

CHAPTER XII: THE FIRST STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL SOCIALIST GERMAN LABOUR PARTY

Here at the close of this volume I shall describe the first stage in the progress of our Movement and shall give a brief account of the problems we had to deal with during that period.

In doing this I have no intention of expounding the ideals which we have setup as the goal of our Movement, for these ideals are so momentous in their significance that an exposition of them will need a whole volume.

Therefore, I shall devote the second volume of this book to a detailed survey of the principles which form the programme of our Movement and I shall attempt to draw a picture of what we mean by the word 'State.'

When I say 'we', in this connection, I mean to include all those hundreds of thousands who have fundamentally the same longing, though in the individual cases they cannot find adequate words to describe the vision that hovers before their eyes.

It is a characteristic feature of all great reforms that, in the beginning, there is only one single protagonist to come forward on behalf of several million people.

The final goal of a great reformation has often been the object of profound longing on the part of hundreds of thousands for centuries past, until finally one among them comes forward as a herald to announce the will of that multitude and become the champion of the old desire, which he now sets about triumphantly realising in the form of a new ideal.

The fact that millions of our people yearn for a radical change in our present conditions is proved by the profound discontent which exists among them.

This feeling is manifested in a thousand ways. Some express it in their discouragement and despair; others show it in resentment, anger and indignation.

In some this profound discontent calls forth an attitude of indifference,

while it urges others to violent manifestations of wrath.

Another indication of this feeling may be seen, on the one hand, in the attitude of those who abstain from voting at elections and, on the other, in the large numbers of those who side with the fanatical extremists of the left wing.

It was to the latter that our young Movement had to appeal first of all. It was not to be an organisation for contented and satisfied people, but was meant to gather in all those who were suffering from profound anxiety and could find no peace, those who were unhappy and discontented. It was not meant to float on the surface of national life, but rather to push its roots deep down among the people.

Looked at from the purely political point of view, the situation in 1918 was as follows: A nation had been torn asunder. One part, which was by far the smaller of the two, comprised the intellectual classes of the nation, from which all those employed in physical labour were excluded.

On the surface, these intellectual classes appeared to be national-minded, but that word meant nothing to them except a very vague and feeble concept of the duty to defend what they called the interests of the State, which in turn seemed identical with those of the dynastic regime.

This class tried to defend its ideas and realise its aims by carrying on the fight with the aid of intellectual weapons, which, insufficient and superficial enough in the face of the brutal methods adopted by the adversary, were, of their very nature, bound to fail.

With one violent blow the class which had hitherto governed was now struck down; it trembled with fear and accepted every humiliation imposed on it by the merciless victor.

Over against this class stood the broad masses of manual labourers who were organised in movements with a more or less radically Marxist tendency. These organised masses were firmly determined to break any kind of intellectual resistance by the use of brute force.

They had no nationalist tendencies whatsoever and deliberately repudiated the idea of advancing the interests of the nation as such.

On the contrary, they promoted the interests of the foreign oppression. Numerically, this class embraced the majority of the population and, what is

more important, included all those elements of the nation without whose collaboration a national resurgence was not only a practical impossibility, but was even inconceivable.

Even in 1918 one thing had to be clearly recognised, namely, that no resurgence of the German nation could take place until we had first re-established our national strength in relation to the outside world.

For this purpose arms were not the preliminary necessity, though our bourgeois 'statesmen' always blathered about it being so; what was wanted was will-power.

At one time the German people had more than sufficient armaments, and yet that did not suffice for the defence of its liberty, because it lacked that energy which springs from the instinct of national self-preservation and the will to hold one's own.

The best armament is only dead and worthless material as long as the spirit is wanting which makes men willing and determined to avail themselves of such weapons. Germany was rendered defenceless, not because she lacked arms, but because she lacked the will to keep her arms for the further preservation of her people.

To-day our left-wing politicians, in particular, are constantly insisting that their craven-hearted and obsequious, but in reality treacherous, foreign policy necessarily results from the disarmament of Germany.

To all that kind of talk the answer ought to be, 'No, the contrary is the truth. Your action in delivering up the arms was dictated by your anti-national and criminal policy of abandoning the interests of the nation. Now you try to make people believe that your miserable whining is fundamentally due to the fact that you have no arms. Just like everything else in your conduct, this is a lie and a falsification of the true facts.'

The politicians of the right deserve exactly the same reproach. It was through their miserable cowardice that those ruffians of Jews who came into power in 1918 were able to rob the nation of its arms.

The conservative politicians have neither right nor reason on their side when they cite disarmament as the cause which compelled them to adopt a policy of prudence (that is to say, of cowardice).

The truth is that disarmament is the result of their pusillanimity.

Therefore, the problem of restoring Germany's power is not a question of how we can manufacture arms, but rather a question of how we can foster that spirit which enables a people to bear arms.

Once this spirit prevails among a people, then it will find a thousand ways, each of which leads to the acquisition of arms. A coward will not fire even a single shot when attacked, though he may be armed with ten pistols; to him they are of less value than a blackthorn in the hands of a man of courage.

The problem of re-establishing the political power of our nation is first of all a problem of restoring the instinct of national self-preservation, if for no other reason than that every preparatory step in foreign policy and every weighing up by foreign Powers of the military value of a State has been proved by experience to be grounded not on the total amount of armaments such a State may possess, but rather on the moral capacity for resistance which such a State has, or is believed to have.

The question whether or not a nation be desirable as an ally is determined not so much by the inert mass of arms which it has at hand, but by the obvious presence of an enthusiastic will to national self-preservation and a heroic courage which will fight to the last breath, for an alliance is not made between arms but between men.

The British nation will, therefore, be considered as the most valuable ally in the world as long as it can be counted upon to show that brutality and tenacity in its government, as well as in the spirit of the broad masses, which enables it to carry on till victory any struggle upon which it once enters, no matter how long such a struggle may last, no matter how great the sacrifice that may be necessary and no matter what the means that have to be employed—and all this even though the actual military equipment at hand may be utterly inadequate as compared with that of other nations.

Once it is understood that the restoration of Germany is a question of reawakening the will to political self-preservation we shall see quite clearly that it will not be enough to win over those elements that are already national-minded, but that the deliberately anti-national masses must be converted to believe in the national ideals.

A young movement that aims at re-establishing a German State with full

sovereign powers will therefore have to make the task of winning over the broad masses a special objective of its plan of campaign.

Our so-called 'national bourgeoisie' are so lamentably supine, generally speaking, and their national spirit appears so feckless, that we may feel sure they will offer no serious resistance against a vigorous national foreign or domestic policy.

Even though the narrow-minded German bourgeoisie should keep up a passive resistance when the hour of deliverance is at hand, as they did in Bismarck's time, we shall never have to fear any active resistance on their part, because of their acknowledged and proverbial cowardice.

It is quite different with the masses of our population, who are imbued with ideas of internationalism. Through the primitive roughness of their natures, they are disposed to accept the idea of violence, while at the same time their Jewish leaders are more brutal and ruthless.

They will crush any attempt at a German revival, just as they smashed the German Army by striking at it from the rear.

Above all, these organised masses will use their numerical majority in this parliamentary State, not only to hinder any national foreign policy, but also to prevent Germany from restoring her prestige abroad and so establishing her desirability as an ally.

For it is not we ourselves alone who are aware of the handicap that results from the existence of fifteen million Marxists, democrats, pacifists and followers of the Centre in our midst; foreign nations also recognise this internal burden which we have to bear and take it into their calculations when estimating the value of a possible alliance with us.

Nobody would wish to form an alliance with a State where the active portion of the population is at least passively opposed to any resolute foreign policy.

The situation is made still worse by reason of the fact that the leaders of those parties which were responsible for the betrayal of the nation are ready to oppose any and every attempt at a revival, simply because they want to retain the positions they now hold.

According to the laws that govern human history, it is inconceivable that

the German people could resume the place they formerly held without retaliating on those who were both cause and occasion of the collapse that involved the ruin of our State.

Before the judgment seat of posterity November 1918 will not be regarded as a simple rebellion but as high treason against the country.

Therefore, it is not possible to think of re-establishing German sovereignty and political independence without at the same time reconstructing a united front within the nation.

Looked at from the standpoint of practical ways and means, it seems absurd to think of liberating Germany from foreign bondage as long as the masses of the people are not willing to support such an ideal of freedom.

Considering this problem from the purely military point of view, everybody, and in particular every officer, will agree that a war cannot be waged against an outside enemy by battalions of students; but that, together with the brains of the nation, the physical strength of the nation is also necessary.

Furthermore, it must be remembered that the nation would be robbed of irreplaceable assets, if the national defence were composed only of the intellectual circles, as they are called.

The young German intellectuals who joined the volunteer regiments and fell on the battlefields of Flanders in the autumn of 1914 were bitterly missed later on.

They were the most valuable treasure which the nation possessed and their loss could not be made good in the course of the war.

It is not only the struggle itself which could not be waged if the working classes of the nation did not join the storm battalions, but the necessary technical preparations could not be made without a united will and a common front within the nation itself.

Our nation which has to exist disarmed under the thousand eyes appointed by the Versailles Peace Treaty, cannot make any technical preparations for the recovery of its freedom and human independence, until the whole army of spies employed within the country is cut down to those few whose inborn baseness would lead them to betray anything and everything for

the proverbial thirty pieces of silver.

We can deal with such people, but the millions, who are opposed to the national revival, simply because of their political opinions, constitute an insurmountable obstacle.

At least, the obstacle will remain insurmountable, as long as the cause of their opposition, which is international Marxism, is not overcome and its teachings banished from both their hearts and minds.

From whatever point of view we may examine the possibility of recovering our independence as a State and as a nation, whether we consider the problem from the standpoint of technical rearmament or from that of the actual struggle itself, the necessary prerequisite always remains the same.

This prerequisite is that the broad masses of the people must first be won over to accept the principle of our national independence.

If we do not regain our external freedom, every step forward in domestic reform will be at best an augmentation of our productive powers for the benefit of those nations that look upon us as a colony to be exploited.

The surplus produced by any so-called economic revival would only go into the hands of our international supervisors, and any social betterment would at best increase our output, to the advantage of those persons.

No cultural progress can be made by the German nation, because such progress is too much bound up with the political independence and dignity of a people.

Since, therefore, we can find a satisfactory solution for the problem of Germany's future only by winning over the broad masses of our people for the support of the national idea, this must be considered the highest and most important task to be accomplished by a movement which does not strive merely to satisfy the needs of the moment, but considers itself bound to examine in the light of future results everything it decides to do or to refrain from doing.

As early as 1919 we were convinced that to make the masses national-minded would have to constitute the first and paramount aim of the new movement. From the tactical standpoint, this decision brought with it a certain number of obligations.

(1) No social sacrifice could be considered too great in this effort to win over the masses for the national revival.

Whatever economic concessions are granted to-day to employees are negligible when compared with the benefit to be reaped by the whole nation if such concessions contribute to bring back the masses of the people once more to an appreciation of their own nationality.

Nothing but meanness and short-sightedness, which are characteristics that are unfortunately only too prevalent among our employers, could prevent people from recognising that in the long run no economic improvement and therefore no rise, in profits are possible unless the internal *völkisch* solidarity of our nation be restored.

If the German trade-unions had defended the interests of the working-classes uncompromisingly during the War;

- if, even during the War, they had used the weapon of the strike to force the industrialists (who were greedy for higher dividends) to grant the demands of the workers for whom the unions acted;

- if at the same time they had stood up as good Germans for the defence of the nation as stoutly as for their own claims; and

- if they had given as unstintingly to their country that which was their country's due—then the War would never have been lost.

How ludicrously insignificant would all, and even the greatest, economic concessions have been as compared with the tremendous importance of such a victory!

For a movement which would restore the German worker to the German people it is, therefore, absolutely necessary to understand clearly that economic sacrifices must be considered negligible in such cases, provided, of course, that they do not go the length of endangering the independence and stability of the national economic system.

(2) The education of the masses along national lines can be carried out only indirectly, by improving social conditions, for only by such a process can the economic conditions be created which enable everybody to share in the cultural life of the nation.

(3) The making of the broad masses national-minded can never be achieved by half-measures—that is to say, by feebly insisting on what is called the objective side of the question—but only by a ruthless and fanatically one-sided insistence on the aim which must be achieved.

This means that a people cannot be made ‘national’ in the sense of that word as accepted by our bourgeois class to-day—that is to say, nationalism with many reservations—but ‘national’ in the vehement and extreme sense.

Poison can be overcome only by a counter-poison and only the supine bourgeois mind could think that the Kingdom of Heaven can be attained by a compromise.

The broad masses of a nation are not made up of professors and diplomats. Since these masses have but little acquaintance with abstract ideas, their reactions lie more in the domain of the feelings, which determine their positive or their negative attitude as the case may be.

They are susceptible only to a manifestation of strength which comes definitely either from the positive or the negative side, but they are never susceptible to any half-hearted attitude that wavers between one pole and the other.

The emotional grounds of their attitude furnish the reason for their extraordinary stability. It is always more difficult to fight successfully against faith than against knowledge.

Love is less subject to change than respect. Hatred is more lasting than mere aversion. None of the tremendous revolutions which this world has witnessed, have been brought about by a scientific revelation, which has moved the masses, but always by an ardour which has inspired them, and often by a kind of hysteria which has urged them to action.

Whoever wishes to win over the masses must find the key that will open the door to their hearts. It is not objectivity, which is weakness, but determination and strength.

(4) The soul of the masses can be won only if those who lead the movement are determined not merely to carry through the positive struggle for their own aims, but are also determined to destroy the enemy that opposes them.

When they see an uncompromising onslaught against an adversary, the people have at all times taken this as a proof that right is on the side of the aggressor.

But if the aggressor should go only half-way and fail to push home his success by driving his opponent entirely from the scene of action, the people will look upon this as a sign that the aggressor is uncertain of the justice of his own cause and, that his half-way policy may even be an acknowledgment that his cause is unjust.

The masses are but a part of Nature herself. Their feeling is such that they cannot understand mutual handshakings between men who are declared enemies.

Their wish is to see the stronger side win and the weaker wiped out, or subjected unconditionally to the will of the stronger.

It is possible to succeed in making the masses national-minded, only if, positive though the struggle to win the soul of the people may be, those who spread the international poison among them are exterminated.

(5) All the great problems of our time are problems of the moment and are only the results of certain definite causes, and among all these there is only one that has a profoundly causal significance.

This is the problem of preserving the pure racial stock among the people. Human vigour or decline depends on the blood.

Nations that are not aware of the importance of their racial stock, or which neglect to preserve it, are like men who would try to educate the pug-dog to do the work of the greyhound, not understanding that neither the speed of the greyhound nor the imitative faculties of the poodle are inborn qualities which cannot be drilled into the one or the other by any form of training.

A people that fails to preserve the purity of its racial blood thereby destroys the unity of the soul of the nation in all its manifestations.

A disintegrated national character is the inevitable consequence of a process of disintegration in the blood, and the change which takes place in the spiritual and creative faculties of a people is only an outcome of the change that has modified its racial substance. If we are to free the German people from all those non-characteristic failings and traits we must first get rid of alien

causes of these traits and failings. The German nation will never revive unless the racial problem, and with it, the Jewish question, is taken into account and dealt with.

The racial problem furnishes the key, not only to the understanding of human history, but also to the understanding of every kind of human culture.

(6) By incorporating in the national community the broad masses of our people (who are now in the international camp) we do not mean to renounce the principle that the interests of the various trades and professions must be safeguarded.

Divergent interests in the various branches of labour and in the trades and professions are not the same as a division between the various classes, but rather a natural feature inherent in our economic life.

Vocational grouping does not clash in the least with the idea of a national community, for it means national unity in regard to all those problems that affect the life of the nation as such.

To incorporate in the national community, or in the State, a stratum of the people which has now formed a social class, the standing of the upper classes must not be lowered, but that of the lower classes must be raised.

The class which carries through this process is never the upper class, but rather the lower one which is fighting for equality of rights.

The bourgeoisie of to-day was not incorporated in the State through measures enacted by the feudal nobility, but only through its own energy and leaders who had sprung from its own ranks.

The German worker cannot be raised from his present status and incorporated in the German folk-community by means of goody-goody meetings where people talk about the brotherhood of the people, but rather by a systematic improvement in the social and cultural life of the worker, until the yawning gulf between him and the other classes can be bridged.

A movement which has this for its aim must try to recruit its followers mainly from the ranks of the working class. It must include members of the intellectual classes only in so far as such members have rightly understood, and accepted without reserve, the ideal towards which the movement is striving. This process of transformation and reunion cannot be completed

within ten or twenty years; it will take several generations, as the history of such movements has shown.

The most difficult obstacle to the inclusion of our contemporary worker in the national folk-community does not consist so much in the fact that he fights for the interests of his fellow-workers, but rather in the influence of his international leaders and their anti-national and non-patriotic attitude which he has accepted.

If they were inspired by the principle of devotion to the nation in all that concerns its political and social welfare, the trade-unions would make those millions of workers most valuable members of the national community, irrespective of their own individual struggle on behalf of economic interests.

A movement which sincerely endeavours to bring the German worker back into his folk community, and rescue him from the folly of internationalism, must wage a vigorous campaign against certain notions that are prevalent among the industrialists.

One of these notions is that according to the concept of the folk-community, the employee is obliged to surrender all his economic rights to the employer and, further, that the workers would come into conflict with the folk-community, if they should attempt to defend their own justified and vital interests.

Those who try to propagate such a notion are deliberate liars. The folk-community imposes obligations not only on the one side, but also on the other.

A worker certainly does something which is contrary to the spirit of the folk-community, if he acts entirely on his own initiative and puts forward exaggerated demands, without taking the common weal or the maintenance of the national economic structure into consideration.

But an industrialist also acts against the spirit of the folk-community, if he adopts inhumane methods of exploitation and misuses the working capacity of the nation and, by sweating the workers, amasses million for himself.

He has no right to call himself 'national' and no right to talk of a folk-community, for he is only an unscrupulous egotist who sows the seeds of social discontent and provokes future conflicts which are bound to prove injurious to the interests of the country.

The reservoir from which the young movement has to draw its members will be first of all the working classes. These classes must be delivered from the clutches of the international mania.

Their social distress must be eliminated. They must be raised above their present cultural level, which is deplorable and transformed into a resolute and valuable factor in the folk-community, inspired by national ideas and national sentiment.

If, among those intellectual circles that are nationalist in their outlook, men can be found who genuinely love their people and look forward eagerly to the future of Germany, and at the same time have a sound grasp of the importance of a struggle, whose aim is to win over the soul of the masses, such men will be cordially welcomed in the ranks of the movement.

They can serve as a valuable intellectual support in the work that is to be done. But this movement can never aim at recruiting its membership from the unthinking herd of bourgeois voters. If it did so, the movement would be burdened with a mass of people whose whole mentality would only help to paralyse the efforts of the campaign to win over the broad masses.

In theory it may be very fine to say that the broad masses ought to be influenced by a combined leadership of the upper and lower social strata within the framework of the one movement; but notwithstanding all this, the fact remains that, though it may be possible to exercise a psychological influence on the bourgeois classes and to arouse some enthusiasm or even awaken some understanding among them by public demonstrations, it is impossible to eliminate those characteristics, or rather faults, which have grown and developed in the course of centuries.

The difference between the cultural levels of the two groups and between their respective attitudes towards economic questions is still so great that it would turn out a hindrance to the movement the moment the first enthusiasm aroused by demonstrations calmed down.

Finally, it is not part of our programme to transform the nationalist camp itself, but, rather to win over those who are anti-national in their outlook. It is this point of view which must finally determine the tactics of the whole movement.

(7) This one-sided, but, consequently, clear and definite attitude must be

manifested in the propaganda of the movement; and, on the other hand, this clarity is absolutely necessary in order to make the propaganda itself effective.

If propaganda is to be of service to the movement it must be addressed to one side alone; for if it should vary the direction of its appeal it will not be understood in the one camp and may be rejected by the other as obvious and uninteresting, for the intellectual background of the two camps that come into question is very different.

Even the manner in which something is presented and the tone in which particular details are emphasised cannot have the same effect on those two strata that belong respectively to the opposite extremes of the social structure.

If the propaganda should refrain from using primitive forms of expression, it will not appeal to the sentiment of the masses.

If, on the other hand, it conforms to the crude sentiments of the masses in its words and gestures, the intellectual circles will be averse to it because of its crudity and vulgarity.

Among a hundred men who call themselves orators, there are scarcely ten who are capable of speaking with effect to an audience of street-sweepers, mechanics, navvies, etc., to-day and of expounding the same subject with equal effect to-morrow to an audience of university professors and students.

Among a thousand public speakers there may be only one who can address a mixed audience of mechanics and professors in the same hall in such a way that his statements can be fully comprehended by each group while, at the same time, he effectively influences both to such an extent that they are carried away by a common enthusiasm. It must always be remembered that in most cases even the most beautiful idea embodied in a sublime theory can be brought home to the public only by men of middling ability.

The thing that matters here is not the vision of the man of genius who created the great ideal, but rather what his apostles tell the broad masses, how they do this and with what degree of success.

Social Democracy and the whole Marxist movement were particularly qualified to attract the great masses of the nation, because of the uniformity of the public to which they addressed their appeal.

The more limited and narrow their ideas and arguments, the easier it was

for the masses to grasp and assimilate them, for those ideas and arguments were well adapted to a low level of intelligence.

These considerations led the new movement to adopt the following clear and simple line of policy. In its message as well as in its forms of expression the propaganda had to be kept on a level with the intelligence of the masses, and its value had to be measured only by the actual success it achieved.

At a public meeting where the great masses are gathered together the best speaker is not he whose way of approaching a subject is most akin to the spirit of those intellectuals who may happen to be present, but the speaker who knows how to win the hearts of the masses.

An educated man who is present and who finds fault with an address because he considers it to be on an intellectual plane that is too low, though he himself has witnessed its effect on the lower intellectual groups whose adherence has to be won, only shows himself completely incapable of rightly judging the situation and thereby proves that he can be of no use in the new movement.

Only those intellectuals can be of use to a movement who understand its mission and its aims so well that they have learned to judge the methods of propaganda exclusively by the success obtained and never by the impression which those methods, make on them personally.

Propaganda is not meant to serve as an entertainment for those people who already have a nationalist outlook; its purpose is to win the adhesion of those who have hitherto been hostile to the nation, but who are, nevertheless, of our own blood and race.

In general, those considerations of which I have given a brief summary in the chapter on 'War Propaganda' became the guiding rules and principles which determined the kind of propaganda we were to adopt in our campaign and the method by which we were to carry it out.

The success that has been obtained proves that our decision was right.

(8) The ends which any political reform movement sets out to attain can never be reached by trying to educate the public or influence those in power, but only by getting political power into its hands.

It is not only the right, but the duty, of the protagonists of any world-

shattering ideal to secure control of such means as will enable them to realise that idea.

In this world, success is the standard whereby we can decide whether such an undertaking was right or wrong, and by the word 'success' in this connection I do not mean such a success as the mere acquisition of power in 1918, but the beneficial results of such an acquisition of power.

A *coup d'état* cannot, therefore, be considered successful if, as many empty-headed critics in Germany now, believe, the revolutionaries succeeded in seizing control of the State, but only if, in comparison with the state of affairs under the old regime, the lot of the nation has been improved when the aims and intentions on which the revolution was based have been put into practice.

This certainly does not apply to the German Revolution, as the coup was called, which was effected by a gang of bandits in the autumn of 1918.

But if the acquisition of political power be a requisite preliminary for the practical realisation of the ideals that inspire a reform movement, then any movement which aims at reform must, from the very first day of its activity, be considered by its leaders as a movement of the masses and not as a literary tea-club or an association of Philistines who meet to play ninepins.

(9) The nature and internal organisation of the new movement make it anti-parliamentarian.

That is to say, it rejects in general, and in its own structure, the principle according to which decisions are to be taken on the vote of the majority and according to which the leader is only the executor of the will and opinion of others.

The movement lays down the principle that, in the smallest, as well as in the greatest, problems, one person must have absolute authority and bear all responsibility.

In the movement the practical consequences of this principle are as follows: The president of a local group is appointed by the head of the group immediately above his in authority. He is then the responsible leader of his group.

All the committees are subject to his authority and not he to theirs. There

is no such thing as committees that vote, but only committees that work.

This work is allotted by the responsible leader, who is the president of the group. The same principle applies to the higher organisations—the *Bezirk* (district), the *Kreis* (urban circuit) and the *Gau* (the region).

In each case the president is appointed from above and is invested with full authority and executive power. Only the leader of the whole party is elected, at the general meeting of the members, but he is the sole leader of the movement.

All the committees are responsible to him, but he is not responsible to the committees. His decision is final, but he bears the whole responsibility for it.

The members of the movement are entitled to call him to account by means of a new election, or to remove him from office, if he has violated the principles of the movement or has not served its interests adequately.

He is then replaced by a more capable man, who is invested with the same authority and obliged to bear the same responsibility.

One of the highest duties of the movement is to make this principle valid not only within its own ranks, but also for the whole State.

The man who becomes leader is invested with supreme and unlimited authority, but he also has to bear the final and heaviest responsibility.

The man who has not the courage to shoulder responsibility for his actions is not fitted to be a leader. Only a man of heroic mould can have the vocation for such a task.

Human progress and human culture are not founded by the multitude. They are exclusively the work of personal genius and personal efficiency.

To cultivate these and give them their due, is one of the conditions necessary for the regaining of the prestige and power of our nation.

Because of this principle, the movement must necessarily be anti-parliamentarian: and if it takes part in a parliamentary institution it must be only for the purpose of destroying this institution from within; in other words, we wish to do away with an institution which we must look upon as one of the gravest symptoms of human decline.

(10) The movement steadfastly refuses to take up any stand in regard to problems which are either outside of its sphere of political work or seem to have no fundamental importance for it.

It does not aim at bringing about a religious reformation, but rather a political re-organisation of our people.

It looks upon the two religious denominations as equally valuable mainstays for the existence of our people, and therefore it makes war on all those parties which would degrade the foundation on which the religious and moral stability of our people is based, by exploiting it in the service of party interests.

Finally, the movement does not aim at re-establishing any one form of State or trying to destroy another, but rather at making those fundamental principles prevail without which no republic and no monarchy can exist for any length of time.

The movement does not consider its mission to be the establishment of a monarchy or the preservation of the Republic but rather the creation of a Germanic State.

The problem of the external form of this State, that is to say, its final shape, is not of fundamental importance. It is a problem which must be solved in the light of what seems practical and opportune. Once a nation has understood and appreciated the great problems that affect its inner existence, the question of formalities will never lead to internal conflict.

(11) The problem of the inner organisation of the movement is not one of principle, but of expediency.

The best kind of organisation is not that which places a large intermediary apparatus between the leadership of the movement and the individual followers, but rather that which functions with the smallest possible intermediary apparatus.

For it is the task of such an organisation to transmit a certain idea, which originated in the brain of one individual, to a multitude of people and to supervise the manner in which this idea is being put into practice.

From any and every point of view, therefore, the organisation is only a necessary evil. At best it is only a means to an end, at the worst, an end in

itself.

Since the world produces more mechanically-minded beings than idealists, it will always be easier to develop the form of an organisation than its substance, that is to say, the ideals which it is meant to serve.

The march of any ideal which strives towards practical fulfilment, and in particular those ideals which are of a reformatory character, may be roughly sketched as follows:

A creative idea takes shape in the mind of somebody who thereupon feels himself called upon to transmit this idea to the world. He propounds his faith to others and thereby gradually gains a certain number of followers.

This direct and personal way of promulgating one's ideas among one's contemporaries is the most natural and the best, but as the movement develops and secures a large number of followers it gradually becomes impossible for the original founder of the doctrine on which the movement is based, to carry on his propaganda personally among his many followers and at the same time to guide the course of the movement.

According as the community of followers increases, direct communication between the head and the individual followers becomes impossible.

This intercourse must then take place through an intermediary apparatus introduced into the framework of the movement. Thus ideal conditions of intercommunication cease, and organisation has to be introduced as a necessary evil.

Small subsidiary groups come into existence, as in the political movement, for example, where the local groups represent the germ-cells out of which the organisation develops later.

But such subdivisions must not be introduced into the movement until the authority of the spiritual founder, and of the school he has created, are accepted without reservation.

Otherwise the movement would run the risk of becoming split up by divergent doctrines. In this connection too much emphasis cannot be laid on the importance of having one geographic centre as the chief seat of the movement.

Only the existence of such a seat, or centre, around which a magic spell such as that of Mecca or Rome is woven, can supply a movement, with that permanent driving force which has its source in the internal unity of the movement, and the recognition of one head as representing this unity.

When the first germ-cells of the organisation are being formed, care must always be taken not only to insist on the importance of the place where the idea originated, but to invest it with a sublime significance.

The creative, moral and practical significance of the place whence the movement went forth and from which it is governed must be stressed in the same measure in which the original cells of the movement become so numerous that they have to be regrouped into larger units in the structure of the organisation.

When, the number of individual followers becomes so large that direct personal, contact with the head of the movement is out of the question, we have to form those first local groups.

As these groups multiply it becomes necessary to establish higher cadres in which the local groups are organised. Examples of such cadres in the political organisation are those of the region (*Gau*) and the district (*Bezirk*).

Though it may be easy enough to maintain the original central authority over the lowest groups, it is much more difficult to do so in relation to the higher units of organisation which have now developed.

Yet we must succeed in doing so, for this is an indispensable condition if the unity of the movement is to be guaranteed and its ideal realised.

Finally, when those larger intermediary organisations have to be combined in new and still higher units, it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain the absolute supremacy of the original seat of the movement and its school of thought.

Consequently, the mechanical forms of an organisation must only be introduced if, and in so far as, the spiritual authority and the ideas of the central seat of the organisation are shown to be firmly established.

In the case of a political structure, this authority can frequently be guaranteed only by the exercise of power.

Having taken all these considerations into account, the following principles were laid down for the inner structure of the movement:

(a) That at the beginning all activity should be concentrated in one town: namely, Munich. That a group of absolutely reliable followers should be trained and a school founded which would subsequently help to propagate the ideal of the Movement.

That the necessary authority for later should be established by gaining many and visible successes in this particular place.

To secure name and fame for the Movement and its leader it was necessary, not only to give, in this one town, a striking example to shatter the belief that the Marxist doctrine was invincible, but also to show that a counter-doctrine was possible.

(b) That local groups should not be established before the supremacy of the central authority in Munich was definitely established and acknowledged.

(c) That District, Regional, and Provincial groups should be formed not only after the need for them had become evident, but after the supremacy of the central authority has been satisfactorily guaranteed.

Further, that the creation of subordinate units should depend on whether or not persons could be found who were qualified to undertake the leadership thereof.

Here there are two alternatives:

(a) That the movement should have the necessary funds to attract and train intelligent people who would be capable of becoming leaders.

The personnel thus obtained could then be systematically employed according as the tactical situation and the necessity for efficiency demanded.

This solution is the easier and the more expeditious, but it necessitates large financial resources, for this group of leaders can work for the Movement only if they are paid a salary.

(b) Because the Movement, owing to lack of funds, is not in a position to employ paid officials it must begin by depending on voluntary helpers. Naturally this solution is slower and more difficult.

It means that the leaders of the Movement have to allow large districts to remain uncanvassed, unless in these respective districts a member comes forward who is capable and willing to place himself at the service of the central authority for the purpose of organising and directing the Movement in the region concerned.

It may happen that in extensive regions no such leader can be found, but that at the same time in other regions two or three or even more persons appear whose capabilities are almost on a level.

The difficulty which this situation involves is very great and can be overcome only with the passage of time.

The necessary condition for the establishment of any branch of the organisation must always be that a person can be found who is capable of fulfilling the functions of a leader.

Just as the army and all its various units of organisation are useless if there are no officers, so any political organisation is worthless, if it has not the right kind of leaders. If an inspiring personality who has the gift of leadership cannot be found for the organisation and direction of a local group it is better for the Movement to refrain from establishing such a group, than to run the risk of failure after the group has been founded.

A necessary qualification for leadership is the possession, not only of will-power, but of efficiency, and will-power and energy must be considered as more important than the intellect of a genius.

The most valuable association of qualities is a combination of talent, determination and perseverance.

(12) The future of a movement is determined by the devotion, and even intolerance, with which its members fight for their cause.

They must feel convinced that their cause alone is just, and they must carry it through to success, as against other similar organisations in the same field.

It is quite erroneous to believe that the strength of a movement must increase if it is to be combined with other movements of a similar kind.

Any expansion resulting from such a combination will of course mean an

increase in external development, which superficial, observers might consider to be also an increase of power; but in reality the movement thus admits outside elements which will subsequently weaken its constitutional vigour. Though it may be said that one movement is identical in character with another, in reality no such identity exists.

If it did exist, then in practice there would not be two movements, but only one. No matter what the difference may be, even if it consists only in the measure in which the capabilities of the one set of leaders differ from those of the other, it is still there.

It is against the natural law of all development to couple dissimilar organisms; for the law is that the stronger must overcome the weaker and, through the struggle necessary for such a conquest, increase the constitutional vigour and effective strength of the victor.

By amalgamating political organisations that are approximately alike, certain immediate advantages may be gained, but advantages thus gained are bound in the long run to become the cause of internal weaknesses which will make their appearance later on.

A movement can become great only if the unhampered development of its internal strength be safeguarded and steadfastly augmented, until victory over all rivals is secured.

One may safely say that the strength of a movement and its right to existence can be developed only as long as it remains true to the principle that struggle is a necessary condition of its progress and that it has exceeded the maximum limit of its strength at that moment in which complete victory, is within its grasp.

Therefore, a movement must not strive to obtain successes that will be only immediate and transitory, but it must show a spirit of uncompromising perseverance in carrying on a long struggle which will secure for it a long period of inner growth.

All those movements which owe their expansion to a so-called combination of similar organisms, which means that their external strength is due to a policy of compromise, are like plants whose growth is forced in a hothouse.

They shoot up rapidly, but they lack that inner strength which enables the

natural plant to grow into a tree that will withstand the storms of centuries.

The greatness of every powerful organisation which embodies a creative ideal lies in the spirit of religious devotion and intolerance with which it stands out against all others, because it has an ardent faith in its own cause.

If an ideal is right in itself and, furnished with the fighting weapons I have mentioned, wages war on this earth, then it is invincible and persecution will only add to its internal strength.

The greatness of Christianity did not arise from attempts to make compromises with those philosophical opinions of the ancient world which had some resemblance to its own doctrine, but in the unrelenting and fanatical proclamation and defence of its own teaching.

The apparent advance that a movement makes by associating itself with other movements will be easily reached and surpassed by the steady increase of strength which a doctrine and its organisation acquires if it remains independent and fights its own cause alone.

(13) The movement ought to educate its adherents on the principle that struggle must not be considered a necessary evil, but as something desirable in itself.

Therefore, they must not be afraid of the hostility which their adversaries manifest towards them, but they must take it as a necessary condition on which their own right to existence is based.

They must not try to avoid being hated by those who are the enemies of our people and our *Weltanschauung*, but must welcome such hatred.

Lies and calumnies are part of the method which the enemy employs to express his hatred. The man who is not opposed, vilified and slandered in the Jewish press is not a staunch German and not a true National Socialist.

The best standard whereby the sincerity of his convictions, his character and strength of will can be measured is the hostility which his name arouses among the mortal enemies of our people.

The followers of the Movement, and indeed the whole nation, must be reminded again and again of the fact that, through the medium of his newspapers, the Jew is always spreading falsehood. If he tells the truth on

certain occasions, it is only for the purpose of masking some greater deception, which turns the apparent truth into a deliberate falsehood.

The Jew is past master in the art of lying. Falsehood and duplicity are the weapons with which he fights. Every calumny and falsehood published by the Jews are honourable scars borne by our comrades. He whom they decry most is nearest to our hearts and he whom they mortally hate is our best friend.

If a comrade of ours opens a Jewish newspaper in the morning and does not find himself vilified there, then he has wasted the previous day, for, if he had achieved something, he would be persecuted, slandered, derided, and abused.

Those who effectively combat this mortal enemy of our people, who is at the same time the enemy of an Aryan peoples and all culture, can only expect to arouse: opposition on the part of this race and become the object of its slanderous attacks.

When these truths become part of the flesh and blood, as it were, of our members, then the Movement will be unshakable and invincible.

(14) The Movement must use every possible means to cultivate respect for the individual personality. It must never forget that all human values are based on personal values, and that every idea and achievement is the fruit of the creative power of one man.

We must never forget that admiration for everything that is great, is not only a tribute to one creative personality, but that all those who feel such admiration become thereby united under one covenant.

Nothing can take the place of the individual, especially if the individual embodies in himself not the mechanical element, but the element of cultural creative ability.

No pupil can take the place of the master in completing a great picture which he has left unfinished; and just in the same way no substitute can take the place of the great poet or thinker, the great statesman or the great general, for their activity lies in the realm of artistic creative ability which can never be mechanically acquired, because it is an innate and divine gift.

The greatest revolutions and the greatest achievements of this world, its greatest cultural works and the immortal creations of great statesmen, are

inseparably bound up with one name which stands as a symbol for them in each respective case.

Failure to pay tribute to one of those great spirits signifies a neglect of that enormous source, of power which lies in the remembrance of all great men and women. The Jew is well aware of this. He, whose great men have always been great only in their efforts to destroy mankind and its civilisation, takes good care that they are worshipped as idols.

The Jew tries to belittle the respect in which nations hold their own great men and women. He stigmatises this respect as ‘the cult of personality.’

As soon as a nation has so far lost its courage as to submit to this impudent defamation on the part of the Jew, it renounces the most important source of its own inner strength.

This inner force cannot arise from a policy of pandering to the masses, but only from the worship of men of genius, with its uplifting and ennobling influence, to any of our speakers.

Consider that only six or seven poor devils who were entirely unknown came together to found a movement which should succeed in doing what the great mass-parties had failed to do, namely, to reconstruct a German Reich, having even greater power and glory than before.

We should have been very pleased if we had been attacked or even ridiculed, but the most depressing fact was that nobody paid any attention to us whatsoever. This utter lack of interest in us caused me great mental distress at that time.

When I entered the circle of these men there was not yet any question of a party or a movement. I have already described the impression which was made on me when I first came into contact with that small organisation.

Subsequently, I had time and opportunity, to study the impossible form of this so-called party. The picture was indeed depressing and discouraging. It was a party only in name and absolutely devoid of significance.

The committee consisted of all the party members. Somehow or other, it seemed just the kind of thing we were about to fight against—a miniature parliament.

The voting system was employed. When the members of the great parliaments cried until they were hoarse, at least they shouted over problems of importance, but here this small circle engaged in interminable discussions as to the form in which they might answer the letters which they were delighted to have received.

Needless to say, the public knew nothing of all this. In Munich nobody knew of the existence of such a party, not even by name, except our own few members and their small circle of acquaintances.

Every Wednesday, what was called a committee meeting was held in one of the caf  s, and a debate was arranged for one evening each week.

In the beginning, all the members, of the ‘movement’ were also members of the committee; therefore the same persons always turned up at both meetings.

The first step that had to be taken was to extend the narrow limits of this small circle and get new members, but, above all, it was necessary to utilise all the means at our command for the purpose of making the movement known.

We chose the following methods. We attempted to hold a ‘meeting’ every month, and later, every fortnight.

Some of the invitations were typewritten, and some were written by hand. For the first few meetings we distributed them in the streets and delivered them personally at certain houses.

Each one canvassed among his own acquaintances and tried to persuade some of them to attend our meetings. The result was lamentable.

I still remember how I personally once delivered eighty of these invitations and how we waited in the evening for the crowds to come.

After waiting in vain for a whole hour the ‘chairman’ finally had to open the ‘meeting.’ Again there were only seven persons present, the old familiar seven.

We then changed our methods. We had the invitations typewritten and multi-graphed at a Munich stationer’s shop. The result was that a few more people attended our next meeting.

The number increased, gradually from eleven to, thirteen, to seventeen,

to twenty-three and finally to thirty-four. We collected some money within our own circle, each poor soul giving a small contribution, and in that way we raised sufficient funds to be able to advertise one of our meetings in the *Münchener Beobachter*, which was then an independent paper.

This time we had an astonishing success. We had chosen the Munich Hofbräuhaus Keller (which must not be confounded with the Munich Hofbräuhaus-Festsaal) as our meeting-place.

It was a small hall and would accommodate scarcely more than one hundred and thirty persons. To me, however, the hall seemed enormous, and we were all trembling lest this tremendous edifice would remain partly empty on the night of the meeting.

At seven o'clock one hundred and eleven persons were present, and the meeting was opened. A Munich professor delivered the principal address, and I spoke after him.

That was my first appearance in the role of public orator. The whole thing seemed a very daring adventure to Herr Harrer, who was then chairman of the Party. He was a very decent fellow, but he had an *a priori* conviction that, though I might have, quite a number of good qualities, I certainly did not have a talent for public speaking.

Even later he could not be persuaded to change his opinion. Things turned out differently. Twenty minutes had been allotted to me for my speech on this occasion, which might be looked upon as our first public meeting.

I spoke for thirty minutes, and what I always had felt deep down in my heart, without being able to put it to the test, was here proved to be true; I could make a good speech.

At the end of the thirty minutes, it, was quite clear that all the people in the little hall had been profoundly impressed. The enthusiasm aroused among them found its first expression in the fact that my appeal to those present brought us donations which amounted to three hundred marks. That was a great relief to us. Our finances were at that time so meagre that we could not afford to have our party programme, or even leaflets, printed. Now we possessed at least the nucleus of a fund from which we could meet the most urgent and necessary expenses.

The success of this first larger meeting was also important from another

point of view. I had already begun to introduce some young and fresh members into the committee.

During the long period of my military service I had come to know a large number of good comrades whom I was now able to persuade to join our Party.

All of them were energetic and disciplined young men who, through their years of military service, had been imbued with the conviction that nothing is impossible and that where there's a will there's a way.

The need for this fresh blood became evident to me after a few weeks of collaboration with the new members. Herr Harrer, who was then chairman of the Party, was a journalist by profession, and as such, he was a well-educated man, but as leader of the Party he had one very serious handicap—he could not speak to the crowd.

Though he did his work conscientiously, it lacked the necessary driving force, probably for the reason that he had no oratorical gifts whatsoever.

Herr Drexler, at that time chairman of the Munich local group, was a simple working man. He, too, was not of any great importance as a speaker. Moreover, he was not a soldier. He had never done military service, even during the War, so that he, who was feeble and diffident by nature, had missed the only school which can transform diffident and weakly natures into real men.

Therefore neither of those two men were of the stuff that would have enabled them to have an ardent and indomitable faith in the ultimate triumph of the Movement and to brush aside, with obstinate force and, if necessary, with brutal ruthlessness, all obstacles that stood in the path of the new ideal.

Such a task could be carried out only by men who had been trained, body and soul, in those military virtues which make a man, so to speak, agile as a greyhound, tough as leather, and hard as Krupp steel.

At that time I was still a soldier. Physically and mentally I had the polish of six years of service, so that in the beginning this circle must have looked on me as quite a stranger.

In common with my army comrades, I had forgotten such phrases as, “That can’t be done,” or “That is not possible,” or “We ought not to take such a risk; it is too dangerous.”

The whole undertaking was, of its very nature, dangerous. At that time there were many parts of Germany where it would have been absolutely impossible to invite people openly to a national meeting that dared to make a direct appeal to the masses. Those who attended such meetings were usually dispersed and driven away with broken heads. It certainly did not call for any great qualities to be able to do things in that way. The largest so-called bourgeois mass meetings were accustomed to dissolve, and those in attendance would scuttle away like rabbits frightened by a dog, as soon as a dozen communists appeared on the scene.

The Reds used to pay little attention to those bourgeois organisations where only babblers talked. They recognised the inner triviality of such associations much better than the members themselves and therefore felt that they need not be afraid of them.

On the other hand, however, they were all the more determined to use every possible means of annihilating, once and for all, any movement that appeared to them to be dangerous.

The most effective means which they always employed in such cases were terrorism and brute force.

The Marxist leaders, whose business consisted in deceiving and misleading the public, naturally hated most of all a movement whose declared aim was to win over those masses which had hitherto been exclusively at the service of international Marxism in the Jewish and Stock Exchange parties.

The mere title, 'German Labour Party,' irritated them. It could easily be foreseen that at the first opportune moment we should have to face the opposition of the Marxist despots who were still intoxicated with their triumph in 1918.

People in the small circle of our own Movement at that time showed a certain amount of anxiety at the prospect of such a conflict.

They wanted to refrain as much as possible from coming out into the open, because they feared that they might be attacked and beaten.

In their minds they saw our first public meetings broken up and feared that the Movement might thus be ruined for ever.

I found it difficult to defend my own opinion, which was, that the conflict

should not be evaded, but that it should be faced openly and that we should be armed with those weapons which are the only protection against brute force.

Terrorism cannot be overcome by the weapons of the mind, but only by counter-terror. The success of our first public meeting strengthened my own position. The members felt encouraged to arrange for a second meeting on a somewhat larger scale.

Some time in October 1919 the second larger meeting took place in the Eberlbräukeller. The theme of our speeches was 'Brest-Litovsk and Versailles.' There were four speakers.

I spoke for almost an hour, and my success was even more striking than at our first meeting. The number of people who attended had increased to over one hundred and thirty. An attempt to disturb the proceedings was immediately frustrated by my comrades. The would-be disturbers were thrown down the stairs, with bruised heads. A fortnight later, another meeting took place in the same hall. The number in attendance had now increased to more than one hundred and seventy, which meant that the room was fairly well filled. I spoke again, and once more the success obtained was greater than at the previous meeting.

Then I proposed that a larger hall should be found. After looking around for some time we discovered one at the other end of the town, in the *Deutsches Reich* in the Dachauer Strasse.

The first meeting at this new rendezvous had a smaller attendance than the previous meeting. There were just about one hundred and forty present. The members of the committee began to be discouraged, and those who had always been sceptical were now convinced that this falling-off in the attendance was due to the fact that we were holding the meetings at too short intervals.

There were lively discussions, in which I upheld my own opinion that a city of seven hundred thousand inhabitants ought to be able not only to stand one meeting every fortnight, but ten meetings every week.

I held that we should not be discouraged by one set-back, that the tactics we had chosen were correct, and that sooner or later success would be ours if we only continued with determined perseverance to push forward on our road.

This whole winter of 1919–20 was one continual struggle to strengthen confidence in our ability to carry the Movement on to success, and, to intensify

this confidence, until it became a burning faith that could move mountains.

Our next meeting in the same hall proved the truth of my contention. Our audience had increased to more than two hundred. The publicity effect and the financial success were splendid.

I immediately urged that a further meeting should be held. It took place in less than a fortnight, and there were more than two hundred and seventy people present.

Two weeks later, we invited our followers and their friends, for the seventh time to attend our meeting. The same hall was scarcely large enough for the number that came. They amounted to more than four hundred.

During this phase the young Movement developed its inner form. Some times we had more or less heated discussions within our small circle.

On various sides—it was then just the same as it is to-day—objections were made against the idea of calling the young Movement a party.

I have always considered such criticism as a demonstration of practical incapability and narrow-mindedness on the part of the critic.

Such objections have always been raised by men who cannot differentiate between external appearances and inner strength, but try to judge a movement by the high-sounding character of the name attached to it and to this end they ransack the vocabulary of our ancestors, with unfortunate results.

At that time it was very difficult to make the people understand that every movement is a party as long as it has not realised its ideas and thus achieved its purpose. It is a party no matter by what name it chooses to call itself.

Any person who tries to carry into practice an original idea whose realisation would be for the benefit of his fellow men will first have to look for disciples who are ready to fight for the ends he has in view.

Even if these aims were merely to destroy the existing party system, and thereby to put a stop to the process of disintegration, then all those who come forward as protagonists and apostles of such an ideal are a party in themselves as long as their final goal is not reached.

It is only hair-splitting and playing with words if these antiquated

völkisch theorists, whose practical success is in inverse ratio to their wisdom, presume to think they can change the character of a movement, which is at the same time a party, by merely changing its name.

If there is anything which is non-*völkisch* it is this messing about with old Germanic expressions, in particular, which neither suit the present time nor conjure up a definite picture.

This habit of borrowing words from the dead past tends to mislead the people into thinking that the external trappings of its vocabulary are the important feature of a movement.

It is a mischievous habit; but it is very prevalent nowadays. At that time, and subsequently, I had to warn followers repeatedly against these wandering *völkisch* scholars who never accomplished anything positive or practical, except to cultivate their own superabundant self-conceit.

The new Movement must guard against an influx of people whose only recommendation is their own statement that they have been fighting for these same ideals for the last thirty or forty years.

Now, if somebody has fought for forty years to carry into effect what he calls an ideal, and if these alleged efforts not only show no positive results, but have not even been able to hinder the success of the opposing party, then the story of those forty years of futile effort furnishes sufficient proof for the incompetence of such a protagonist.

People of that kind are especially dangerous because they do not want to participate in the movement as ordinary members. They talk rather of the leading positions which, in view of their past work and also of their intended activities in the future, are the only positions they are fitted to fill, but woe to a young movement if the conduct of it should fall into the hands of such people.

A business man who has been in charge of a great firm for forty years and who has completely ruined it through mismanagement is not the kind of person one would recommend as the founder of a new firm, nor would a *völkisch*-minded Methuselah who, for the space of forty years, has been preaching a great ideal, until it has lost all meaning and vitality, be a suitable leader of a fresh young movement.

Furthermore, only a very small percentage of such people join a new movement with the intention of serving its ends unselfishly and helping in the

spread of its principles.

In most cases they come because they think that, under the aegis of the movement, it will be possible for them to promulgate their old ideas, to the misfortune of their new listeners.

Anyhow, nobody ever seems able to make out what exactly these ideas are. It is typical of such persons that they rant about ancient Teutonic heroes of the dim and distant ages, stone axes, battle-spears and shields, whereas in reality they themselves are the woofullest poltroons imaginable.

For they are the very same people who brandish Teutonic tin swords that have been fashioned carefully according to ancient models and wear padded bear-skins, with the horns of oxen mounted over their bearded faces, proclaim that all contemporary conflicts must be decided by the weapons of the mind alone, and skedaddle at the very sight of a communist cudgel. Posterity will have little occasion to write a new epic on these heroic gladiators.

I have seen too much of that kind of person not to feel a profound contempt for their miserable play-acting. To the masses of the nation they are just an object of ridicule; but the Jew finds it to his own interest to treat these *völkisch* comedians with respect and to prefer them to real men who are fighting to establish a German State.

Yet such people are extremely proud of themselves. Notwithstanding their complete fecklessness, which is an established fact, they pretend to know everything better than other people; so much so, that they make themselves a veritable nuisance to all sincere and honest patriots, to whom not only the heroism of the past is worthy of honour, but who also feel bound to leave examples of their own work for the inspiration of the coming generation.

Among these people there are some whose conduct can be explained by their innate stupidity and incompetence; but there are others who have a definite ulterior purpose in view. Often it is difficult to distinguish between the two classes.

The impression which I often get, especially of those so-called religious reformers whose creed is grounded on ancient Germanic customs, is that they are the missionaries and protégés of those forces which do not wish to see a national revival taking place in Germany.

All their activities tend to turn the attention of, the people away from the

necessity of fighting together for a common cause against the common enemy, namely, the Jew.

More ever, that kind of preaching induces the people to use up their energies, not in fighting for the common cause, but in absurd and ruinous religious controversies within their own ranks.

These are definite grounds that make it absolutely necessary for the movement to be dominated by a strong central force which is embodied in the authoritative leadership.

In this way alone is it possible to counteract the activity of such fatal elements, and that is just the reason why these *völkisch* Ahasueruses are vigorously hostile to any movement whose members are firmly united under one leader and one discipline.

Those people of whom I have, spoken hate such a movement because it is capable of putting a stop to their mischief.

It was not without good reason that when we laid down a clearly defined programme for the new movement we excluded the word *völkisch* from it.

The concept underlying the term *völkisch* cannot serve as the basis of a movement, because it is too indefinite and general in its application. Therefore, if somebody calls himself *völkisch* this cannot be taken as a sign of party membership.

Because this concept is practically indefinable it gives rise to various interpretations and thus people can use it all the more easily as a sort of personal recommendation.

Whenever such a vague concept, which is subject to so many interpretations, is admitted into a political movement it tends to break up the disciplined solidarity of the fighting forces.

No such solidarity can be maintained if each individual member is allowed to define for himself what he believes and what he is willing to do.

One feels it a disgrace when one notices the kind of people who trot about nowadays with the *völkisch* symbol stuck in their buttonholes, and at the same time realises how many people have various ideas of their own as to the significance of that symbol.

A well-known professor in Bavaria, a famous combatant who fights only with the weapons of the mind and who boasts of having laid siege to Berlin (with the weapons of the mind, of course), believes that the word *völkisch* is synonymous with ‘monarchical.’

But this learned authority has hitherto neglected to explain how our German monarchs of the past can be identified with what we generally mean by the word *völkisch* to-day.

I am afraid he will find himself at a loss, if he is asked to give a precise answer, for it would be very difficult indeed to imagine anything less *völkisch* than were most of those German monarchical states.

Had they been otherwise they would not have disappeared; or if they were *völkisch*, then the fact of their downfall would have to be taken as evidence that the *völkisch Weltanschauung* is false. Everybody interprets this concept in his own way, but such multifarious opinions cannot be adopted as the basis of a militant political movement.

I need not call attention to the absolute lack of worldly wisdom, and especially failure to understand the soul of the nation, which is displayed by these *völkisch* John-the-Baptists of the twentieth century.

Sufficient attention has been called to these people by the ridicule which the left-wing parties have heaped on them. They allow them to babble on and sneer at them.

I do not set much value on the friendship of people who do not succeed in getting themselves disliked by their enemies.

Therefore, we considered the friendship of such people as not only worthless, but even dangerous to our young Movement.

That was the principal reason why we first called ourselves a Party. We hoped that by giving ourselves such a name we might scare away a whole host of *völkisch* dreamers, and that was also the reason why we named our Party, The National Socialist German Labour Party.

The first term, Party, kept away all those dreamers who live in the past and all lovers of bombastic nomenclature, as well as those who went around beating the big drum for the *völkisch* idea.

The full name of the Party kept away all those heroes whose weapon is the sword of the spirit and all those whining poltroons who take refuge behind their so-called 'intelligence', as if it were a kind of shield.

It was only to be expected that this latter class would launch a massed attack against us after our Movement had started; but, of course, it was only a pen-and-ink attack, for the goose-quill is the only weapon which these *völkisch* heroes wield.

We had declared one of our principles thus, "We shall meet violence with violence in our own defence."

Naturally, that principle disturbed the equanimity of the knights of the pen. They reproached us bitterly not only for what they called our crude worship of the cudgel, but also because, according to them, we had no intellectual forces on our side.

These charlatans did not think for a moment that a Demosthenes could be reduced to silence at a mass meeting by fifty idiots who had come there to shout him down and use their fists against his supporters.

The innate cowardice of the pen-and-ink charlatan prevents him from exposing himself to such a danger, for he always works in 'peace and quiet' and never dares to make a noise or come forward in public.

Even to-day I must warn the members of our young Movement in the strongest possible terms to guard against the danger of falling into the snare of those who claim to work in 'peace and quiet,' for they are not only a white-livered lot, but are also and always will be ignorant do-nothings. A man who is aware of certain happenings and knows that a certain danger threatens, and at the same time sees a certain remedy which can be employed against it, is in duty bound not to work in 'peace and quiet,' but to come into the open and publicly fight for the destruction of the evil and the acceptance of his own remedy.

If he does not do so, then he is neglecting his duty and shows that he is weak in character and that he fails to act either because of his timidity, his indolence or his incompetence.

Most of those who work in 'peace and quiet,' generally pretend to know God knows what. Not one of them is capable of any real achievement, but they keep on trying to fool the world with their antics.

Though quite indolent, they try to create the impression that their peaceful, quiet work keeps them very busy. To put it briefly, they are sheer swindlers, political jobbers who feel chagrined by the honest work which others are doing.

When you find one of these *völkisch* moths talking of the value of 'peace and quiet,' you may be sure that you are dealing with a fellow who does no productive work at all, but steals from others the fruits of their honest labour.

In addition to all this one ought to note the arrogance and conceited impudence with which these obscurantist idlers try to tear to pieces the work of other people, criticising it with an air of superiority, and thus playing into the hands of the mortal enemy of our people.

Even the simplest follower who has the courage to stand on the table in some beer-hall where his enemies are gathered, and manfully and openly defend his position against them, achieves a thousand times more than these slinking hypocrites.

He will convert at least one or two people to believe in the movement. We can examine his work and test its effectiveness by its actual results, but those cowardly swindlers, who praise their own work done in 'peace and quiet' and shelter under the cloak of anonymity, are just worth less drones, in the truest sense of the term, and are utterly useless for the purpose of our national reconstruction.

At the beginning of 1920 I put forward the idea of holding our first mass meeting. On this proposal there were differences of opinion amongst us. Some leading members of our Party thought that the time was not ripe for such a meeting and that the result might be detrimental.

The press of the Left had begun to take notice of us and we were lucky enough to be able gradually to arouse their wrath. We had begun to appear at other meetings and to ask questions or contradict the speakers, with the natural result, that we were shouted down forthwith, but still we thereby gained something.

People began to know of our existence and the better they understood us, the stronger became their aversion and their enmity.

Therefore we might expect that a large contingent of our 'friends' from the Red camp would attend our first mass meeting.

I fully realised that there was a great probability that our meeting would be broken up, but we had to face the fight, if not now, then some months later.

It was up to us from the very first to immortalise the Movement by defending it in a spirit of blind faith and ruthless determination.

I was well acquainted with the mentality of all those who belonged to the Red camp and I knew quite well that if we opposed them tooth and nail not only would we make an impression on, them, but we might even win new followers for ourselves. Therefore, I felt that we must be prepared to offer such resistance.

Herr Harrer was then chairman of our Party. He did not see eye to eye with me as to the opportune time for our first mass meeting. Accordingly, he felt himself obliged as an upright and honest man to resign from the leadership of the Movement.

Herr Anton Drexler took his place. I kept the work of organising the propaganda in my own hands and carried it out uncompromisingly.

We decided on February 24th, 1920, as the date for the first great popular meeting to be held under the auspices of this Movement which was hitherto unknown.

I made all the preparatory arrangements personally. They did not take very long. The whole apparatus of our organisation was such that we were able to make rapid decisions.

Within the space of twenty-four hours, we had to be able to arrange mass meetings at which our attitude on current problems was made known.

The holding of these meetings was announced by means of posters and leaflets, the contents of which was in accordance with the principles which I have already laid down in dealing with propaganda in general.

They were produced in a form which would appeal to the crowd. They concentrated on a few points which were repeated again and again.

The text was concise and definite, an absolutely dogmatic form of expression being used. We distributed these posters and leaflets with a dogged energy and then we patiently waited for the effect they would produce.

For our principal colour we chose red, as it has an exciting effect on the

eye and was calculated to arouse the attention of our opponents and irritate them.

Thus they would have to take notice of us whether they liked it or not and would not forget us.

During the period which followed, the close bond of union between the Marxists and the Centre party (in Bavaria as elsewhere) was clearly revealed by the strenuous efforts made by the Bavarian People's Party, which was omnipotent here to counteract the effect which our placards were having on the 'Red' masses.

If the police could find no other grounds for prohibiting the display of our placards, then they might claim that we were disturbing the traffic in the streets. Thus the so-called German National People's Party calmed the anxieties of their 'Red' allies by completely prohibiting those placards which proclaimed a message that was bringing back hundreds of thousands of workers who had been misled by international agitators and worked up against their own nation to the bosom of their own people.

These placards bear witness to the bitterness of the struggle in which the young Movement was then engaged.

Future generations will find in these placards documentary evidence of our determination and the justice of our own cause. They will also prove how the so-called national officials took arbitrary action to strangle a movement that did not please them, because it was making the broad masses of the people national-minded and winning them back to their own racial stock.

These placards will also help to refute the theory that there was then a national, government in Bavaria and they will afford documentary confirmation of the fact that if Bavaria remained national-minded during the years 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922 and 1923, this was not due to a national government, but was because the national spirit gradually gained a deeper hold on the people and the government was forced to follow public feeling.

The government authorities themselves did everything in their power to hamper this process of recovery and make it impossible, but in this connection two officials must be mentioned as outstanding exceptions.

Ernst Pöhner was Chief of Police at the time. He had a loyal counsellor in Dr. Frick, who was his chief executive officer. These were the only men

among the higher officials who had the courage to place the interests of their country before their own interests in holding on to their jobs.

Of those in responsible positions, Ernst Pöhner was the only one who did not pay court to the mob, but felt that his duty was towards the nation as such and was ready to risk and sacrifice everything, even his personal livelihood, to help in the restoration of the German people, whom he dearly loved.

For that reason he was a bitter thorn in the side of the venal group of government officials. It was not the interests of the nation or the necessity of a national revival that inspired or directed their conduct. They simply truckled to the wishes of the government, as their employer, but they had no thought whatsoever for the national welfare for which they were responsible.

Above all, Pöhner was one of those people who, in contradiction to the majority of our so-called defenders of the authority of the State, did not fear to incur the enmity of the traitors to the country and the nation, but rather courted it as mark of honour.

For such men the hatred of the Jews and Marxists, and the lies and calumnies they spread concerning them, was their only source of happiness in the midst of the national misery. Pöhner was a man of absolute honesty, classic simplicity and German straightforwardness for whom the saying "Better dead than a slave" is not an empty phrase, but the essence of his being.

In my opinion, he and his collaborator, Dr. Frick, were the only men then holding positions in Bavaria who have the right to be considered as having taken an active part in the creation of a national Bavaria.

Before holding our first great mass meeting it was necessary not only to have our propaganda material ready, but also to have the main items of our programme printed.

In the second volume of this book I shall give a detailed account of, the guiding principles which we then followed in drawing up our programme.

Here I will only say that, the programme was arranged not merely to set forth the form and scope of the young Movement, but also with an eye to making it understood by the broad masses.

The so-called intellectual circles made jokes and sneered at it and then

tried to criticise it, but the effect of our programme proved that the ideas which we then held were right.

During those years I saw dozens of new movements arise and disappear without leaving a trace behind. Only one movement had survived; it is the National Socialist German Labour Party.

To-day I am more convinced than ever before that, though they may combat us and try to paralyse our Movement, and though pettifogging party ministers may forbid us the right of free speech, they cannot prevent the triumph of our ideals.

When the present system of state administration and even the names of the political parties that represent it will be forgotten, the programmatic basis of the National Socialist Movement will supply the groundwork on which the future State will be built.

The meetings which we held before January 1920 had enabled us to collect the financial means that were necessary to have, our first pamphlets and posters and our programme printed.

I shall bring the first part of this book to a close by referring to our first great mass meeting, because that meeting marked the occasion on which the Party shed its fetters as a small association and exercised for the first time a definite influence on public opinion which is the most powerful factor of our age. At that time my chief anxiety was that we might not fill the hall and that we might have to face empty benches. I myself was firmly convinced that if only the people would come, this day would turn out a great success for the young movement so that it was with a feeling of tense excitement that I waited impatiently for the evening to come.

It had been announced that the meeting would begin at 7.30 p.m. A quarter of an hour before the opening time I entered the *Festsaal* of the Hofbräuhaus in the Platz in Munich and my heart nearly burst with joy.

The great hall—for at that time it seemed very big to me—was filled to overflowing. Nearly two thousand persons were present, and, above all, those people had come whom we had always wished to reach.

More than half the audience consisted of persons who seemed to be communists or independents. Our first great demonstration was destined, in their view, to come to an abrupt end.

But they were mistaken. When the first speaker had finished I got up to speak. After a few minutes I was met with a hailstorm of interruptions, and violent encounters broke out in the body of the hall.

A handful of my loyal war-comrades and some other followers grappled with the disturbers and gradually restored a semblance of order. I was able to continue my speech.

After half an hour the applause began to drown the interruptions and the cat-calls. Then I turned to the question of our programme, which I proceeded to elucidate for the first time.

Then interruptions gradually ceased and applause took their place.

When I finally came to explain the twenty-five points and laid them, point by point, before the masses gathered there and asked them to pass their own judgment on each point, one after another was accepted with increasing enthusiasm.

When the last point was reached I had before me a hall full of people united by a new conviction, a new faith and a new resolve.

Nearly four hours had passed, when the hall began to clear. As the masses streamed towards the exits, crammed shoulder to shoulder, shoving and pushing, I knew that a Movement was now set afoot among the German people which would never fade into oblivion.

A fire had been kindled from whose glowing heat the sword would be fashioned which would restore freedom to the German Siegfried and bring back life to the German nation.

Beside the revival which I then foresaw, I also felt that the Goddess of Vengeance was now getting ready to redress the wrongs of November 9th 1918.

The hall was emptied. The Movement was on the march.

