as this New Germany desires *work*, it also desires *peace*. It has announced to the whole world, through the mouth of the Chancellor himself, speaking in the Reichstag, that it has *no aggressive intentions whatever*, that it does not wish to provoke anyone nor to stir up unrest. It wishes to pursue its work in peace and in a spirit of deep moral conviction, in order to make sure of its daily bread. It stands unarmed before the world, and has no other means of proving the genuineness of its intentions but its industry and assiduity. It is firmly convinced that the world cannot regard its claims with indifference.

When this Germany announces that it will not sign any treaties that cannot be observed, it, only does so because it intends to observe faithfully all treaties that have once been signed. It is an orderly and disciplined Germany in which authority rules that has been awakened by Adolf Hitler and his movement, and is endeavouring to gain the confidence and understanding of the world.

The world is still suspicious; with the exception of a few men who have had the courage to look the facts in the face, the world has no understanding whatever, or at best a very poor one, for the meaning of the events that have taken place in Germany. Then only will it ready appreciate the overwhelming importance of the internal revolution in Germany when Europe's need has become so great that people everywhere begin to realize that, without mutual understanding and respect between nations, peace cannot flourish and that the scourge of unemployment will continue to afflict the nations of the world.

The speeches delivered by Adolf Hitler since the 30th January 1933 are eloquent proofs of Germany's desire for work and peace. May the world learn at least one thing from them, namely, that the German nation once more deserves to be respected by the other nations in the same way as it can now once more respect itself.

Dr. Joseph Goebbels

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Proclamation by the Government to the German Nation.

Berlin, 1 February 1933¹

More than fourteen years have gone by since that unhappy day on which the German nation, deceived by promises from without and from within, forgot the glories of its past, forgot its honour and its freedom and thereby lost everything. Since that day of betrayal the Almighty has turned His countenance away from us. Strife and hatred have been the order of the day. Millions of the finest German men and women in all stations of life have had to behold with heavy hearts the unity of the nation breaking up and disappearing in a welter of egoistic political theories, selfish business interests and conflicting social doctrines.

Since that day of revolution, Germany has presented, as so often before in our history, a heart-breaking picture of disunity. We have not received the promised equality and fraternity, and we have lost our liberty. The collapse of the spiritual unity at home was followed by the loss to our people of their political standing in the world.

We are firmly convinced that the German nation entered the fight in 1914 without the slightest feeling of guilt on its part and filled only with the desire to defend its Fatherland which had been attacked and to preserve the freedom, nay, the very existence, of the German people. This being so, we can only see in the disastrous fate which has overtaken us since those November days of 1918 the result of our own collapse at home. But the rest of the world too has suffered no less since then from overwhelming crises. The balance of power which had evolved in the course of history, and which formerly played no small part in bringing about the understanding of the necessity for an internal solidarity of the nations, with all its advantages for trade and commerce, has been set on one side.

The **insane Conception of Victors and Vanquished**

destroyed the confidence existing between nations, and, at the same time, the industry of the entire world. The misery of our people is appalling! Millions of our proletariat are without work and without means of existence, and the entire middle class is rapidly becoming impoverished. If the German peasantry is to go under too, we shall be faced by a catastrophe beyond all conception, for this will not only mean the collapse of a single nation but of a cultural inheritance of the highest importance which has stood for two thousand years.

Symptoms of approaching collapse are all around us. Communism, with its method of madness, is making a powerful and insidious attack upon our discouraged and shattered nation. It wishes to poison the minds of the people, and to drive them into a period which will fall far shorter of its promises than the period through which we have just passed falls short of the promises of the very same apostles of November 1918.

This negative, destroying spirit has spared nothing of all that is highest and most valuable. Beginning with the family, it has undermined the very foundations of morality and faith, and

¹ Authorised translation of the official text.

scoffs at culture and business, nation and fatherland, justice and honour. *Fourteen years of Marxism have ruined Germany: one year of Bolshevism would destroy her.* The richest and fairest territories of the world would be turned into a smoking heap of ruins. *Even the sufferings of the last decade and a half could not be compared to the misery of a Europe in the heart of which the red flag of destruction had been hoisted.* The thousands of wounded, the hundreds of dead which this inner strife has already cost Germany should be a warning of the storm which would come.

In this hour of overwhelming anxiety as to the future of the German nation, the aged leader of our armies in the War summoned us men of the national parties and organisations to fight at home under him once more, as of old at the front, in unity and loyalty, to save the Reich. Our venerable President has joined our hands together in this spirit and for this purpose, and we are determined, as leaders of the nation, to fulfil, as a national Government, the task which has been allotted to us, swearing fidelity only to God, our conscience and the nation.

The inheritance which has fallen to us is a terrible one.

The task with which we are faced is the hardest which has fallen to German statesmen within the memory of man. But we are all filled with unbounded confidence, for we believe in our people and their imperishable virtues. Every class and every individual must help us to found the new Reich.

The National Government will regard it as their first and foremost duty to *revive in the nation the spirit of unity and cooperation.* They will preserve and defend those basic principles on which our nation has been built up. *They regard Christianity as the foundation of our national morality, and the family as the basis of national life.* They are determined, without regard for class and social status, to restore the nation to a consciousness of its political and national unity and of the duties consequent upon this realisation. *They intend to make respect for our glorious past and pride in our ancient traditions the ground principles for the education of German youth.* In this way they will wage a pitiless warfare upon spiritual, political and cultural *Nihilism.* Germany must not, Germany shall not go under in the chaos of Communism.

Turbulent instincts must be replaced by a national discipline as the guiding principle of our national life. All those institutions which are the strongholds of the energy and vitality of our nation will be taken under the especial care of the Government.

The National Government intends to solve the problem of the *reorganisation of trade and commerce with two four-year plans:*

The German farmer must be rescued in order that the nation may be supplied with the necessities of life.

A concerted and all-embracing attack must be made on unemployment in order that the German working class may be saved from ruin.

The November parties have ruined the German peasantry in fourteen years.

In fourteen years they have created an army of millions of unemployed.

The National Government will, with iron determination and unshakeable steadfastness of purpose, put through the following plan:

Within four years the German peasant must be rescued from the quagmire into which he has fallen.

Within four years unemployment must be finally overcome.

At the same time the conditions necessary for a revival in trade and commerce are provided.

The National Government will couple with this tremendous task of reorganising business life a *reorganisation of the administration and fiscal systems of the Reich, of the Federal States and the Communes.*

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Only when this has been done can the idea of a continued *federal existence of the entire Reich* be fully realised.

Compulsory labour service and the „back-to-the-land” policy are two of the basic principles of this programme.

The securing of the necessities of life will include *the performance of social duties to the sick and aged.*

In economical administration, the promotion of employment, the preservation of the farmer as well as in the exploitation of individual initiative the Government see the best guarantee for the *avoidance of any experiments which would endanger the currency.*

As regards their foreign policy, the National Government consider their highest mission to be the securing of the right to live and the restoration of freedom to our nation. Their determination to bring to an end the chaotic state of affairs in Germany will assist in restoring to the community of nations *a State of equal value* and, above all, *a State which must have equal rights.* They are impressed with the importance of their duty to use *this nation of equal rights* as an instrument for the *securing and maintenance of that peace* which the world requires today more than ever before.

May the good will of all others assist in the fulfilment of this our earnest wish for the welfare of Europe and of the whole world.

Great as is our love for our army as the bearer of our arms and the symbol of our great past, we should be happy if the world, *by reducing its armaments*, would see to it that we need never again increase our own.

If, however, Germany is to experience this *political and economic revival* and *conscientiously fulfil* her duties towards the other nations, one decisive step is absolutely necessary first: the

overcoming of the destroying menace of Communism in Germany.

We of this new Government feel ourselves responsible to posterity for the reorganisation of an ordered national State, and, at the same time, for the overcoming of class mania and class warfare. We are not concerned with only a part of the nation but with the entire German people, with the millions of peasants, working men and members of all classes who will either vanquish together the difficulties of this time or together succumb to them.

With our minds made up and true to our oath, we wish, in the face of the inability of the former Reichstag to support this work, to set the German nation itself the task which lies before us.

The President, Field-Marshal von Hindenburg, has summoned us with the command to give to the nation by our united front the possibility of a recovery.

We now therefore call upon the German people to set its signature to this act of reconciliation.

The Government of the national renaissance wishes to work and will work.

It was not this Government which in the course of fourteen years brought the German nation to ruin. What this Government intends to do is to restore the nation to its former eminence.

They are determined to make good in four years the evil done in fourteen.

They cannot, however, subject the work of restoration to the approval of those who are responsible for the collapse.

The parties of Marxism and their followers have had *fourteen years to show what they can do.*

The result is a heap of ruins.

We now appeal to the German nation to give us four years' time and then to pass judgement.

Obedient to the command of the Field-Marshal, we are ready to begin. May God Almighty give our work His blessing, strengthen our purpose and endow us with wisdom and the trust of our people, for we are fighting not for ourselves but for Germany!

The Government of the Reich.

Adolf Hitler, von Papen, Freiherr von Neurath, Dr. Frick, Graf
Schwerin von Krosigk, Dr. Hugenberg, Seldte, Dr. Gürtner,
von Blomberg, Eltz von Rügenach, Goring.

President von Hindenburg

*in Potsdam on 21 March 1933
on the Occasion of the Opening of the Reichstag of the
National Renaissance²*

By my decree of the 1st February of this year *I dissolved the Reichstag* in order that the German people might have an opportunity to record its decision concerning *the national coalition government formed by me*. In the elections of the 5th March our people have placed themselves with a clear majority behind the government which I have summoned by reason of my confidence in them and have thus given them a *constitutional mandate* to commence their work.

Many and arduous are the tasks which you, Herr Reichskanzler, and you, gentlemen, Members of the Cabinet, have before you. Both in home and foreign politics, in our own household as in the world, there are difficult problems to solve and *important decisions* to be made. I am convinced that Chancellor and Government will attack these problems with firm determination, and I trust that you, the members of the newly formed Reichstag, will take your stand behind the Government in a full appreciation of the state of affairs and the measures which are necessary, and that you for your part will do all in your power to support the work of the Government.

The place³ in which we are assembled today summons up memories of the Prussia of former days which became great in the fear of God by devotion to duty, unflinching courage and selfless patriotism, which principles have *welded the German peoples into one nation*. May the spirit of this hallowed spot inspire the men of today, may it free us from selfish concerns and party strife and join us together in a feeling of devotion to the best of our national traditions and spiritual renewal for the service of a proud, free and united Germany.

With this desire in my heart, I extend my greetings to the Reichstag at the beginning of its new term of office and

call upon the Chancellor to address the assembly.

² Authorised translation of the official text.

³ Owing to the burning by Communists of the Reichstag, the opening of the new Reichstag session took place in the Garrison Church at Potsdam which is the last resting-place of Frederick the Great.

Chancellor Adolf Hitler⁴

Herr Reichspräsident, Members of the German Reichstag,

For years our people has been oppressed by care.

After a period of prosperity and progress when every branch of our national life flourished, we have fallen once more – as so often in the past – upon times of misery and want.

Millions of Germans are seeking in vain their daily bread, in spite of industry and the will to work, and in spite of ability, knowledge and experience. Business is at a standstill, finance in ruins and millions are without work.

The world sees our cities only from the outside, and knows nothing of the misery which is under the surface.

Ever changing has been the lot of our nation for two thousand years, a rise has always been followed by a fall. The causes have always been the same. The German, restless and distraught, at war within himself and ignorant of what he really desires, sinks into a state of coma. He dreams of justice in the stars and loses his contact with reality.

The more nation and country fall into decay and national life grows weaker, the more have men sought in all times to make a virtue of necessity. The theory of the individual value of our tribes hid from view the fact that cooperation was a vital necessity. Ultimately there was only one way left for the German, the way within. As a nation of poets and thinkers, they dreamed then of the better world in which the others lived, and only when need and suffering had rained their heaviest blows upon them did there arise, perhaps out of their art, the *longing for a period of revival, for a new Reich and, at the same time, for a new life.*

When *Bismarck* steered the cultural aspirations of the German nation into the channels of *national unity*, the long period of misery and internal strife seemed for ever ended. Obedient to the spirit of the proclamation of the Empire, our nation played its part in the revival of prosperity, of culture and moral standards. Its consciousness of its own strength has always been inseparably bound up with its feeling of responsibility for cooperation *among the European nations.*

It was during this time of growing national solidarity of the German peoples that our nation began to lose its sense of political perspective, and under this loss we are suffering today.

This inner decay it was which played once more, as so often before, into the hands of the world around us. The revolution of November 1918 ended a conflict into which the German nation had been drawn in the most sacred conviction that it was but protecting its liberty and its right to live.

⁴ Authorised translation of the official text.

The Myth of Germany's War Guilt.

Neither the Kaiser nor the Government nor the nation *wanted* this war. It was only the collapse of our nation which compelled a weakened race *to take upon itself, against its most sacred convictions, the guilt for this war.*

This collapse, however, was followed by the disintegration of our entire life. Politically, morally, culturally and economically, our nation sank deeper and deeper into the morass.

Worst of all was the deliberate annihilation of our faith in our own strength, the soiling of our traditions and the destruction of the very roots of our belief in ourselves.

Since then, crisis after crisis has shaken our nation to its very foundations.

But the rest of the world has not been made any happier or richer by this severing of a politically and economically important limb from the body corporate. Out of the insane theory of *a permanent status of victors and vanquished* arose the *folly of reparations* and, as a result, *the breakdown of the entire economic system of the world.*

While the German nation and the German Reich were thus sinking into the bog of inner political strife and economic ruin, a small group of Germans was beginning to come forward which had not lost faith in the nation and was determined to weld it once more into a united entity.

It is to this young Germany that you, Herr Generalfeldmarschall, magnanimously entrusted, on the 30th January 1933, the leadership of the nation.

The Appeal to the Nation.

In the conviction that the German people was bound to give its approval to the new order of things in Germany, we of this National Government made a final appeal to the nation.

On the 5th March the people decided with a majority in our favour. Rising as never before, it has in a few weeks restored the national honour, and, thanks to your clear judgment, Herr Reichspräsident, has united the symbol of past greatness to that of the strength and vitality of youth.

In this solemn hour the National Government faces the Reichstag for the first time and proclaims its unshakeable determination to undertake the reorganisation of the German Reich and nation, and to carry it through successfully.

The National Government, conscious that they have the will of the nation behind them, demands from the parties and the representatives of the nation that, after fifteen years of misery in Germany, they raise themselves above the doctrinaire conceptions of party politics and recognize the inevitable necessity of cooperation which has been laid upon us by the needs of the times and their threatening consequences.

The task, which fate has demanded that we fulfil, makes it our bounden duty to rise high above the petty considerations of everyday party politics.

We are determined to restore once more *unity of spirit and of determination* to our people.

We are determined to protect the eternal foundations of our national life, the strength and the virtues which are our birthright.

We are determined to raise once more to the guiding principles of organisation and government those ideas without which no nation and no country can rise to greatness.

We are determined to combine trust in the sound and natural instincts of life with a steady development of inner and foreign policy.

We are determined to constitute a government which, instead of constantly wavering from side to side, shall be firm and purposeful, and restore to our people a source of *unshakeable authority*.

We are determined to profit from all those experiences which in past centuries have proved of value to mankind, politically and economically, both to the individual and to the community.

We are determined to restore politics to that level which shall enable them to act as the reorganizing and guiding principles of national life.

We are determined to make use of all the truly vital forces in the nation which shall serve to ensure the future of Germany, to gather together all men of good will under our banner, and to deprive those who wish to harm our nation of the power to do so.

We are determined to create a new community out of the German peoples – a community formed of men of every status and profession and of every so-called class, which shall be able to achieve that community of interests which the welfare of the entire nation demands. All classes must be welded together into *a single German nation*.

This nation shall take under its protection for all time our faith and our culture, our honour and our freedom.

In our relations to the world *we wish*, having clearly before our eyes the sacrifices of the War, *to be the champions of a peace which shall finally heal those wounds from which all are suffering*.

The Government of the national renaissance is determined to fulfil the task which they have undertaken before the German nation. They stand today before the German Reichstag with the earnest desire to receive from it the support necessary for the fulfilling of their mission. May you, the elected representatives of the nation, recognise the meaning of this epoch and join with us in the great work of national restoration.

Hindenburg as symbol.

There is among us today a grand old man. We rise to salute you, Herr Generalfeldmarschall.

Three times you have fought on the field of honour for the existence and the future of our nation.

As lieutenant in the army of the King of Prussia, you fought for the unity of Germany; under him who afterwards became the first German Kaiser you fought for the glorious founding of the German Empire and, as our supreme leader, you fought in the greatest war of all time for the existence of the Reich and for the freedom of our people.

You were present when the German Empire came into being, you beheld the work of the Great Chancellor, the glorious rise of our nation, and you have led us in those momentous times in which fate has allowed us to play our part.

Hindenburg, the Patron of the National Renaissance.

Providence has willed it, Herr Generalfeldmarschall, that you should be present here today as the patron of the renaissance of our nation. Your marvellous career is a symbol for us all of the indestructible forces which are latent in the German nation. The youth of Germany and, indeed, the whole nation is filled with gratitude to you that you have lent your approval and given your blessing to the rehabilitation of the German nation. May these forces give strength also to the newly elected representatives of the people.

May Providence at the same time grant us that courage and perseverance of which this spot, hallowed for every German, reminds us and give us who stand here at the tomb of our greatest monarch the strength to fight for the freedom and greatness of our people.

Chancellor Adolf Hitler

before the Reichstag on 23 March 1933⁵

Men and Women of the German Reichstag,

The National Socialist Party and the German National People's Party, with the concurrence of the Government of the Reich, have proposed a motion for the adoption of a law for the removal of the distress of the people and the Reich. The reasons for this extraordinary procedure are as follows: –

In November 1918 Marxist organizations seized the executive power by means of a revolution. The monarchs were dethroned, the authorities of the Reich and of the States removed from office, and thereby a *breach of the constitution* was committed. The success of the revolution in a material sense protected the guilty parties from the hands of the law. They sought to justify it morally by asserting that Germany or its Government bore

the Guilt for the Outbreak of the War.

This assertion was *deliberately and actually untrue*. In consequence, however, these untrue accusations in the interest of our former enemies led to the severest oppression of the entire German nation and to the breach of the assurances given to us in Wilson's fourteen points, and so for Germany, that is to say the working classes of the German people, to a time of infinite misfortune.

All the promises made by the men of November 1918 proved to be, if not intentionally misleading from the start, no less damnable illusions. The „achievements of the revolution“, taken as a whole, were only pleasing to the smallest fraction of our people. But for the overwhelming majority, at least in so far as they had to earn their daily bread by honest work, they were absolutely tragic. It is, of course, comprehensible, that the instinct of self-preservation of the parties and men responsible for this state of affairs provided them with a thousand palliatives and excuses. The sober comparison of the average results of the last fourteen years with the promises proclaimed aloud at the time is disastrous for the responsible instigators of this crime unparalleled in German history.

In the course of the last fourteen years our nation has suffered from a decline in all spheres of life on such a scale that anything worse can hardly be imagined. The question of what could have been worse in this period is unanswerable in view of the basic values of our German nation and the formerly existing political and economic heritage.

The German nation itself, in spite of the difficulty it finds in changing its political feelings and opinions, has more and more turned its back on the views, parties and associations responsible in its eyes for these circumstances.

The number of Germans who were wholehearted supporters of the Weimar Constitution was, in spite of the power of suggestion and the ruthless exploitation of governmental authority, actually no more than a fraction of the whole nation.

⁵ Authorised translation of the official text.

It was, further, a characteristic feature of these fourteen years that – apart from natural fluctuations – the line of development led constantly downwards. The recognition of this depressing fact was one of the causes of the general despair. It furthered the realization of the necessity of a fundamental abandonment of the ideas, organizations and men that the nation gradually began rightly to recognize as the underlying causes of our decline.

The National Socialist movement was consequently able, in spite of the worst forms of oppression, to attract a constantly increasing number of Germans who were ready to devote themselves heart and soul to the struggle. In combination with the other national associations, it has now, in the course of a few weeks, removed the powers that had dominated the country since November 1918 and, by a revolution, placed public authority in the hands of the National Government. *On the 5th of March the German people gave its approval to this act.*

The Programme of Reconstruction

of the nation and the Reich arises from the intensity of the needs of our political, moral and economic life. Fully convinced, as they are, that this collapse is due to internal infirmities in our national body corporate, it is the aim of the Government of the National Revolution to remove from our national life those defects which would prevent any real recovery in future too. The splitting up of the nation into groups with irreconcilable views, systematically brought about by the false doctrines of Marxism, means the destruction of the basis of a possible communal life.

The disintegration attacks all the foundations of social order. The completely irreconcilable views of different individuals with regard to the terms state, society, religion, morals, family and economy give rise to differences that lead to internecine war.

Starting from the liberalism of the last century, this development is bound by natural laws to end in communistic chaos.

The mobilization of the most primitive instincts leads to a connection between the views with regard to a political idea and the doings of real criminals. Starting with plunderings, incendiarism, train-wrecking, political outrages and so on, everything receives its moral sanction from the principles of Communism. The method of individual terrorization of the masses alone has cost the National Socialist movement over 350 dead and tens of thousands of wounded in the course of a few years.

The setting on fire of the Reichstag, as an unsuccessful attempt forming part of a well-organized plan, is only a sample of what Europe had to expect from the victory of this infernal doctrine. When a certain section of the press, especially abroad, now attempts, in accordance with political untruth adopted as a principle by Communism, to identify the national renaissance in Germany with this outrage, this can only strengthen my determination to leave nothing undone in order to exact expiation for this crime by the public execution of the guilty incendiary and his accomplices.

The whole extent of the intended action of this organization has not been sufficiently realized either by the German nation or by the rest of the world. It was only by taking immediate action that the Government prevented a development whose catastrophic results would have shaken the whole of Europe. Many of those both in and outside Germany who now associate

themselves with the interests of communism out of hatred for the national renaissance would themselves have been the victims of such a development.

It will be the supreme task of the National Government to utterly eliminate and remove this symptom in our country, not only in Germany's interest but also in that of the rest of Europe.

They will constantly keep in view the fact that it is not a question of the negative problem which these organizations constitute, but of carrying out the positive task of gaining the German workman for the national state. It is only the creation of a real national community, rising above the interests and differences of rank and class, that can permanently remove the source of nourishment of these aberrations of the human mind. The establishment of such a solidarity of views in the German body corporate is all the more important, for it is only thereby that the possibility is provided of maintaining friendly relations with foreign powers, without regard to the tendencies or general principles by which they are dominated, for *the elimination of communism in Germany is a purely domestic German affair*. The rest of the world may well have just as great an interest in it, for the outbreak of communistic chaos in the densely populated German Reich would lead to political and economic consequences of inconceivable extent, especially in the rest of Western Europe. The internal decay of our national life led inevitably to a more and more serious weakening of the authority of the supreme government. The decrease in the respect felt for the Government of the Reich which was the inevitable consequence of such insecure internal conditions led, in the case of various parties in the different federal States, to conceptions that are incompatible with the unity of the Reich. All regard for the traditions of the federal States cannot brush aside the recognition of the bitter fact that the excessive disintegration of state life in the past was not only not helpful but really injurious to the position held by our nation in the world.

It is not the task of a supreme government subsequently to surrender to the theoretical principle of an unrestrained system of standardization what has grown up organically. But it is its duty *to establish beyond any doubt this spiritual and generally desired unity of the leadership of the nation, and thus of the idea of the Reich as such*.

The welfare of our communes and federal States has need of state protection just as much as the existence of every individual German. Therefore the Government of the Reich do not intend to abolish the local governments of the federal States by an enabling act. But, on the other hand, they will adopt those measures that will guarantee from now on and for ever a uniformity of political intentions in the Reich and the States. The greater the spiritual and generally desired unanimity, the less can it be in the interest of the Reich in the future to do violence to the cultural and economic life in the individual States. The recently prevailing state of a mutual disparagement of the governments of the federal States and the Reich, with the aid of the modern means offered by popular propaganda, is absolutely impossible. Under no circumstances will I permit, and the Government of the Reich will take all measures to prevent, that in future ministers of German governments ever again accuse or disparage each other in the eyes of the world at public mass meetings and even on the wireless.

It also leads to a complete discrediting of the legislative body in the eyes of the people, when, even if it be assumed that times are normal, the people is forced to go to the polls, either in the Reich or in the various States, almost twenty times in the course of four years. The Government of the Reich will find a way of reaching the goal that the expression of the people's will when once given shall lead, for the Reich and the States, to uniform consequences.

A still more comprehensive

Reform of the Reich

can only result from active development. Its aim must be the construction of a constitution combining the people's will with the authority of real leadership. *The legal sanction to such a constitutional reform will be granted by the nation itself.*

The Government of the National Revolution regard it in principle as their duty, in accordance with the vote of confidence given them by the nation, to prevent the exercise of influence on the structure of the life of the nation by those elements who knowingly and intentionally deny this life. Theoretical equality in the eyes of the law cannot be extended to the toleration on an equal basis of those who scorn the laws on principle, or indeed to surrendering the nation's freedom to them on the basis of democratic doctrines. But the Government will accord equality in the eyes of the law to all those who take their stand, in face of this danger, on the line adopted by our nation and behind the national interests, and who do not deny their support to the Government.

Our immediate task is now to call to account the spiritual leaders of these destructive tendencies, and to rescue their misguided victims.

We consider in particular the millions of German workmen who profess these ideas of madness and self-destruction merely as the result of the *unpardonable weakness of earlier governments* who did not prevent the dissemination of theories, the putting into practice of which they themselves were bound to punish. The Government will allow no-one to deter them from their resolve to solve this question. It is now the business of the Reichstag, for its part, to adopt a definite attitude to this question. This will not affect the fate of Communism and of the organizations affiliated with it. The National Government adopt their measures in this respect from no other point of view but that of protecting the German people, and especially the millions of the working classes, from untold misery.

They therefore regard the question of a

Monarchical Restoration

as one which cannot be discussed at present, if for no other reason than the existence of this state of affairs. They would have to regard an attempt by the individual States to solve this problem on their own responsibility as an attack on the unity of the Reich, and act accordingly.

Simultaneously with this political purification of our public life, the Government of the Reich will undertake a thorough

Moral Purging of the Body Corporate of the Nation.

The entire educational system, the theatre, the cinema, literature, the press and the wireless – all these will be used as means to this end and valued accordingly. They must all serve for the maintenance of the eternal values present in the essence of our nationality. Art will always remain the expression and the reflection of the longings and the realities of an era. The neutral international attitude of aloofness is rapidly disappearing. Heroism is coming forward ardently and will in future shape and lead political destiny. It is the task of art to be the expression of this determining spirit of the age. Blood and race will once more become the source of artistic intuition. It is the task of the Government to take measures to secure that, especially at a time of limited political power, the inner life's value and will to live of the nation

find all the greater cultural expression. This resolve obliges us to regard our great past with thankful admiration. A bridge must be constructed between this past and the future in all spheres of our historical and cultural life. Respect for the great men of the past must once more be impressed on the youth of Germany as a sacred heritage. The Government, being resolved to undertake the political and moral purification of our public life, are creating and securing the conditions necessary for a really profound

Revival of Religious Life.

The advantages of a personal and political nature that might arise from compromising with atheistic organizations would not outweigh the consequences which would become apparent in the destruction of general moral basic values.

The National Government regard the two Christian confessions as the weightiest factors for the maintenance of our nationality. They will respect the agreements concluded between them and the federal States.

Their rights are not to be infringed. But the Government hope and expect that the work on the national and moral regeneration of our nation which they have made their task will, on the other hand, be treated with the same respect. *They will adopt an attitude of objective justice towards all other confessions.* But they cannot permit that the fact of belonging to a certain confession or a certain race should constitute a release from general legal obligations or even a licence for the commission with impunity or the toleration of crimes. It will be the Government's care to maintain honest cooperation between Church and State; the struggle against materialistic views and for a real national community is just as much in the interest of the German nation as in that of the welfare of our Christian faith.

Our Legal Institutions

must serve above all for the maintenance of this national community. The irremovableness of the judges must ensure a sense of responsibility and the exercise of discretion in their judgements in the interests of society. Not the individual but the nation as a whole alone can be the centre of legislative solicitude. High treason and treachery to the nation will be ruthlessly eradicated in future. The foundations of the existence of justice cannot be other than the foundations of the existence of the nation. Let the judges therefore always pay regard to the gravity of the decisions taken by those who are responsible for forming the life of the nation under the hard pressure of reality.

Great are the tasks of the National Government in the

Sphere of Economic Life.

Here all action must be governed by one law: the people does not live for business and business does not exist for capital, but capital serves business and business serves the people. In principle the Government will not protect the economic interests of the German people by the circuitous method of an economic bureaucracy to be organized by the state, but by the utmost furtherance of private initiative and by the recognition of the rights of property.

A just balance must be established between productive intention on the one hand and productive work on the other. Administration must respect, by means of economy, the results of ability, diligence and work. The problem of our public finances is also to no small degree a problem of economical administration. The proposed

Reform of our Fiscal System

must lead to a simplification of assessment and thus to a reduction of the costs and burdens. In principle, the mill of taxation must be built beside the stream and not at the source. These measures must be accompanied by a reduction of burdens through simplification of the administration. This reform of the fiscal system to be carried out in the Reich and the federal States is, however, not a question which can be settled in a moment, but only during a period commensurate with the necessities of the situation.

The Government will systematically

avoid Currency Experiments.

We are faced above all by two economic tasks of the first magnitude. The salvation of the German farmer must be achieved at all costs.

The ruin of this class in our nation would lead to the gravest conceivable consequences. The restoration of the

Remunerative Capacity of Agriculture

may be hard on the consumer. But the fate that would await the entire German nation, if the German farmer were ruined, is not to be compared with these hardships. It is only in connection with the remunerative capacity of our agriculture which must be attained at all costs that the question of protection against distraint or relief from indebtedness can be solved. Should that not be achieved, then the ruin of our agriculturists would lead not only to the collapse of German business as a whole, but above all to the collapse of the German body corporate. To maintain our agriculture in a healthy state is the first condition for the prosperity and expansion of our industry, of German home trade and of German exports. But for the counterpoise of the German agricultural class, the communistic madness would already have overrun Germany, and thus finally ruined German business. What the whole of business, including the export trade, owes to the sound commonsense of the German agriculturists cannot be repaid by any sacrifice of a business nature. We must, therefore, devote our greatest solicitude in future to pursuing the back-to-the-land policy in Germany.

Furthermore, it is perfectly clear to the National Government that the final removal of the distress both in agricultural business and in that of the towns depends on the

absorption of the army of the unemployed in the process of production.

This constitutes the second of the great economic tasks. It can only be solved by a general appeasement, in applying sound natural economic principles and all measures necessary, even if, at the time, they cannot reckon with any degree of popularity. The *providing of work and the compulsory labour service* are, in this connection, only individual measures within the scope of the entire action proposed.

The Attitude of the National Government to the Middle Classes

is similar to that adopted by them to the German agriculturists. Their salvation can only be achieved within the scope of the general economic policy. The National Government are determined to solve this question thoroughly. They recognize it as their historical task to support and further the millions of German workers in the struggle for their right of existence. As Chancellor and National Socialist, I feel myself allied with them as the former companions of

my youth. The increase of the consuming power of these masses will be an important means of furthering economic recovery. While maintaining our

Social Legislation,

the first step must be taken for its reform. Above all, however, all working power will be utilized in the service of the nation as a whole. The waste of millions of hours of human labour is an act of madness and a crime that must lead to the impoverishment of everyone. Whatever values may be produced by the utilization of our superfluous man-power, they will represent indispensable vital necessities for millions of people who are now prostrated by misery and distress. It must and will be possible for our national talent for organization to succeed in solving this problem.

We are aware that the geographical position of Germany with her lack of raw materials does not fully permit of

Economic Self-Sufficiency

for the Reich. It cannot be too often emphasized that nothing is further from the thoughts of the Government of the Reich than hostility to exporting. We are fully aware that we have need of the connection with the outside world, and that the marketing of German commodities in the world provides a livelihood for many millions of our fellow-countrymen.

We also know what are the conditions necessary for a sound exchange of services between the nations of the world. For Germany has been compelled for years to perform services without receiving an equivalent, with the result that the task of maintaining Germany as an active partner in the exchange of commodities is not so much one of commercial as of financial policy. *So long as we are not accorded a reasonable settlement of our foreign debts corresponding to our economic capacity, we are unfortunately compelled to maintain our foreign exchange control.* The Government of the Reich is, for that reason, also compelled to maintain the restrictions on the efflux of capital across the frontiers of Germany. If the Government of the Reich are guided by these principles, we may certainly expect that increasing understanding abroad will facilitate the inclusion of the German Reich in the peaceful competition of the nations.

The Furtherance of Transport

until a sensible balance is reached between all transport interests will be initiated at the beginning of the coming month by a reform of the tax on motor vehicles. The maintenance of the German Railways Company and its return to the hands of the Reich as soon as possible is a task imposed upon us not only as an economic but also as a moral duty. The National Government will devote their energies to the development of aviation as a means of peaceful communication between the nations.

In all these spheres of activity the Government require the support not only of the general forces in our nation, which they are resolved to make use of to the greatest extent, but also of the devoted trust and work of the professional official classes. It is only in cases where the public finances are in dire need that intervention will take place, but even then absolute justice will be the supreme law governing our action.

The protection of the frontiers of the Reich and thereby of the lives of our people and the existence of our business is now in the hands of the Reichswehr, which, in accordance with the terms imposed upon us by the Treaty of Versailles, is to be regarded as the

only really disarmed army

in the world. In spite of its enforced smallness and entirely insufficient armament, the German people may regard their Reichswehr with proud satisfaction. This little instrument for our national self-defence has come into being under the most difficult conditions. The spirit imbuing it is that of our best military traditions. *The German nation has thus fulfilled with painful conscientiousness the obligations imposed upon it by the Peace Treaty*, indeed, even the replacement of ships for our fleet then sanctioned has, I may perhaps be allowed to say, unfortunately, only been carried out to a small extent.

For years Germany has been waiting in vain for the fulfilment of the promise of disarmament made to her by the others. It is the sincere desire of the National Government to be able to refrain from increasing our army and our weapons, in so far as the rest of the world is now also ready to fulfil its obligations in the matter of radical disarmament. For Germany desires nothing except

an equal right to live and equal freedom.

In any case the National Government will educate the German people in this spirit of a desire for freedom. The national honour, the honour of our army and the ideal of freedom must once more become sacred to the German people!

The German nation wishes to live in peace with the rest of the world.

But it is for this very reason that the Government of the Reich will employ every means to obtain the final removal of the division of the nations of the world into two categories. The keeping open of this wound leads to distrust on the one side and hatred on the other, and thus to a general feeling of insecurity. The National Government are ready to extend a hand in sincere understanding to every nation that is ready finally to make an end of the tragic past. The international economic distress can only disappear when the basis has been provided by stable political relations and when the nations have regained confidence in each other.

For the Overcoming of the Economic Catastrophe

three things are necessary: –

1. absolutely authoritative leadership in internal affairs, in order to create confidence in the stability of conditions;
2. the securing of peace by the great nations for a long time to come, with a view to restoring the confidence of the nations in each other;
3. the final victory of the principles of commonsense in the organization and conduct of business, and also a general release from reparations and impossible liabilities for debts and interest.

We are unfortunately faced by the fact that

the Geneva Conference,

in spite of lengthy negotiations, has so far reached no practical result. The decision regarding the securing of a real measure of disarmament has been constantly delayed by the raising of questions of technical detail and by the introduction of problems that have nothing to do with disarmament. This procedure is useless.

The illegal state of one-sided disarmament and the resulting national insecurity of Germany cannot continue any longer.

We recognize it as a sign of the feeling of responsibility and of the good will of the British Government that they have endeavoured, by means of their disarmament proposal, to cause the Conference finally to arrive at speedy decisions. The Government of the Reich will support every endeavour aimed at really carrying out generally disarmament and securing the fulfilment of Germany's long overdue claim for disarmament. For fourteen years we have been disarmed, and for fourteen months we have been waiting for the results of the Disarmament Conference. Even more far-reaching is the plan of the head of the Italian Government, which makes a broadminded and far-seeing attempt to secure a peaceful and consistent development of the whole of European policy. We attach the greatest weight to this plan, and we are ready to cooperate with absolute sincerity on the basis it provides, in order to unite the four Great Powers, England, France, Italy and Germany, in friendly cooperation in attacking with courage and determination the problems upon the solution of which the fate of Europe depends.

It is for this reason that we are particularly grateful for the appreciative heartiness with which the national renaissance of Germany has been greeted in Italy. We hope and trust that the similarity of our spiritual ideals will be the foundation of a constant strengthening of the friendly relations between the two countries.

In the same way, the Government of the Reich, who regard Christianity as the unshakeable foundation of the morals and moral code of the nation, attach the greatest value to friendly relations with the Holy See, and are endeavouring to develop them. We feel sympathy for our brother nation in Austria in its trouble and distress. In all their doings the Government of the Reich are conscious of the connection between the destiny of all German races. Their attitude towards the other foreign powers may be gathered from what has already been said. But even in cases where our mutual relations are encumbered with difficulties, we shall endeavour to arrive at a settlement. But in any case *the basis for an understanding can never be the distinction between victor and vanquished.*

We are convinced that such a settlement is possible in our relations with France, if the governments will attack the problems affecting them on both sides in a really broadminded way. The Government of the Reich are ready to cultivate with the Soviet Union friendly relations profitable to both parties. It is above all the Government of the National Revolution who feel themselves in a position to adopt such a positive policy with regard to Soviet Russia. The fight against Communism in Germany is our internal affair in which we will never permit interference from outside. Our political relations with other Powers to whom we are bound by common interests will not be affected thereby. Our relations with the remaining countries also deserve to receive our most serious attention in future, especially our relations with the great oversea states with whom Germany has long been connected by ties of friendship and economic interests.

We have particularly at heart the fate of the Germans living beyond the frontiers of Germany who are allied with us in speech, culture and customs and have to make a hard fight to retain these values. The National Government are resolved to use all the means at their disposal to support the rights internationally guaranteed to the German minorities.

We welcome the plan for a

World Economic Conference

and approve of its meeting at an early date. The Government of the Reich are ready to take part in this Conference, in order to arrive at positive results at last.

The most important question is the

Problem of our private short-term and long-term External Indebtedness.

The complete change in the conditions in the commodity markets of the world renders an adjustment necessary. It is only by trustful cooperation that a real removal of the general anxiety can be brought...

[MISSING PAGE]

Chancellor Adolf Hitler

to the representatives of German Agriculture on 5 April 1933⁶

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...agriculturist for the renewal, the resurgence and thus also for the change which will lead to the general restoration of healthy conditions in Germany.

Any government that overlooks the importance of such an essential foundation can only be a government of the moment. It may govern and administer for some years, but it will never achieve permanent or eternal successes, for these demand that the necessity of the maintenance of a people's room to live and thus of its own agricultural class must ever be borne in mind. The recognition of such a fundamental fact governs our actions in numerous spheres and the essential features of numerous minor decisions; it will serve us as a guiding idea and always take precedence in the whole of our actions and decisions. If we adopt these principles, we shall never lose touch with the ground beneath our feet, but will practically always from the start do the right thing, even if from time to time men – and we are after all merely human beings – may on one occasion or another not have chosen or found exactly what is right. I therefore believe that *this* government which regards the maintenance of the German nationality as its mission, – which again is dependent, as regards its interests, upon the maintenance of the German agricultural class – will never be mistaken in its decisions. It may make mistakes from time to time as to the means employed, but never in principle.

It is a question of courage not only to see things as they are. We shall have to break with many old traditions, and be compelled in many cases to adopt an attitude contrary to public opinion. We shall be able to do so all the more and all the sooner, the more a block of the nation stands solidly behind the Government. But one thing is impossible, namely, that a government should be able to fight in all directions at the same time. If a government fights for the maintenance of the German nationality, and thus also for the maintenance of the German agricultural class, then it is especially these sections of the German nation that must give their full support to the wishes and the actions of the government. This then provides it with that inner stability which it requires in order to make decisions that are difficult to defend at the moment, but which must be made and whose success is not visible at first to its unseeing fellow citizens, but which we are aware will contribute in the end to the salvation of the entire nation.

As the German agriculturists have now united to form a great whole, it will thus in future facilitate the work of the Government to an unprecedented extent by supporting it with its enormous weight of numbers. I believe that there is no member of this Government who is not imbued with the honest desire for this intimate cooperation. We regard the solution of this problem as implying at the same time the salvation of the German nation in the future, not only in 1933 and 1934 but for long ages to come. We are determined to adopt now and to carry out in the next few years those measures which we know will be recognized by later generations as fundamentally right.

It was high time to find the energy to adopt the decisions to which, in the most profound and final sense, we owe the salvation of the German nation.

⁶ Authorised translation of the official text.

We are ready to accept the burden imposed by this hard fight. Owing to the Enabling Law, the work of the deliverance of the German people has been freed and released for the first time from the party views and considerations of our former representative assembly. With its assistance we shall now be able to do what, after clear-sighted examination and dispassionate consideration, appears necessary for the future of the nation. The purely legislative previous conditions necessary for this have been provided. But it is also necessary that the people itself should take an active part in this action. The nation must not imagine that, because the Reichstag can no more restrict our decisions, the nation itself no longer needs to take part in the shaping of our destiny. On the contrary, we wish that the German people at this very time should concentrate once more and cooperate actively in support of the Government. The result must be that, when we appeal to the nation once more in four years' time, we shall not appeal to men who have been asleep, but will find ourselves faced by a nation that has finally awakened in the course of these years from its parliamentary trance and has realized the knowledge necessary to understand the eternal conditions of human existence.

I am aware that the work which lies before us entails tasks of terrible difficulty, not only because we must begin, after fifteen years of neglect of the most natural previous conditions of human existence, with perfectly simple principles of common sense, but because during this period an unprecedented interlacing of interests has occurred, and hardly any step appears possible without coming in contact with cases of corruption which must be dealt with, whether they are of a moral or material nature. But the main thing is that this problem must be solved, and this will be done. The varying fortunes which the German people has lived to see during the thousands of years of its history prove that it cannot be the intention of Providence that before our times previous generations fought and made sacrifices in order that their descendants might ruin their own lives and no longer be able to look forward to future ages. The great struggles in the past would be purposeless, were we to abandon the struggle for the future.

The sacrifices that we ourselves made for the maintenance of the German Reich were heavy. The generation which fought through the World War suffered to an unprecedented extent. But we must not only take that into account, for we must also think of what generations before us have performed, suffered and fought for. We must calculate the sum total of the sacrifices which have been made

before our time, not in order that one generation should capitulate in the face of destiny, and thus wipe out coming generations, but in the hope that each generation in turn will do its duty in this eternal succession of generations.

At the present day the warning finger of fate demands that we should fulfil this duty. For fifteen years we have all, without exception, transgressed grievously, some of us actively and consciously, and others passively and tolerantly. *It is for us, united and together, to overcome that time. Let the task be ever so great, if it must be solved then it will be solved. In this case also the eternal principle applies that where there's a will there's a way.*

Chancellor Adolf Hitler

Before two million workers on 1 May 1933
the „National Labour Day“.

My comrades of the German people!

May is here. That is what the German song says. For many centuries the first day of May has been not only the symbol of the return of spring to the land, it has also been the day of joy, gaiety and festivity. Then there came a time which took over this day and turned it from a day of blossoming life and hopeful joy into a day of conflict and internal warfare. A doctrine which had seized upon our people attempted to make of this day of awakening nature, of the visible return of spring, a day of hatred, of civil war, of strife and sorrow. Decades have gone by and this day seemed evermore destined to constitute a record of the inward strife and the disunity of our nation. At length, however, came a time, when we returned to our senses after endless misery had taken hold of our nation, a time of introspection, when the German people found each other once more.

And to-day we can sing once more the old German folk-song: „May is here, our people have awakened once more.“ The symbol of class-warfare, of perpetual strife and contention has become once more the symbol of the great unification and rebirth of the nation. Therefore we have chosen this day of reawakening nature to be for all time the day for the restoration of our own internal force and strength and at the same time of that creative work which knows no narrow boundaries and which is not tied to the Trade Unions, to the factories and offices, a work which we wish to recognize and support everywhere where it is being done with the intention of furthering the life of our nation.

The German nation has a time of cruel need behind it. Nor is (his to be ascribed in any way to a lack of industriousness. No! Millions of our people are as busy as formerly, millions of peasants stride, as formerly, behind the plough, millions of workers stand by their work tables and by their clanging anvils. Millions of our people are indeed busy, and millions of others, who wish to be busy, cannot be. Tens of thousands are voluntarily putting an end to their own lives which seem for them to hold nothing but trouble and misery. They are exchanging this life for the other side from which they hope for something more and better. Frightful misery and misfortune have come upon us and brought with them despondency, aye and despair. And we ask ourselves, why?

It is a political calamity. The German nation is at war within itself, its whole strength is being used up in internal strife. No longer are we relying on the strength of our own wills, no longer is the same force there. Millions are looking to the world outside and hoping to obtain from there happiness and salvation. The nation is crumbling to pieces, and in this process of collapse all power and all vital energy are disappearing. The results of class warfare are to be seen all around us and we wish to learn a lesson from them, for we have recognized one thing as necessary for the return to health of our nation:

The German people must learn to know each other again.

The millions who have been split up into professions and kept apart by artificial class distinctions, who, foolishly clinging to profession and status, cannot understand each other any longer, must find once more the way to each other. An enormous and stupendous task – we know it. After seventy years of the preaching of this madness as a political idea, after the destruction of community feeling has been held as a political duty for seventy years, it is, of course, difficult to alter the opinions of people at a blow. Nevertheless we must not give way to despondency and despair. What has been built up by the hands of man, can also be destroyed by the hands of man; what human madness once invented, can be overcome by human wisdom.

We know that this process of finding one another again and getting to know one another cannot be a question of weeks or months, and not even of a few years. We are, however, absolutely determined to fulfil this mighty task which has been laid upon us; we have made up our minds to lead the people of Germany to one another and, if necessary, to compel them.

That is the meaning of the first of May, which day, from now on, shall be celebrated in Germany throughout the centuries, in order that on it all those who are taking part in our creative national work may come together and, once in the year, may give each other their hands, fully recognizing that nothing can be achieved if all are not ready to do their part in the great work. Therefore we have chosen as the motto of this day the following sentence:

Honour work and respect the worker!

It is hard to-day for millions to find the way to each other again over all the hatred and misunderstandings which, in the past, have been artificially cultivated. The recognition of one fact should make the following of this way easier. Every man, wherever and whatever his work, must always remember that his fellow-citizen, who is doing his duty in just the same way as he himself, is indispensable, and that the nation is not maintained by the work of a government, by a certain class, or by its intellectuals, but by the common and harmonious work of all. The millions of people who believe that the kind of work which is done by the individual carries with it any especial distinction are making a great mistake. There are tens of thousands among us whose respect for the individual depends upon the kind of work which he does. No! Not *what* he does, but *how* he does it must be the deciding factor. The fact that millions among us are working hard year out and year in, without ever being able to hope to achieve riches or even to be able to lead a life free from care, should show us that it is to them especially that we owe respect, for it is their idealism and their devotion alone which make possible the existence and the life of the community. It would be a bad day for us if this idealism in our nation should disappear and if the worth of a man were only to be measured by the material goods which he possessed. Our nation would not then be worth much, nor would it survive very long.

It is no use telling the labourer how valuable he is, nor proving to the peasant the necessity of his existence. It is no use going to the intellectual, to the brain worker, in order to tell him how important he is. *What is necessary is to teach each class and profession the importance of the others.* . For this reason we wish to go to the cities and explain to them the nature and the necessity of the German peasantry, and to go into the country and to our intellectuals and tell them how important the German labourer is. We want to go to the labourer and to the peasant and teach them that without a German intellectual class there can be no German life, that they all form together one mighty body corporate: brain, spirit and fist; labourer, peasant and professional man.

This first of May is intended to bring to the realization of the German nation that diligence and labour alone do not create life, unless they are united to the strength and will of a people. Diligence and labour, strength and will, even if they work together, still need behind them the protection of the mighty fist of the nation, in order that real blessings may result.

And further, this day must bring a message to the nation: You are strong if you unite, if you tear from your hearts the spirit of class warfare and forget your quarrels. You have an enormous reserve of strength to put behind your work if you harness that work to the will to live of the entire nation.

We hope for a German national state which will be able to ensure once more to our people their daily bread, and we know that the united strength of the nation 'is necessary to achieve this. If Marxism scoffs that we shall never succeed, we shall give it the proof that we will succeed. My friends! Nothing in this world that is worth having is given gratis. Everything must be striven for; even the rebirth of a nation will not take place of its own accord; it too must be striven for from within. We must not complain; we know that we shall attain to this rebirth by our own exertions and that we shall win the freedom of our nation. Then it will be proved to how great an extent Marxism has been nothing but theory and, as such, attractive and seductive but unable, in reality, to bring happiness or prosperity to a nation.

This first of May must be the proof that we do not wish to destroy anything, but are concerned only with reconstruction. One cannot choose the loveliest spring day in the year as a symbol of strife, but only as one of constructive work. This day shall not stand for disintegration and collapse, but only for national unity and thus for rebirth. It is not chance that our opponents,, who have wished for the last seventy years to celebrate this day, and who have been in power in Germany for the last fourteen years, have nevertheless not succeeded in gripping the German nation on this day as we have done the very first time. The nation feels subconsciously that that Marxism celebration was contrary to the spirit of spring time. The people did not wish for hatred and strife; they wanted a new life. And to-day they feel that the first of May has been given once more its real inner meaning. That is the reason why millions in all Germany are joyfully flocking together to bear witness to their will to take part in this rebuilding of the nation. We who to-day are celebrating this festival wish to hold before our eyes the aim which must be ours in the time which lies before us:

We will fight undeterred that the power, which the new idea, the new political faith in Germany, has attained for itself, shall never vanish but, on the contrary, shall become stronger and stronger.

We will fight to preserve the new idea victoriously in the whole of Germany and gradually to draw the entire German nation into the might of its ban. Bravely and with determination will we defend this flag of the resurgence of our nation against all who think that they can tear it down. We wish to reawake in our nation both self-consciousness and self-confidence, and to see to it that they increase from day to day. We know the time which lies behind us and the people who represented that time. They have intentionally inoculated our people with the idea that it was inferior throughout, incapable of great deeds and not worthy of the rights which belong to all others. Inferiority complexes were artificially cultivated, because they corresponded to the inferiority of those parties who led the nation astray during so many years. We want to free the nation from this ban, to fill them with the conviction:

Germans! You are not second-rate, even if the world wishes to have it so a thousand times. You are not second-class and inferior. Awake to a realization of your own importance. Remember your past and the achievements of your fathers, yes, and those of your own generation. Forget the fourteen years of decay, and think of the two thousand years of German history.

Fellow-citizens in all Germany! I have spoken thus from the very first day in order to arouse in you a feeling of inner unity and thus to give you this conviction:

Germans! You are a strong nation if you yourselves wish to be strong.

These millions who are demonstrating in Germany today will go home with the feeling of a newly won inner strength and unity. I know it, my comrades; your step will be firmer tomorrow than it was yesterday. For we all know that the nation can perhaps be violated and bound in chains, but never again can we be humiliated and made to bow our heads. We wish also, however, to strengthen today not only your trust in yourselves, but also your trust in your government, which feels itself bound up with you and is a piece of you, which belongs to you, which fights for your life, and which has no other aim than to make you free and happy once more.

And finally, this unity will be documented for the future to-day through an act. When we for the first time gave to the public

the idea of compulsory labour-service,

the representatives of the dying Marxian world raised a howl of protest and declared: „That is a new attack on the proletariat, an attack on labour, an attack on the life of the working man.” Why did they do that? They knew quite well that it could never be an attack on labour and, above all, not an attack on the working man, but rather an attack on the loathsome prejudice that manual labour is something inferior. It is our intention to root out this prejudice as far as Germany is concerned. We wish, at a time when millions of us are living without understanding of the importance of manual labour, to teach the German nation once more, through the institution of labour service, that manual labour does not degrade or dishonour but rather does honour to everyone who performs it faithfully and conscientiously, as does any other work.

It is our firm determination that every German, be he who he may, rich or poor, son of a professional man or of a factory worker, shall once in his life be a manual labourer, in order that he may learn what manual labour is and that he may be able more easily to command because he himself has learned to obey. We are not going to be contented with doing away with Marxism superficially; we are determined to remove the conditions necessary for its existence. We want to spare the generations that come after us this intellectual chaos.

Brain worker and labourer must never again stand in opposition to one another. That is the reason why we are rooting out that silly pride which so easily takes possession of the individual and makes him look down upon his comrades who „only” stand at the carpenter’s bench or by the machine or walk behind the plough. But not only must every German become acquainted with this kind of work, the labourer must also realize that brain work is necessary too. He also must learn that no one has the right to look down on others and to think himself better, but that everybody must be ready to form part of the great community.

This year we shall, for the first time, put into practice this great ethical idea which is bound up with labour service, and we know that after forty years the words „manual labour” will have- undergone the same change of meaning as did once the expression „landsknecht” in the place of which the name „German soldier” came into use.

Another great task which must be accomplished this year is the freeing of creative initiative from the disastrous influence of majority rule, not only in the parliament but also in our economic life. We know that our economic life cannot experience a revival unless a synthesis can be found between the freedom of the creative genius and his obligation towards the community. It will therefore also be our task to give to contracts the meaning which they ought to have. Man does not live for contracts, but the contracts are there to make possible the life of man. And finally, we shall endeavour to take this year the first step on the way to an

organic economic development,

working on the fundamental principle that there can be no recovery which does not begin at the root of national and economic life, the peasant. From him the way leads to the labourer and then to the intellectual.

We shall therefore begin with the farmer and put him first of all on a sound basis. We are convinced that this is the first step necessary for the restoration of our entire economic life. For the last fourteen years the opposite method has been taken. We have seen the results. Neither the city dweller nor the labourer nor the middle-classes were helped – they were all brought to the brink of destruction.

Our next task is the removal of unemployment, the providing of work. This providing of work is divided into two main groups. First the *private providing of work*. Under this heading we are going to undertake a great work this year, a work which will bring the buildings and houses in Germany in order and thus give employment to hundreds of thousands. We wish to make at this moment and in this place our first appeal to the entire German nation. Do not think that the problem of providing work will solve itself. You must help to solve it. You must wisely and trustfully do everything you can to provide work. Everyone has the duty not to hesitate to buy what he needs and not to wait to have done for himself what eventually must be done. Every contractor, every house owner, every business-man and every private individual must think of the German worker. If the world is spreading untrue stories about us, if German work is being cried down, then it is up to the German to look after himself in this respect. This is an appeal which, directed to millions of individuals, is most likely to give work to millions. Further, it is our intention to start in a large way the *public providing of work* this year. We have made a programme which we do not wish to leave to our successors, the programme of road-building, a gigantic task, which will demand millions. We will put aside all opposition and set about our task on a large scale. With this we shall begin a series of public works which will help to lower the number of unemployed more and more.

We wish to work and we shall work. But it must not be forgotten that everything depends in the end on the German people themselves. It depends on you, on the trust which you put in us, on the strength with which you support the national state. Only when you all become one in the determination to save Germany can the individual in Germany be saved.

We know that we still have tremendous difficulties to overcome. We know too that all human work must in the end be in vain if it does not have the blessing of Providence. But we are not of those who leave everything to Providence. Nothing will be given to us for nothing. Just as the road which we have trod in the last fourteen years up to the present day was a road

of eternal strife, a road which often led us to the point of despair, so will the road to a better future also be a hard one. The world is persecuting us, it is turning against us, it will not recognise our right to live, nor our right to protect our homeland.

My German comrades! If the world is so against us we must all the more unite ourselves together, we must all the more firmly proclaim: „You can do what you like but you will never make us bow our heads, you will never compel us to recognise a yoke. You will never compel our nation to give up its claim to equal rights.” The German people have come to themselves. They will not endure people among them anymore who are not for Germany. We are determined honourably to earn a recovery for our nation by our industriousness, our perseverance and our unshakeable determination. We do not pray to God: „Lord, make us free.” *We shall work, behave as brothers one to another and strive together until the day comes when we can stand before the Lord and say that we have become different, that the German nation is no more a nation without honour, a nation covered with shame, a nation at war within itself, a nation of little faith. That the German nation is strong again in its own will, strong in perseverance and strong to make every sacrifice. We will not let Him go until He bless our fight for our freedom and bless our German people and fatherland.*

Chancellor Adolf Hitler

at the Congress of the German Labour Front in Berlin, 10 May 1933⁷

Important changes cannot take place in the life of a nation unless there is the most urgent necessity for them.

Nobody can bring about a really decisive revolution unless the people themselves in their inmost souls are crying out for one,

unless the state of affairs makes such a revolution inevitable. It is easy to alter the form of government of a state, but a nation can only be remoulded from within when a certain process of development has already more or less taken place of itself, when that nation has discovered – perhaps not quite clearly and only subconsciously – that it has been following the wrong path, and would like to leave that path, and is only prevented from doing so by the sheer inertia of the masses until, from somewhere or other, the impulse comes, or until a movement, which has seen the new way, one day leads the nation into it. At the first moment the nation may wish to go this new way or it may seem not to wish to – but it will go if the realization is there, consciously or unconsciously, that the path it has been following is not the right one. Of all the crises under which we are suffering, all of which are but different aspects of the same picture, the one which perhaps affects the people themselves most directly is the

Economic Crisis.

The political crisis and the moral crisis are not as a rule perceived by the individual. The man in the street does not usually notice what is affecting the community but only what is affecting himself directly. It is seldom that a political or moral state of decay makes itself perceptible in the present unless it in some way affects the economic situation. But when this happens, it is no longer a question of some abstract problem which can be observed or studied from outside; one day the individual will be brought face to face with the situation, and his recognition of the impossibility of the existing state of affairs will be the more pronounced the more he himself is affected by it. Then people suddenly begin to talk about an economic crisis and economic distress and then it is possible too, taking this as the starting point, to awake an understanding for that other crisis which usually remains hidden so long from the individual.

It is natural too that even the economic crisis cannot at first be accurately diagnosed, that one does not immediately perceive all those causes which are working together to bring about this crisis. It is also quite natural that at first everyone lays the blame on somebody else and is particularly prone to hold the community, the corporations, etc. responsible for that for which he himself must bear part of the blame. At such a time it is a great good fortune if one is gradually able to make clear the reasons for such a crisis, so that they become evident to more and more people, since that is the first essential for finding the way out of the morass.

It is not enough to say that the German economic crisis is merely the result of a world crisis, and that industry is in a bad way everywhere. If that be our excuse, then every other nation can find exactly the same excuse for itself. Even so, it becomes evident that this evil is not rooted just somewhere in the world but in the nations themselves. One thing only is

⁷ Authorised translation of the official text.

probable; that the root is perhaps the same in various different countries but that one cannot hope, merely by demonstrating that a certain evil seems to be a symptom of the age, thus to overcome this evil. It is clear, on the other hand, that what we have to do is to dig up this root in the individual nations, in order that one may attack the evil there where one can hope to attack it with success.

Unfortunately the German is only too inclined at such times to gaze into the distance instead of turning his attention to what is going on at home. The fact that for a long time our people have been trained to take an international outlook results, even in such a crisis, in their seeking to solve this problem from an international standpoint. It has even caused many people to believe that it is not possible to overcome such a misfortune otherwise than by international methods. This, however, is not true. It is clear that international ills under which all nations are suffering must be cured by those nations themselves, but that does not alter the fact that every nation must take the cure into its own hands, and that no nation can be relieved by international measures which does not take the necessary steps for itself.

These measures can, of course, be consistent with international measures, but what we undertake ourselves must not be made dependent upon what others undertake.

The German economic crisis is not merely one which expresses itself in economic indices but is primarily one the cause of which is to be sought partly in the internal course of our economic life, in the type of our economic organisation, etc. In this connection one crisis should be mentioned which has affected our nation more than the others.

It is the crisis which we observe in the relationship between capital, economic life and nation.

This crisis is especially striking in the relationships between our employers and our employees. In this respect it has reached a higher peak than in any other country in the world. If this question is not satisfactorily solved, all other attempts to overcome the economic distress will be ultimately fruitless.

If we examine the real nature of the German labour movement as it has gradually developed in the course of the last fifty years, we shall be brought up against *three reasons* which have brought about this peculiar development.

The first reason is the change in the very nature of our economic system.

This change is just as apparent in the whole world as it is in Germany. Beginning early in the last century and increasing up to the present time, there has been a metamorphosis of our – I would almost say – petty bourgeois economic system which is resulting in its industrialisation, and finally doing away with the patriarchal relationship between employer and employee. This process was accelerated from the moment when the shareholder took the place of the owner. We can observe the beginning of an estrangement between the head worker and the hand worker, for that is actually the only decisive difference.

The word ‘owner’ cannot be regarded here as characteristic, for we know that very many of the men who were the founders of our productive system came originally not from the owner class but from the labouring class. In them, strength of arm was united to genius, and they became the divinely gifted inventors and organizers to whom we, my comrades, owe our very

existence; for without the ability of these men the nourishing and preserving of sixty-five million people on a restricted area would never have been possible.

Without these men we should have remained an export land for man-power, and with the workers we should have had to send abroad would have gone, as cultural manure for the rest of the world, the spirit which those workers possessed. That this has not been the case, we have those countless men to thank who have worked their way up from the bottom of the ladder and now, through their ability and their genius, provide a livelihood for millions of human beings. We cannot then simply speak of employers and employees, the fact is that, as is always the case in the sphere of human endeavour, the man of genius raises himself to a position of command over his fellow men. This genius is not, however, a prerogative of birth but is to be found in all castes and classes. One can say with truth that in Germany every status in life has produced such men.

The separation of interests which gradually became apparent gave rise to certain special interests of the employees, and thus began the unfavourable development of our economic system. Once we had started upon this way, it was bound to lead us further and further apart. This is the result of a law:

When once one has started upon a road which is not the right one, it will lead ever further away from the path of reason. We have experienced this in practice in the last seventy years. This road in all its consequences led us so far away from natural reasonableness that individual men of intelligence, who were themselves leading us along this road, had to admit, when the question was put to them personally, the madness of this course. Individually, they have always admitted it, but, caught up in the machinery of the system, they were unable to find the way back to reason.

On the contrary; the road led inevitably to a further separation, helped on, as has been said, by the

gradual removal of the personal element from ownership.

The result of this was moreover a seemingly scientific corroboration of the rightness of the way. There thus arose gradually a theory which conceived that the idea of property can be permanently maintained, even when those who actually benefit from this idea form only a minimal percentage of the nation. On the other hand, some people began to think that, just because only a small part of the nation benefited from this idea, the idea itself should be done away with. Thus began the endless discussions and the battle over the idea of private property and of property as such. The result was a continually widening split between the exponents of the two ideas in economic life.

The ensuing developments led again to an unnatural state of affairs.

As soon as the two parties no longer regard their task as a common one, it is clear that only organised labour can hold its own against the employers, and it is quite natural that the power which is inherent in the employer can only be met by the united power of the employees.

Once this course is started upon, the logical result is that organised labour finds itself faced with the organisation of the employers. It is then inevitable that these two organisations will not tolerate one another, but will fight for their seemingly contrasted interests with the weapons which they have to hand – lock-out and strike. In this warfare sometimes one side and

sometimes the other wins, but in either case it is the nation which has to pay the price and suffer the resulting loss.

The final result of this is that the organisations which are thus built up become, as a result of the German's tendency to bureaucracy, continually larger and more unwieldy. In the end these apparatuses no longer serve the interests behind them but those interests become the slaves of the apparatuses, so that the fight continues in order to give the apparatuses a reason for existence. And so it goes on, even when reason steps in and says: „The whole thing is lunacy. Measured by the sacrifices, the gains are utterly ludicrous; reckoned together, the sacrifices which the apparatus demands are far greater than any possible gains.” Then it is up to the apparatus, more than ever before, to show how necessary it is in order to fan the flame of conflict on the respective sides. This can even result in the apparatuses coming to a certain understanding between themselves.

For example. Apparatus A says: „I am glad that apparatus B is there because I can always find a way of getting even with it. Supposing B was not there but some honest fanatics were to be fighting in its place – that would be much worse! We know the people in apparatus B and how to handle them.” And so a way is found. To Caesar is rendered what is Caesar's, to the people what is the people's and – to the trade unions what is theirs. Thus a „peaceable” arrangement can always be come to. Sometimes it becomes a regular farce. The two sides rant and rage but never destroy each other of course – one can't do that or neither trade unions nor employers' organisations could exist! In the end it is the public that pays.

This conflict, which has devoured incalculable wealth and manpower, is one of the reasons for the catastrophe which has slowly but surely come about.

The second reason is the rise of Marxism.

Marxism, which is essentially a destructive philosophy, perceived at once in the trade union movement the possibility of using this as an annihilating weapon in its attack against the state and the human community. Not of course to help the working-man – what is the working-man of any country to these apostles of internationalism? Nothing at all!

They do not see him at all! They are no workers, *they are intelligentsia without a country, a denationalised gang!*

They saw only too well that with the help of the trade union movement, while kindly supporting the excesses of the other side, they were in the best position to forge an instrument which would carry on the fight while it took care of them at the same time, for in the entire preceding decade political social democracy has nourished itself from this fight and from the trade unions.

It was necessary for them to imbue the trade unions with the thought that they were the instrument of class warfare – which, of course, could only be brought to a successful conclusion under the leadership of Marxism. What can- be more natural than that one pays the leader tribute? And they; exacted plenty. These gentry were not contented with a tenth but demanded a considerably higher percentage.

This class warfare led to the proclamation of the trade unions as nothing more than instruments for the representation of the economic interests of the workers, and thus for the

purpose of the general strike. The *general strike* thus appears for the first time as a political weapon and shows what Marxism really hoped for from this weapon: not a means to save the worker but on the contrary only a weapon for the destruction of the state which was opposed to Marxism. How far this madness could go we Germans had an unparalleled example, which was as frightful as it was instructive, *during the war*.

Today a number of the leaders of the Social Democrats come to me, completely changed at heart by the new spirit of the new time, and say, with somewhat deficient memory: „Social Democracy fought in the field too.”

No, Marxism never fought but the German working-man fought.

In 1914 the German working-man, in a sudden inner, I might almost say, clairvoyant, recognition of the truth turned his back on Marxism and returned to his own people. The leaders of Marxism, who saw this happening, could do nothing to stop it. Some of them, a very few, returned in their hearts to their own people too. We know that one great man who has today played a decisive part in the history of the world, Benito Mussolini, returned at this hour to his own people. There were a few in Germany too. The overwhelming majority of the political leaders however did not, in comparison to the enormous response of the workers, offer themselves immediately and voluntarily for service at the front. In spite of all their protests today they seem to have been spared this spiritual conversion. Working-men fell – their leaders took very good care of themselves to the extent of some 99 percent.

They cannot show the percentage of fallen and wounded that the entire nation can. They considered their political activities more important. Then, in 1914 and 1915, they considered their task to consist in a careful reticence; later, while delegating certain individual outsiders, they more and more began to take up a passive attitude towards the national task. The revolution was the fulfilment of their ideas.

We have only one thing to say to that:

Had the German trade unions been in our hands during the war, had they been in my hands if you like, and had they been aiming at the same wrong ends as they actually were, we National Socialists would have brought this gigantic organisation into the service of the fatherland. We should have said: „We know, of course, the sacrifice, we are ready to make it ourselves, we do not want to hold back but we will fight too, we put our fate and our lives into the hands of Almighty God just as the others must do.” That we should have done without hesitation.

For you, the German workers, must realise: the present decision has to be made not about Germany as a state, not about the empire as a political form. We are not deciding for or against monarchy, capitalism or militarism but whether our nation is to exist at all, and we German workers make up 70 per cent of the nation. It is our fate that is being decided upon.

That should have been known and could have been known at the time. We would have known it. We should all have taken the consequences for our own lives and should, of course, also have taken the consequences for the trade-union movement. We should have proclaimed: „German workers, we want to represent your rights.” True, we should have had to stand in opposition to the state at times for this reason, that is to say we should have protested against the monstrosity and shamelessness of the *war-time monopoly companies*.

We should have protested against this *pack of profiteers* and would have seen to it that they were brought to reason, if necessary with the halter.

In the same way we should have put down everyone who withheld his services from the fatherland. We should have said: „In facing the enemy our only aim is the victory of our nation, for that is not the victory of a form of government but a victory which is necessary for our very lives. If we lose the war, it is not a form of government that we have lost but millions of us will lose our very means of existence, and the first to do this will not be the capitalists and the millionaires but the working masses.”

It was a crime that this was not done. It was not done because this course of action was opposed to the very nature of Marxism which wished for nothing better than the destruction of Germany. The Marxists waited until they believed that nation and country, crushed by superior forces, could no longer withstand the attack from within. And then they struck.

And it was Germany that they struck and the German worker was the first to suffer and suffered the hardest.

The sum total of misery and suffering which since then has weighed upon millions of small workers' families and small households is something which the November criminals can never make good. For this reason they have nothing to complain of today. We have not exacted vengeance. If we wanted to do so we should have had to slay them by tens of thousands!

They talk so much about the Social Democrats having fought at the front. The German workers fought at the front! But even if at that time they still felt themselves in some dim way as Social Democrats – it was not the case, and everyone who fought at the front knows that at that time no one thought about parties – but even if it had been the case, how mean of those leaders that they then betrayed their own followers, who were making all the sacrifices, of the fruits of those sacrifices, that they robbed their own people of the reward for their misery, hunger, torture, sleeplessness and fear of death. They can never make good what they did to our people by their crime of that time. And, above all they can never make good that for decades they led the German worker into ever deeper spiritual isolation and in November 1918, through the meanness of small, irresponsible groups, laid on him the responsibility for a deed for which he could never be made responsible. For since November 1918 there are millions of Germans who believe that the German workers were responsible for the collapse. They, who endured such unspeakable sacrifices, who filled our regiments with millions of men, were suddenly made collectively responsible for the deed of the perjured, lying and rotten destroyers of the fatherland. That was the worst that could have happened, for at that moment the community ceased to exist for millions of men in Germany. Millions were in despair, others gazed blankly ahead and could not find the way back to their own people. The inevitable result of the breaking up of the community was the breaking down of German economic life since economic life is not a thing of itself but is a living process, a function of the national community and its course is determined by the people that make up that community. If the people thus break down, one cannot be surprised if the entire economic life gradually falls into decay too. When the individual is working on false premises, the result is that the community does the same thing, and thus something is destroyed the destruction of which has the worst possible effect on the community itself.

The third reason lies in the State itself.

There was one thing which could have kept a hold upon the masses. That was the State, if it had not itself sunk to the status of a plaything of the groups of special interests. It is not chance that the general collapse ran parallel to the democratizing of our public life. This process resulted in the state's falling into the hands of certain groups which identified themselves with property and the employing class. The masses gradually came to the conclusion that the state itself was no longer an impartial institution independent of contemporary phenomena, and, above all, that it no longer incorporated an objective authority but that it had come to be simply the tool of certain economic interests and that the very conduct of the state justified this assumption. The victory of political bourgeoisie was nothing else than the victory of a definite class which had come into being as the result of economic laws and which for its part had not the slightest qualification for political leadership and which made this leadership dependent upon the ever-changing phenomena of economic life and upon the effect of this economic life on the masses and public opinion. In other words; the people rightly felt that a natural selection takes place in all spheres of activity, always provided that the individual is qualified for this particular sphere, but that one sphere was excepted, the sphere of political leadership. In this sphere they suddenly found a process of selection based on quite other premises.

While it is quite natural that a leader in the army can only be one who has been trained for this post, it was not then taken for granted that a political leader can only be one who has had training in this work and, moreover, especially one who has shown what he can do in this line. Unfortunately people began to get the idea that the capacity for political leadership was the prerogative of a certain class which had come into existence as the result of economic laws. We have seen the results of this mistake. The class which had allocated this leadership to itself failed in every critical hour and, in the blackest moment of the nation's history, collapsed miserably.

The German battalions did not behave in this way. Consider for a moment that this German nation of ours had at that time millions of men at the front. Everyone knows what superhuman power of determination was needed to lead a troop, let us say of the reserve, against the enemy once more, to march once more into the zone of fire with death staring one in the face and not to falter. And at home the political leaders break up and give way before a miserable gang of deserters who were too cowardly to face the enemy, and those at home capitulated in the face of these cowards. Let nobody say there was no other way; only for these men was there no other way.

For any other leaders the way would have been quite clear and there would have been no question of excusing the capitulation on the ground that higher orders had been received to this effect. At certain moments in the history of a nation there are no orders which can compel the people or the leaders of a state to give way and leave the field in the hands of cowards and incompetents.

In my opinion, if anybody had the right to lay down his arms it was the German soldier who, in his thousands, had the misfortune to have to face for four and a half years, thanks to the weakness of German diplomacy, an enemy who was nearly always superior in strength, but nevertheless, convinced that he was fighting for his nation, knew no other duty than that of every decent soldier, to conquer or to die.

No, it was not chance; on the 9th November a false development finally proved itself as a false development and false methods have proved themselves today to have been false, and it was only a question of time whether these false methods finally ruined Germany completely or

whether there would yet be found in Germany sufficient strength to get rid of them. I believe we are now in a period when they have finally been got rid of.

But we are also in a period when the question of the reconstruction of our German economic system must not only be thoroughly thought out but must also be completely solved, not from without

but by a thorough examination of the inner causes of the collapse and by the determination to get rid of these causes. I believe we shall have to begin where a beginning is indicated today; that is with the state itself.

A new authority must be set up

and this authority must be independent of temporary political fluctuations and, above all, of those fluctuations which allow narrow, selfish and material interests to predominate. The state must be led by a real authority and one which is not dependent on any one class. The leaders must be such that every citizen can trust them and be sure that they do not wish for anything but the happiness and the good of the German nation; they must be able to say with right that they are completely independent.

People talk so much of the absolutism of past times, of the absolutism of Frederick the Great and the democratic times of our parliamentary era. From the point of view of the nation those past times were more objective. Then people were able to perceive the interests of the nation in a more objective manner, whereas in later times the interests of individual classes came exclusively to the fore. There can be no better proof of this than the class warfare whose slogan is: „The dictatorship of the bourgeoisie must make way for the dictatorship of the proletariat/’ It is simply a question of a change from the dictatorship of one class to that of another,

while we wish for the dictatorship of the nation, that is, the dictatorship of the entire community.

We do not regard any one class as being of paramount importance, such distinctions disappear during the course of centuries, they come and go. What remains is the substance, a substance of flesh and blood, our nation. That is what is permanent and to that alone should we feel ourselves responsible. Only then can we prepare the way for the overcoming of our dire economic distress, only then shall we be able to restore to the millions of our people the conviction that the state does not represent the interests of a single group or class, and that the government is there to manage the concerns of the entire community. If, on one side or the other, there are people who believe that they cannot reconcile themselves to this state of affairs, then the new authority will have to be brought to bear against the one side or the other. All will have to realize that the new leaders do not hold their authority at the pleasure of any one class, but that it is theirs by virtue of a law and that law is: the necessity of preserving the nation as such.

And further: all those who play upon human weakness in order to carry out their deadly plans must be got rid of. For fourteen or fifteen years I have continuously proclaimed to the German nation that

I regard it as my task before posterity to destroy Marxism,

and that is no empty phrase but a solemn oath which I shall perform as long as I live.

I have made this confession of faith, the confession of faith of a single man, that of a mighty organisation. I know now that even if fate were to remove me the fight would be fought on to the end; this movement is the guarantee for that. This is for us no fight which can be finished by a compromise. We see in Marxism the enemy of our people which we shall root out and destroy without mercy.

We know too that only too often in economic life the interests seem to be opposed to one another, that the worker feels himself out-manoeuvred – and often is out-manoeuvred – that the employer often feels himself hard-pressed – and perhaps often is hard-pressed – that what seems to be profit for one is considered as loss by the other, and that success for one sometimes means the ruin of the other. We know that and see it and know that humanity has always suffered under it. All the more dangerous is it then when an organisation has as its only aim the exploitation of this fact for the destruction of . the entire nation. Because this is so, that organisation must be destroyed and that doctrine wiped out which abuses this natural weakness which has its roots in the foibles of human nature. We know quite well that the final end of this entire development, of this fight between hand and brain, between the masses, that is quantity, and quality can only be – destruction of quality, of brain. But that will not benefit the masses or improve the lot of the worker but will result in misery and want, will mean total extinction.

We see the economic distress and are not children who believe that good will can get rid of it overnight. We are reckoning too with human weakness which is always playing new tricks on mankind and which often simply brings to nought the best of intentions and the best of ideas. But we have the firm intention not to give way but to fight day in and day out – the whole of life is a battle – against these things and to oppose them by reason and to keep the interests of the community in the foreground. If we do not succeed today, where we fail today we must succeed to-morrow. And if we are asked whether we believe that we can do away with suffering, we can only reply that this will happen when there are no more fallible people on earth. As I am afraid that mankind will always be fallible, I am afraid there will also always be suffering. At any rate one generation cannot set the whole world right.

Every nation has the duty of looking after itself. Every age has the duty of solving its own particular problems. Do not think that we are leaving nothing for future generations to accomplish. No, no, we do not want to bring up our children to be lazy parasites who shall reap the harvest that others have sown. No, what you wish to possess you must continuously build up anew for yourself, you must ever be fighting for it. It is to this that we wish to train the people. We have no idea of teaching them that this sort of strife is something unnatural or unworthy; on the contrary, we want them to realize that this strife is the necessary prerequisite of selection, that without this eternal struggle there would be no human race. No, what we are doing today we are doing for ourselves.

In combatting the need of the present we are building for the future,

in that we are showing our successors how they must carry on the fight, just as we could only learn from the past what we have to do today. If the generation before us had thought in the way in which people would like to persuade us that they thought, we should not have been here. I cannot recognize as right for the future what I must designate as wrong in the past. What gives life to me and to us must also be right for the life of our successors, and we are in duty bound to act on this principle.

We must then fight to the very end those tendencies which have eaten into the soul of the German nation in the last seventeen years, which have done us such incalculable damage and

which, if they had not been vanquished, would have destroyed Germany. Bismarck told us that liberalism was the pace-maker of social democracy. I need not say here that social democracy is the pacemaker of communism.

And communism is the forerunner of death, of national destruction and extinction.

We have joined battle with it and shall fight it to the death. As so often in the history of Germany, it will be proved once more that the greater the need is the more strength the German nation finds to rise once more above it. It will find it this time too and I am convinced that it has already started on the road upwards.

I must now speak of another measure, the freeing of the at present existing unions from the influence of those men who believe that they possess in those unions a last line of defence. Let them have no illusions as to this. What they built up we hold for wrong. We see however that the German genius, working against the will of the founders of these unions, gradually awoke in millions of individuals a feeling which found its outward expression in mighty organisations. Those men would have destroyed those organisations. We are taking them over, not to preserve everything in the same form for the future but to save for the German working-man all that he had put by in these organisations in the way of savings and, furthermore, in order that the German worker might cooperate in the building of the new state, to enable him to do this on a basis of equality. We are not erecting a state against him; no, with him must the new state be built up.

He must not have the feeling that he is something inferior and to be despised. No, on the contrary! We want to fill him from the very beginning, already in the earliest stages, with the feeling that he is a German with the same rights as any other. And, in my eyes, equal rights' have never been anything else than the cheerful undertaking of equal duties.

One must not be always speaking of rights but one must also speak of duties.

The German worker must show the others that he no longer stands outside the German nation and its rebirth. There will, of course, be elements who do not agree. There will, however, be people like this in the right wing too. The day's work will be carried on regardless of them.

Those in Germany who in purity of heart and profound earnestness wish for nothing else than the greatness of their nation will find the way to one another. Such men will be able to come to an agreement, will be able to understand one another, and, if sometimes doubts should arise once more and hard facts play unpleasant tricks upon them, it is our desire to play the part of honest brokers.

Then it will be the task of the Government, as upright and honest broker, to join together once more the hands of those who are on the point of separating

and more and more to impress upon the German people that they must not fight against one another, they must not break with one another on superficial questions and forsake one another because in the course of centuries things may have taken a course which we as individuals regret, but that they must always keep in mind that the common duty of all is to preserve the national community. If this is done, a way will be found – a way must be found. We cannot simply say the way to national life has become impossible because at the moment there are certain difficulties. The moment will pass, but life must and will go on.

In this way *the unifying of the German labour movement* takes on a profound moral significance. In thus building up a state which will have to be the result of great concessions on both sides, we wish to have two contracting parties face one another who think nationally with their whole hearts and see only the nation and are ready to put all other considerations in the background in order to serve the community. Only when this is accomplished can we be confident of success.

And here the will from which the deed proceeds is decisive. There can be no victors and vanquished but only one victor: our German nation.

Victor over classes, victor over statuses and victor over the individual interest groups in our nation. And thus we shall arrive naturally at an understanding of the nobility of work. That too is a task which cannot be fulfilled overnight. Just as it took centuries to pervert the meaning of the word 'labour' so it will take centuries to restore to it its original value in the minds of the German people. It will be the steadfast aim of the movement which I and my fellow-workers represent to exalt the word 'worker' to the greatest title of honour in the German nation. Not for nothing have we included it in the name of our party – certainly not because it has been of great advantage to us. On the contrary, it has brought us hatred and enmity from the one side and lack of understanding from the other. We chose this word because we wished, with the victory of our movement, to bring honour to it too.

We chose it that, with the word 'nation', it might be made to form the basis of national unity, for every honourable man cannot but be proud of such a title.

Personally, I am against honorary titles and I do not think any one can reproach me very much for this. What is not absolutely necessary for me to do I do not do. I should never care to have visiting cards printed with the titles which in this world are given with such ceremony. I do not want anything on my gravestone but my name. All the same, owing to the peculiar circumstances of my life, I am perhaps more capable than any one else of understanding the nature and the life of the various German castes. Not because I have been able to observe this life from the higher ranks but because I have participated in it, because fate in a moment of caprice, or perhaps fulfilling the designs of Providence, cast my lot in that of the great masses. Because I myself was a labouring man for years. And because for the second time I lived for years among the masses as a common soldier, and then fate lifted me into another class of our people so that I learned to know this class better than many another. And so fate has perhaps destined me more than any other to be – I can apply this word to myself – an honest broker, an honest broker for both sides.

I am not personally interested here. I am neither dependent on the state, nor on an official office, nor am I dependent on any industrial or economic concern nor on the trade unions. I am an independent man and I have set myself no other aim than to serve the German people to the best of my ability and above all to be of service to those millions who, thanks to their trusting simplicity and, above all, to the ignorance and wickedness of their leaders, have perhaps suffered most of all.

It has always been my idea that there can be nothing finer than to be the advocate of those who cannot defend themselves.

I know the people and should like to say just one thing to our intellectuals: „Any country that is founded only upon the intellectual classes is built on a weak foundation.”

I know the intellectual too; always indulging in sophistry, always probing and searching but always wavering and uncertain, mobile but never sure. Whoever tries to build a state on this intellectual class alone will see that he is not building securely. It is not chance that the religions are more stable than forms of government. They usually sink their roots deeper in the soil; they would not be conceivable without the masses. I know that the intellectuals are only too prone to look down upon the masses and to judge them by their own standards and their own so-called intellect, and yet there are things here which the intellectual cannot understand because he cannot see them. It is true however that the masses are often somewhat slow of comprehension and are, in certain respects, backward, not so mobile, not so bright. But they have something, they have faithfulness, tenacity and stability.

I can safely say that the revolution would never have succeeded had it not been for my comrades in the masses who stood with such steadfastness and faithfulness behind us.

I can conceive nothing better for our Germany than that we should succeed in bringing those of the masses who now stand outside our ranks into the new state and making them the foundation of that new state.

A poet once said: „Germany will then be truly great when her poorest son is her most devoted citizen.” I knew these poorest sons for four and a half years as soldiers in the great World War; I have known those who, with perhaps nothing to gain for themselves, have followed the call of the blood and become heroes for no reason but that they felt themselves part of the nation.

No nation has more right to erect a monument to its unknown soldier than the German nation. That unshakeable guard which stood firm in a thousand battles, which never shirked and never gave way, which has given a thousand examples of courage, devotion, self-sacrifice, discipline and obedience must be won for the state, for the coming Reich, for our Third Reich. That is perhaps the most priceless gift we can give it.

Because I know these men perhaps better than anyone else who also knows the others, I am now not only ready to act as honest broker, but I am happy that fate has given me the opportunity to play this part.

Nothing in life could make me prouder than, at the end, to be able to say: „I have won over the German worker for the German Reich.”

Chancellor Adolf Hitler

addressing the German Reichstag on 17 May 1933⁸

Men and Women of the German Reichstag,

In the name of the German Government I have asked the President of the Reichstag to convene the Reichstag in order to make a statement before this assembly on the questions which are agitating not merely our own people but the whole world.

The problems, with which you are familiar, are of such importance that not only political peace but also economic salvation for all depend on their successful solution.

If, in the name of the German Government, I express the wish that they shall be treated in a completely dispassionate manner, I do so mainly in the conviction, which is weighing on all, that the deepest causes of the present crisis lie in the passions which clouded the judgment and wisdom of nations after the war.

For all the problems which are causing such unrest today lie in the deficiencies of the Treaty of Peace which did not succeed in solving *in a clear and reasonable way* the questions of the most decisive importance for the future. Neither national nor economic – to say nothing of legal – problems and demands of the nations were settled by this treaty in such a way as to stand the criticism of reason in the future. It is therefore natural that the idea of revision is not only one of the constant accompaniments of the effects of this treaty, but that *it was actually foreseen as necessary by the authors of the Treaty and therefore given a legal foundation in the Treaty itself*.

If I deal briefly with the problems which the Versailles Treaty ought to have settled, I do so because its failure in this respect has inevitably given rise to the later situations under which the political and economic relations of States have since then been suffering.

The political problems.

For many centuries European States and their frontiers developed from conceptions which were only concerned with the State as such. With the triumph of the national conception and of the principle of nationality in the course of the last century, the seed of many conflicts was sown by the failure of States, which had come into existence under other conditions, to take into account these new ideas and ideals. At the end of the World War there could have been no nobler task for a real peace conference than to undertake – in the clear recognition of this fact –

a territorial and political reorganisation of the European States

which should in the highest degree possible do justice to this principle. The more such a settlement succeeded in making the frontiers between peoples coincide with the frontiers between States, the more it would have eliminated a whole series of future possibilities of conflict. Indeed, this territorial reorganisation of Europe, taking account of the real and historical frontiers between peoples, would have been a far-sighted solution which would

⁸ Authorised translation of the official text.

perhaps have made the sacrifice of life during the Great War appear to conquerors and conquered alike not to have been made in vain, because it would have given the world a basis for a real and lasting peace.

As it was, through ignorance, passion and hatred, decisions were taken which, in their injustice and lack of logic, bore the seeds of fresh conflicts.

The economic problems.

The main characteristics of the present economic situation of Europe are the overcrowding of the west of Europe and the poverty of its soil in certain raw materials which are essential to the standard of life which has grown up in those territories with their ancient culture. If the statesmen at Versailles wanted to bring lasting peace to Europe, they should have recognized and followed, instead of the dangerous and sterile conceptions of expiation, punishment and reparation, the profound truth that

the lack of the necessities of life has always been a source of conflict between peoples.

Instead of preaching the idea of extermination, they should have embarked upon a reorganisation of international political and economic relationships, so as to do justice, to the fullest possible extent, to the vital needs of each nation.

It is not wise to deprive a people of the economic resources necessary for its existence without taking into consideration the fact that the population dependent on them are bound to the soil and will have to be fed. The idea that the economic extermination of a nation of sixty-five millions would be of service to other nations is absurd. Any people inclined to follow such a line of thought would, under the law of cause and effect, soon experience that the doom which they were preparing for another nation would swiftly overtake them. The very idea of reparations and the way in which they were enforced will become a classic example in the history of the nations of how seriously international welfare can be damaged by hasty and unconsidered action.

As a matter of fact, the policy of reparations could only be financed by German exports. To the same extent as Germany, for the sake of reparations, was regarded in the light of an international exporting concern, the export of the creditor nations was bound to suffer. The economic benefit accruing from the 'reparation payments could therefore never make good the damage which the system of reparations inflicted upon the individual economic systems.

The attempt to prevent such a development by compensating for a limitation of German exports by the grant of credits, in order to render payments possible, was no less shortsighted and mistaken in the end. For the conversion of political debts into private obligations led to an interest service which was bound to have the same results. The worst feature, however, was that the development of internal economic life was artificially hindered and ruined. The struggle to gain the world markets by constant underselling led to excessive rationalisation measures in the economic field.

The millions of German unemployed are the final result of this development. If it was desired, however, to restrict reparation obligations to deliveries in kind, this must naturally cause equally serious damage to the internal production of the nations receiving them. For deliveries in kind to the amount involved are unthinkable without most seriously endangering the production of the individual nations.

The Treaty of Versailles is to blame for having inaugurated a period in which financial calculations appear to destroy economic reason.

Germany has faithfully fulfilled the obligations imposed upon her, in spite of their intrinsic lack of reason and the obviously suicidal consequences of this fulfilment.

The international economic crisis is the indisputable proof of the correctness of this statement.

The chances of restoring a general international legal sentiment have also been no less destroyed by the Treaty.

For, in order to justify all the measures of this edict,

Germany had to be branded as the guilty party.

This procedure is, indeed, just as simple as it is, however, inadmissible. In any future cases of conflict the vanquished will always be the guilty party, because the victor can establish this fact in the easiest manner possible.

This procedure therefore assumes a terrible significance, because it gave at the same time an excuse for the conversion of the power ratio existing at the end of the war into a permanent legal status. The conception of conqueror and conquered thus literally became the foundation of a new international legal and social order.

The degradation of a great people to a second-class nation was proclaimed at the same moment as a League of Nations came into being.

This treatment of Germany could not lead to the pacification of the world. The disarmed state and defencelessness of the conquered parties which was thus considered necessary – an unheard of procedure in the history of the European nations – was still less calculated to diminish the general dangers and conflicts, but merely led to that condition of constant menaces, demands and sanctions which, by the unrest and insecurity which they give rise to, threaten to undermine the entire economic structure of the world. If no consideration is given by the nations to the danger of certain actions, reason may easily be overcome by unreason. At any rate up to the present, the League of Nations has been unable to grant any appreciable assistance to the weak and unarmed in such cases. Treaties concluded for the pacification of the nations only possess an inner meaning when they are based on *real and honest equality of rights for all*. This is the main reason for the state of unrest which has been weighing on the world for a number of years.

It is, however, in the interests of all that present day problems should be solved in a reasonable and final manner. No new European war could improve the unsatisfactory conditions of the present day.

On the contrary, the application of violence of any kind in Europe could have no favourable effect upon the political or economic position which exists to-day. Even if a fresh European act of violence had a decisive result, the ultimate effect would be to increase the disturbance of European equilibrium and thus, in one manner or another, to sow the seed of further conflicts and complications.

The result would be fresh wars, fresh uncertainty, and fresh economic distress. The outbreak of such infinite madness, however, would necessarily cause the collapse of the present social and political order. A Europe sinking into communistic chaos would bring about a crisis, the extent and duration of which could not be foreseen.

It is the earnest desire of the National Government of the German Reich to prevent such a disturbing development by means of its honest and active cooperation.

This is also the inner meaning of the revolution which has taken place in Germany; the following three aims of our revolution are in no way opposed to the interests of the rest of the world:

Firstly: To prevent the threatened Communist revolution, to build up a national state which shall unite the interests of the different classes and castes and to maintain the idea of property as the basis of our culture. Secondly: To solve the most difficult of social problems by bringing back the millions of our unfortunate unemployed into productive work. Thirdly: To re-establish a stable and authoritative government, supported by the will and confidence of the nation, which shall make our great people an acceptable partner of the other States of the world.

Speaking deliberately as a German National Socialist, I desire to declare in the name of the National Government, and of the whole movement of national regeneration, that we in this new Germany are filled with deep understanding for the same feelings and opinions and for the rightful claims to life of the other nations. *The present generation of this new Germany, which, so far, has only known in its life the poverty, misery and distress of its own people, has suffered too deeply from the madness of our time to be able to contemplate treating others in the same way.*

Our boundless love for and loyalty to our own national traditions makes us respect the national claims of others and makes us desire from the bottom of our hearts to live with them in peace and friendship.

We therefore have no use for the idea of Germanisation. The mentality of the past century which made people believe that they could make Germans out of Poles and Frenchmen is completely foreign to us; the more so as we are passionately opposed to any attempt on the part of others to alienate us from our German tradition. We look at the European nations objectively. The French, the Poles, etc. are our neighbours, and we know

that through no possible development of history can this reality be altered.

It would have been better for the world if in Germany's case these realities had been appreciated in the Treaty of Versailles. For the object of a really lasting treaty should be not to cause new wounds and keep old ones open, but to close wounds and heal them. *A thoughtful treatment of European problems at that time could certainly have found a settlement in the east which would have met both the reasonable claims of Poland and the natural rights of Germany.* The Treaty of Versailles did not provide this solution. Nevertheless no German Government will of its own accord break an agreement which cannot be removed without being replaced by a better one.

But the legal character of such a Treaty must be acknowledged by *all*. Not only the conqueror but also the conquered party can claim the rights accorded in the Treaty. And the right to demand

a revision of the Treaty

finds its foundation in the Treaty itself. The German Government, in stating the reasons for and the extent of its claims, wishes for nothing more than the existing results of previous experience and the incontestable consequences of critical and logical reasoning show to be necessary and just. The experience of the last fourteen years, however, is unambiguous from a political and economic point of view.

The misery of the nations has not been relieved but has increased. The deepest roots of this misery, however, lie in the division of the world into conquerors and conquered, which seems to be intended to form a permanent basis of all treaties and all future order. The worst effect of this order lies in the compulsory defencelessness of one nation as against the excessive armaments of the others. If Germany has continued for years to demand the disarmament of all, it is for the following reasons:

(1) The demand for equality of rights expressed in actual facts is a demand of morality, right and reason; it is a demand which is recognised in the Peace Treaty itself and the fulfilment of which is indissolubly bound up with the demand for German disarmament, as the prelude to world disarmament.

(2) On the other hand the disqualification of a great people cannot be permanently maintained, but must at some time be brought to an end. How long is it thought possible that such an injustice can be imposed on a great nation? What is the advantage of a moment as compared with the permanent development through centuries? The German nation will continue to exist exactly in the same way as the French nation and, as history has proved, the Polish nation.

Of what value is the temporary oppression of a nation of 65 millions as compared with the force of this incontrovertible fact? No State can possess a greater understanding for the young, newly created European national States than the new Germany which has risen out of the national revolution which was inspired by the same impulses. *Germany wants nothing for herself which she is not prepared to give to others.*

Germany, in demanding at present actual equality of rights such as can only be achieved by the disarmament of other nations, has a moral right to do so since she has herself carried out the provisions of the treaties. For

Germany has disarmed

and has carried out this disarmament under the strictest international supervision. 6 million rifles and carbines were surrendered or destroyed; the German people were compelled to destroy or surrender 130,000 machine-guns, huge quantities of machine-gun barrels, 91,000 guns, 38,750,000 projectiles and enormous quantities of other arms and ammunition.

The Rhineland was demilitarised, the German fortresses were dismantled, our ships surrendered, our airplanes destroyed, our system of military service abandoned and the training of reserves thus prevented. Even the most indispensable weapons of defence were denied us.

If, in the face of these indisputable facts, any one should attempt to come forward and declare with truly wretched excuses and pretexts that Germany has not fulfilled the treaties or has even rearmed, as German Chancellor speaking in the Reichstag, I must repudiate such views which are as untrue as they are unfair.

Equally untrue are the statements that Germany has not complied with the provisions of the Treaty in respect of personnel. *The statement that the S. A. and S.S. of the National Socialist Party are connected in any way with the Reichswehr, in the sense that they represent formations with military training or army reserves, is untrue!*

The irresponsible frivolity with which such assertions are made may be seen from the following example: Last year there was a case before the Courts in Brünn against members of the National Socialist Party in Czecho-Slovakia. Military experts of the Czechoslovak army declared on oath that the defendants were in contact with the German National Socialist Party, that they were dependent on it, and that, as members of a popular sports association, they were to be reckoned as equal to members of the storm sections and storm troops of the National Socialistic Party in Germany who formed a reserve army organised and trained by the German Reichswehr.

During that period, however, *neither the storm sections and storm troops nor the National Socialist Party itself had any connection at all with the Reichswehr. On the contrary they were persecuted, prohibited and finally suppressed as organisations dangerous to the State.* Indeed, members of the National Socialist Party, of the storm sections and storm troops were not only excluded from all official positions, but might not even be employed as workmen in works connected with the Reichswehr. But the National Socialists in Czecho-Slovakia were condemned to a long term of hard labour on the strength of this false evidence!

In actual fact, the storm sections and storm troops of the National Socialist Party came into being without any help or financial support from the governments of the Federal States, the Reich or from the army, without any military training or equipment, but purely out of the political needs and considerations of the times. Their object was and is exclusively *the removal of the communist danger*; their development took place without any connection with the army, purely for purposes of propaganda and national enlightenment, psychological mass effect and the breaking down of the communist terror. They form an institution for creating a true team spirit, for overcoming former class differences and for removing economic distress.

The Stahlhelm arose out of memories of the great period of common experiences at the front, in order to keep alive the old traditions and the spirit of true comradeship and, lastly, to protect the German people against the danger of a communist revolution which had been threatening since November 1918; *this is a danger which cannot be estimated by countries which have not, like us, millions of organised communists, and have not, like Germany,*

suffered from their terrorism. The real object of these national organisations is best characterised by the actual nature of their struggle and by their sacrifices. As a result of communist murderous assaults and acts of terrorism, the storm sections and storm troops of the National Socialist Party have lost more than 350 killed and about 40,000 wounded within a few years. If attempts are now made at Geneva to rank these organisations, *which serve exclusively internal purposes*, as *military* effectives, there would be an equally good reason for including the fire brigades, the athletic associations, the watch and ward companies, rowing clubs, sports associations and others in the military forces.

When, however, at the same time the trained annual contingents of the other armies of the world, in contradistinction to these men who are entirely without military training, are not included, when the armed reserves of other countries are deliberately overlooked, while the

unarmed members of the political associations are in our case included, *this constitutes a procedure against which I must categorically protest.*

If the world wishes to destroy confidence in right and justice, these are the best means for the purpose.

On behalf of the German people and the German Government, I have to make the following statement: *Germany has disarmed.* She has complied with all obligations imposed upon her in the Peace Treaty to an extent far beyond the limits of equity and reason. Her army consists of 100,000 men. The strength and the character of her police are internationally regulated.

The auxiliary police established in the days of the revolution have an exclusively political character. In the critical days of the revolution they had to replace that part of the regular police force which at first was considered by the new regime to be unreliable; now, after the success of the revolution, they are already being reduced and will be completely disbanded before the end of the year.

Germany has thus a fully justified moral claim to the fulfilment by the other Powers of their obligations under the Treaty of Versailles. *The equality of status accorded to Germany in December has not yet been given practical expression.* With regard to the contention, repeated by France again and again, that the safety of France must be secured to the same extent as the equality of Germany, I would like to ask two questions:

1. Germany has so far accepted all the obligations with regard to security arising from the signing of the Versailles Treaty, the Kellogg Pact, the Treaties of Arbitration, the Pact of Non-Aggression, etc. What other concrete assurances are left for Germany to give?

2. *On the other hand, how much security has Germany?* According to the figures published by the League, France alone has 3,046 aeroplanes in service, Belgium 350, Poland 700, Czecho-Slovakia 670. In addition to these numbers there are innumerable reserve aeroplanes, thousands of tanks, thousands of heavy guns and all the necessary technical equipment for chemical warfare. Has not Germany, in her state of defencelessness and disarmament, greater justification in demanding security than the over-armed States bound together in military alliances?

Nevertheless Germany is at any time willing to undertake further obligations in regard to international security, if all the other nations are ready on their side to do the same, and if this security is also to benefit Germany. *Germany would also be perfectly ready to disband her entire military establishment and destroy the small amount of arms remaining to her, if the neighbouring countries will do the same thing with equal thoroughness.* But if these countries are not willing to carry out the disarmament measures to which they- are also bound by the Treaty of Versailles, Germany must at least maintain

her demand for equality.

The German Government sees in the British plan a possible basis for the solution of this question, but they must demand that the defence force existing in Germany shall not be abolished unless at least qualitative equality be accorded to Germany. She must further demand that any change in her present defence force organisation, which was not chosen by her but

imposed on her from abroad, shall follow step by step in the same degree as the actual disarmament of the other States.

Germany agrees in principle to a transitional period of five years during which to build up her national security,

in the expectation that at the end of this period she will really be put on a footing of equality with the other States. She is also entirely ready to renounce all offensive weapons of every sort if the armed nations, on their side, will destroy their offensive weapons within a specified period, and if their use is forbidden by an international convention. Germany has only one desire, to be able to preserve her independence and defend her frontiers.

According to a statement made by the French Minister of War in February 1932, a large portion of the French coloured troops can be immediately used on the French mainland. He therefore expressly includes them in the forces of the home country.

It is therefore only just that the coloured troops should also be considered by the disarmament conference as forming part of the French army. While this is not being done, it is proposed that associations and organisations of a purely educational or sporting character which have no military training whatsoever should be reckoned as forming part of the army in the case of Germany. In the case of other countries, however, there is no question of such organisations being counted as military effectives. Such a procedure is, of course, quite impossible. Germany would declare herself willing at any time, in the event of a mutual international supervision of armaments and of equal readiness on the part of other States, to subject these associations to such supervision in order to prove beyond doubt to the whole world that they are of an entirely unmilitary character.

Moreover the German Government will not reject *any* prohibition of arms as being too drastic if it is applied in the same manner to all other States. As long as armaments are allowed to other powers, Germany cannot be permanently deprived of all weapons of defence. We are fully prepared only to make use of an equal status to an extent to be settled by negotiation.

These demands do not imply rearmament but only a desire for the disarmament of the other States. In this connection I again welcome on behalf of the German Government the apt and far-sighted plan of the head of the Italian Government to create, by means of a special pact, close relations of confidence and cooperation between the four great European Powers, the United Kingdom, France, Italy and Germany. The German Government is in whole-hearted agreement with Mussolini's view that this would facilitate a permanent understanding, and will show the greatest good-will, provided the other nations are prepared really to overcome any difficulties which may arise.

The proposal made by President Roosevelt, of which I learned last night, has therefore earned the warmest thanks of the German Government. They are prepared to agree to this method of overcoming the international crisis, for they are also of the opinion that no permanent economic reconstruction is possible unless the disarmament question is solved. They are prepared to take part unselfishly in this work of bringing order into the political and economic conditions of the world. As I stated at the outset, they are also convinced that there is to-day only one great task:

to safeguard the peace of the world.

I am obliged to state that the reason for the present armaments of France or Poland can under no circumstances be the fear of those nations of a German invasion, for such fear would be only justified by the possession by Germany of modern offensive weapons. Germany, however, does not possess such modern offensive weapons at all; she has neither heavy artillery nor tanks nor bombing aeroplanes nor poisonous gases.

The only nation therefore which might justifiably fear invasion is the German nation, which not only may not possess offensive weapons but is also restricted in its right to defensive weapons and is even forbidden to erect frontier fortifications.

Germany is at all times prepared to renounce offensive weapons if the rest of the world does the same. Germany is prepared to agree to any solemn pact of non-aggression because she does not think of attacking but only of acquiring security.

She would welcome the possibility suggested in President Roosevelt's proposal of bringing the United States into European relations as a guarantor of peace. The President's proposal is a ray of comfort for all who wish to cooperate sincerely in the maintenance of peace. We have no more earnest desire than to contribute to the final healing of the wounds caused by the war and the Treaty of Versailles. Germany does not wish to take any other path than that recognized as justified by the treaties themselves. The German Government wishes to come to a peaceful agreement with other nations on all difficult questions. They know that in any military action in Europe, even if completely successful, the sacrifice would be out of all proportion to any possible gains.

The German Government and the German people will under no circumstances allow themselves to be forced to sign what would mean a perpetuation of the degradation of Germany. The attempt to work on Government and people by threats will make no impression. It is conceivable that Germany might be violated in defiance of justice and morality, but it is inconceivable and out of the question that such an act should be given legal validity by our own signature.

The attempt has been made in newspaper articles and in regrettable speeches to threaten Germany with *sanctions*, but such a monstrous step could only be considered as a punishment meted out to Germany for having pressed for the carrying out of the treaties by her demand for disarmament. Such a measure could only lead to the definite moral and effective invalidation of the treaties. Germany, however, even in this case, would never renounce her peaceful claims. The political and economic consequences, the chaos which such an attempt would bring on Europe would be the responsibility of those who used such means against a people which is doing the world no harm.

Any such attempt or any attempt to do violence to Germany by means of a simple majority vote, contrary to the clear meaning of the treaties, could only be dictated by the intention of excluding us from the conferences. The German people, however, today possesses sufficient character in such a case not to impose its cooperation on other nations but, though with a heavy heart, to draw the only possible consequence.

It would be difficult for us as a constantly defamed nation

to continue to belong to the League of Nations.

The German Government and the German nation are only too fully aware of the crisis of the present time. For many years Germany has given warnings regarding the methods which would and did inevitably lead to these political and economic results. If the present direction and the present methods are continued, there can be no doubt as to the ultimate result. After apparent political successes of individual nations, the resultant economic and political disasters for all will be all the more severe. We regard it as our first and most important task to avoid these results.

Hitherto no effective measures have been taken. When we are told by the rest of the world that certain sympathies were felt for the former Germany, we have indeed experienced the results and effects of these „sympathies” in and for Germany.

Millions of destroyed existences, the ruin of entire professions, and an enormous army of unemployed – all these facts reflect a state of wretchedness the extent of which I should like to impress on the rest of the world by a single figure:

Since the signature of this Treaty, which was to form the foundation stone of a new and better world for all nations, 224,900 people, men, women, old people and children, have taken their own lives, almost exclusively out of distress and misery.

These unbribable witnesses condemn the spirit and fulfilment of a Treaty from which not only the rest of the world but also millions of people in Germany expected salvation and peace.

May the other nations realise the resolute will of Germany to put an end to a period of blundering and to find the way to a final understanding between all, on the basis of equal rights.

Chancellor Adolf Hitler

to the Reich Commissioners in the Reich Chancery, Berlin, on 6 July 1933⁹

The political parties have now been finally abolished; this is a historical event of which the importance and far-reaching effect have in many cases not yet been realized at all. We must now get rid of the last remains of democracy, especially of the methods of voting and of the decisions by the majority, such as still often occur in the communes, in economic organisations and in working committees, and lay stress upon the responsibility in all cases of the individual.

The achievement of external power must be followed by the internal education of the individual. We must therefore guard against making purely formal decisions from day to day and expecting them to lead to a final solution. Mankind are only too ready to make the external form fit their own mental conceptions.

Direction must not be changed until the right men have been found for the change. More revolutions have been successful at the outset than have, when once successful, been arrested and brought to a standstill at the right moment.

The revolution is not a permanent state of affairs, and it must not be allowed to develop into such a state. The stream of revolution released must be guided into the safe channel of evolution. *The most important point in this connection is the education of the individual* The present state of affairs must be improved, and the men who incorporate it must be educated up to the National Socialist view of the state. We must therefore not dismiss a business-man if he is a good business-man even if he is not yet a National Socialist; and especially not if the National Socialist who is to take his place knows nothing about the business.

In business, ability must be the only authoritative standard.

The task of National Socialism is to secure the development of our nation. We must not look round to see if there is still something a revolutionize, but it is our task to secure position after position, in order to hold them and gradually find the very best men

for them. In doing so we must spread our action over many years and reckon with long periods. We cannot provide bread for a single workman by mere theoretical coordination. History will not judge us according as to whether we have removed and imprisoned the largest number of economists but according as to whether we have succeeded in providing work.

We have now absolutely the power to enforce our will everywhere.

But we must be able to replace the men we remove by better men. The business man must be judged in the first place according to his business abilities, and we must obviously keep the business apparatus in order. We will not get rid of unemployment by means of business commissions, organizations, constructions and theories. It is not a question at the present of programmes and ideas, but of the daily bread for five million men. Business is a living organism which cannot be transformed at a single blow. Business develops in accordance with primitive laws that are anchored in human nature. The spiritual bacillus carriers that are now attempting

⁹ Translation of abridged official text.

to find a way into business are a danger to the state and the nation. We must not reject practical experience because it is contrary to a certain idea. When we present ourselves to our nation with reforms, we must also prove that we understand things and are able to master them.

Our task is work, work and nothing but work!

We will derive the most powerful authority from success in the provision of work. Our programme has not been drawn up for the sake of fine gestures, but in order to maintain the life of the German nation. The ideas of the programme oblige us not to act like fools and upset everything but to realize our trains of thought wisely and carefully. In the long run, our political power will be all the more secure, the more we succeed in underpinning it economically. The Reich Commissioners must therefore see to it and are responsible that no organizations or party offices assume the functions of government, dismiss individuals and make appointments to offices, to do which the government of the Reich alone and thus, with regard to business, the Reich Minister of Economics, is competent. *The Party has now become the State. All power is invested in the Reich Government. We must prevent the centre of gravity of German life being once more shifted to different quarters or even organizations. There is no longer any authority emanating from any one part of the Reich but only that based on the idea of the German nation as a whole.*
