

**INTERVIEW WITH
ADOLF HITLER**

MUNICH, 1923

**LIBERTY
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By George Sylvester Viereck (1884-1962)

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Editor's Note: Though published in 1932 in Liberty Magazine, this edited interview took place nearly a decade earlier, in 1923, in the private home of an ex-admiral of the German Navy. By 1932, Hitler was the head of Germany's largest political party, the NSDAP (National Socialist German Workers' Party). At this juncture, the NSDAP was at the peak of its strength prior to the Nazi seizure of power in January, 1933. —T. X. Ferenczi

HITLER: When I take charge of Germany, I shall end tribute abroad and Bolshevism at home. Bolshevism is our greatest menace. Kill Bolshevism in Germany and you restore 70 million people to power. France owes her strength not to her armies but to the forces of Bolshevism and dissension in our midst.

The Treaty of Versailles and the Treaty of St. Germain are kept alive by Bolshevism in Germany. The Peace Treaty and Bolshevism are two heads of one monster. We must decapitate both.

VIERECK: Why do you call yourself a National Socialist, since your party programme is the very antithesis of that commonly accredited to socialism?

HITLER: Socialism is the science of dealing with the common weal. Communism is not Socialism. Marxism is not Socialism. The Marxians have stolen the term and confused its meaning. I shall take Socialism away from the Socialists.

Socialism is an ancient Aryan, Germanic institution. Our German ancestors held certain lands in common. They cultivated the idea of the common weal. Marxism has no right to disguise itself as socialism. Socialism, unlike Marxism, does not repudiate private property. Unlike Marxism, it involves no negation of personality, and unlike Marxism, it is patriotic.

We might have called ourselves the Liberal Party. We chose to call ourselves the National Socialists. We are not internationalists. Our socialism is national. We demand the fulfilment of the just claims of the productive classes by the state on the basis of race solidarity. To us state and race are one.

VIERECK: What are the fundamental planks of your platform?

HITLER: We believe in a healthy mind in a healthy body. The body politic must be sound if the soul is to be healthy. Moral and physical health are synonymous.

VIERECK: Mussolini said the same to me.

HITLER: The slums are responsible for nine-tenths, alcohol for one-tenth, of all human depravity. No healthy man is a Marxian. Healthy men recognise the value of personality. We contend against the forces of disaster and degeneration. Bavaria is comparatively healthy because it is not completely industrialised. However, all Germany, including Bavaria, is condemned to intensive industrialism by the smallness of our territory. If we wish to save Germany we must see to it that our farmers remain faithful to the land. To do so, they must have room to breathe and room to work.

VIERECK: Where will you find the room to work?

HITLER: We must retain our colonies and we must expand eastward. There was a time when we could have shared world dominion with England. Now we can stretch our cramped limbs only toward the east. The Baltic is necessarily a German lake.

VIERECK: Is it not possible for Germany to reconquer the world economically without extending her territory?

HITLER: Economic imperialism, like military imperialism, depends upon power. There can be no world trade on a large scale without world power. Our people have not learned to think in terms of world power and world trade. However, Germany cannot extend commercially or territorially until she regains what she has lost and until she finds herself.

We are in a position of a man whose house has been burned down. He must have a roof over his head before he can indulge in more ambitious plans. We had succeeded in creating an emergency shelter that keeps out the rain. We were not prepared for hailstones. However, misfortunes hailed down upon us. Germany has been living in a veritable blizzard of national, moral, and economic catastrophes.

Our demoralised party system is a symptom of our disaster. Parliamentary majorities fluctuate with the mood of the moment. Parliamentary government unbars the gate to Bolshevism.

VIERECK: Unlike some German militarists, you do not favour an alliance with Soviet Russia?

(Here Hitler evaded the question, and evaded it a second time when he was

asked by Liberty Magazine to reply to a statement made by Leon Trotsky¹—then Soviet Minister of War—that his assumption of power would result in a mortal conflict between a Germany-led Europe and Soviet Russia. Hitler then discussed the unlikely prospect of compromising his principles with other political parties.)

HITLER: The political combinations upon which a united front depend are too unstable. They render almost impossible a clearly defined policy. I see everywhere the zigzag course of compromise and concession. Our constructive forces are checked by the tyranny of numbers. We make the mistake of applying arithmetic and the mechanics of the economic world to the living state. We are threatened by ever increasing numbers and ever diminishing ideals. Mere numbers are unimportant.

VIERECK: But suppose France retaliates against you by once more invading your soil? She invaded the Ruhr once before. She may invade it again.

HITLER: It does not matter how many square miles the enemy may occupy if the national spirit is aroused. Ten million free Germans, ready to perish so that their country may live, are more potent than 50 million whose will power is paralysed and whose race consciousness is infected by aliens.

We want a greater Germany uniting all German tribes. But our salvation can start in the smallest corner. Even if we had only 10 acres of land and were determined to defend them with our lives, the 10 acres would become the focus of regeneration. Our workers have two souls: one is German, the other is Marxian. We must arouse the German soul. We must uproot the canker of Marxism. Marxism and Germanism are antitheses.

In my scheme of the German state, there will be no room for the alien, no use for the wastrel, for the usurer or speculator, or anyone incapable of productive work.

ENDNOTES

¹Leon Trotsky (1879-1940) was a Russian revolutionary, Communist theorist, and Soviet politician. In 1917 he was one of the leaders of the November Revolution. He served as Commissar of Foreign Affairs from 1918 to 1925. Trotsky was the founder of the Red Army. Trotsky was deposed by Stalin in October, 1927 and expelled from Russia in February, 1929. In 1940, then living in Mexico in exile, he was assassinated on the orders of Stalin by a Spanish NKVD agent.