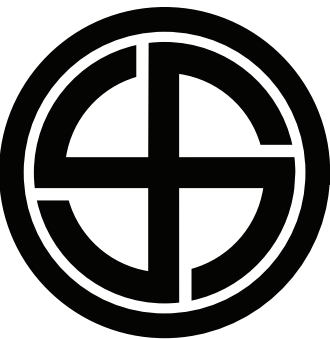


Drexler saw the situation of political violence and instability in Germany as the result of the new Weimar Republic being out-of-touch with the masses, especially the lower classes. Drexler emphasized the need for a synthesis of *völkisch* nationalism, a strong central government movement, with economic socialism in order that a popular, centrist nationalist-oriented workers movement might be created that could challenge the rise of Communism, as well as the internationalist left and right in general.

On January 5, 1919, Drexler created a new political party based on the political principles that he endorsed by combining his Committee of Independent Workmen with a similar group, The Political Worker's Circle, led by newspaper reporter Karl Harrer. Drexler proposed that the party be named the German Socialist Worker's Party, but Harrer objected to using the term "socialist" in the name; the issue was settled by removing the term from the name, and it was agreed that the party be named the German Workers' Party.



Above: The sunwheel-like swastika used by the Thule Society and the German Workers' Party.

To ease concerns among potential middle-class nationalist supporters, Drexler made clear that unlike Marxists, the party supported middle-class citizens, and that the party's socialist policy was meant to give social welfare to German citizens deemed part of the Aryan race. They became one of many *völkisch* movements that existed in Germany at the time. Like other *völkisch* groups, the DAP advocated the belief that through profit-sharing instead of socialization Germany should become a unified "national community" (*Volksgemeinschaft*) rather than a society divided along class and party lines. This ideology was explicitly anti-Semitic as it declared that the "national community" must be *judenfrei* ("free of Jews"). As early as 1920, the party was raising money by selling a tobacco called Anti-Semit.

From the outset, the DAP was opposed to non-nationalist political movements, especially on the left, including the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) and the newly formed Communist Party of Germany (KPD). Members of the DAP saw themselves as fighting against "Bolshevism" and anyone considered to be part of or aiding so-called "international Jewry". The DAP was also deeply opposed to the Versailles Treaty.

The German Reich
Weimar Republic / Third Reich
1919 - 1937



Opposite: Germany during the Weimar Republic. The regions in color represent territories within the Reich. The red dotted line indicates the borders of German control before the Versailles Treaty. The black dotted line indicates the eastern border of the demilitarized zone.