

National Socialist Political Propaganda as a Moral Duty

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Political Propaganda as a Moral Duty

by Dr. Josef Wells

Many of us still must learn the nature and importance of political propaganda. Not infrequently one hears someone say that you should not and cannot stuff the people with propaganda all the time. The newspapers, after all, do not write only about politics in every edition. Leading experts refer to foreign newspapers, especially those in England. They may even mention the *Times*. And the hearers are amazed, since in contrast to the German custom, its front page is devoted entirely to advertisements. Politics appears on the interior pages, interspersed with other stories. As surprising as this may be, it does not eliminate the need for never-failing and never-weakening political propaganda in the National Socialist state.

We should begin by remembering this fact. Germany has the most universities, technical colleges, and mining, forestry, and teacher academies in the entire world, even aside from the large number of middle and higher schools, and occupational, technical, and popular schools. We are the most-schooled and best-taught nation on earth.

People in other countries know this. Those abroad know that to study at a German university requires extraordinary abilities and scientific performance.

But as well educated as we are, a very significant part of our population is still uncertain and awkward politically. One might think that as a nation of poets and philosophers, artists and inventors, we would also take the political lead among the nations that we undoubtedly hold culturally. That unfortunately has not been true up until now. Very many Germans even today lack reliable political instincts. Their political will and sense of direction is inadequate.

We have to admit this, whether we like it or not. We cannot go into the reasons for this situation here, but can mention a few key points. Germany's earlier fragmentation into small states was a fatal blow to any unified political course, for German popular nationalism, and for all political training in the direction of a single goal, "Germany."

How could the German people be a "roche de bronze," a firm rock of political will and firmness, when the politics of the German states were disunited for a long time? Our unified fighting strength during the World War was often enough seriously hurt by battles between the various German states that we today find completely impossible to understand.

We Germans lacked the necessary political determination in the last century, at home, in Europe and in the world. The average Englander is not nearly as well educated as the German, but he is more mature and sure of his opinions. He therefore does not need the same permanent political schooling as we do.

Today, the new German Reich has established the conditions necessary to eliminate those old mistakes and to establish that which all good Germans have longed for for generations: a unified political will of all Germans to build the strength of the fatherland.

I said that the conditions have been established, politically, culturally and socially. That is to say everything is ready. We have no cause to be weary and rest on our laurels. That would only make

us fat and lazy. Now we must build on the conditions to achieve splendid results. That will depend on each of us. We all have hard work to do. The political propagandists have the most to do. They have a long and difficult road before them before we near the goal that the English have reached long ago and maintain with great confidence.

Some citizens who gladly avoid political meetings and think them entirely superfluous, “since we are after all in power,” prove that they do not understand even the ABC’s of politics. They have views on, for example, German foreign policy that are simply laughable. Some of the Führer’s actions, which thanks to his political wisdom he takes with a view over decades or even centuries, they greet in silence or complete incomprehension. Were we to leave such doubters to themselves, they would be dreadfully unhappy, even collapse, because they are unable to recognize or experience successes.

How often does one hear that this or that point of our program has not been fulfilled, or that it should perhaps even be dropped. This shows the lack of political instincts of some Germans. They lack not only a feeling for political unity, but also the strength necessary for political determination. They imagine they have both, but have neither. They must learn.

A cardinal error of German politics in the past, with a few shining exceptions, was disorder, uncertainty, wavering, and confusion. It reached its epitome during the daily compromises of the postwar period. All Germany’s political weaknesses came to the fore. Schiller once said: “Fight, German, to gain Rome’s strength, Greek beauty. Both you can win. But never Gallic volatility [*gallische Sprung*].” He understood German political disharmony. Our soldiers should display Roman strength, our scientific and cultural achievements, Greek beauty.

We have achieved great things in both areas, unsurpassable things. The almost countless successes of German arms should have given us an entirely different political position than in fact we had. How often have other nations drawn political benefit from our military victories?

Gallic volatility does not suit us. The French phrase *Toujours en vedette* does not mean volatility itself, but rather the willingness to change. The German is too easily satisfied with what he has achieved, he is too quickly politically “saturated,” to use Bismarck’s phrase. It actually applied only to that moment, but became a dogma.

The German too quickly gives up when he does not immediately achieve his political goals, and is content with the situation. He has not learned to take the long view in politics, to wait and let time work for him. The German is too willing to accept second best in political matters.

It is understandable why the Führer’s calm, persistent, confident ability to wait and let time work for him in a series of important domestic and foreign policy matters is so hard for most Germans to understand. Many would not be at all upset if Adolf Hitler played the big man by taking unconsidered, hurried, careless actions, perhaps even “a panther’s leap to Agadir” or something like that. The Führer’s careful approach and confidence, and his enormous political abilities in all areas, are something entirely foreign to most Germans, something entirely new. They must become accustomed to it.

The propagandist must therefore always be ready for action, not be hampered by the political uncertainty of the people. They have a double task. First, they must bring the public to the level of political maturity for future foreign policy actions. Foreign actions and decisions cannot be made today’s era of popular nationalism by a thin leadership layer or an intellectual elite, as they were in the past. Political propaganda is necessary to build the determination of the nation.

We have greater freedom of action in domestic policy. Here it is a matter of capturing each individual. The determination of the individual stands alongside the forged determination of the community. Here battles will be fought that require a new kind of statistic. If we want to support a foreign policy decision, the entire nation must be mobilized for a powerful frontal attack.

Domestic matters are not settled by mass meetings and mass

marches alone. There “the troops must be divided into separate units.” The battle will be won within the family, the workplace, the office. Such quiet, tough battles depend on the determination, independence, and self-confidence of the individual fighter.

Many details of our domestic policy are not yet legally settled, nor can everything be written into law. There is much room for personal initiative. Each party member at least can act as a National Socialist. In such matters, each is his own political propagandist. There he can show if he is determined, persistent, self-confident, whether he can hold firm and keep going. Political propaganda in the form of political meetings must always stand alongside such individual fighters.

If we demand political activism of the whole community, we propagandists must ourselves be activists. Activism does not mean being a bigmouth or a rabble rouser, but rather agreement between word and deed, between unity and determination of character.

Political propaganda may not be confused with advertising. Advertising changes its target as needed. The Americans call it “ballyhoo.” The word means making a lot of noise about something, whether it is worth it or not. The art of advertising works this way. Advertising agencies push one thing today, another tomorrow, each time making it sound as if nothing else in the world is worth mentioning. There is no thought of moral or national values. “Ballyhoo” is advertising at any price, with no moral content, no moral thought or responsibility. The Americans made “ballyhoo” against Germany during the World War until the American public finally believed that the Germans were cannibals whose elimination would be a godly deed. “Ballyhoo” is an unlimited, arbitrary exaggeration. In a political sense, it is incitement, distortion, and it is all immoral.

When we talk about the necessity of political propaganda, we seek powerful moral goals. We want to make our people a united nation that confidently and clearly understands National Socialism’s policies, quickly and correctly. We cannot change our political principles as we would a consumer good, becoming random, irresponsible and immoral. We do not want to distort, confuse or incite, but rather clarify, unify, and tell the truth. Political

propaganda is the highest responsibility, it is a moral duty, a national duty. We may never think there is too much of it or that it is superfluous.