

Lecture given by Dr. Franklin Wolff in Chicago.  
Notes taken by P. Selsor on German National Socialism 10-6-40

Those who have been born since the turn of the century scarcely know the difference in the world of 1914 and that of today. (Genius is distinct from the ordinary human being because he never gets out of adolescence.)...I remember those days because I was just getting out of my own academic training.....The scientific world hardly knew national or international lines. The same was true in the socialism of that day....The meaning of racial differences and national differences thus was becoming weak. They thought the time of great conflicts was past. Officially wars were irrational. At Stanford I attended the first class on International Peace..... The destruction of the most fit men meant that it led to biological decay of the race. In 1914 something tragic happened and in the 25 years or so we have witnessed a simply tremendous turnover. In place of those other ideals, we see crystalized nationalism. We see the conflict between races. We emphasize national economics. Now we don't see this happening simply with backward races. Nor from out of the depths of Russia. For we see it happen from one of the most enlightened races the world has ever known. And here is what, in particular, makes them possible for we see only too clearly that the man that was on the surface carried along in his nature something else that said "Nay" to the ideals of his time... I have already pointed out that this is a psychical overturn. And remained because it had then been cultivated so that many of the best things of that day are to-day in the discard. Thus when little men of genius rise into the places of power and they rose into the place of power because they were ~~attuned~~ attuned to the heart of

the little man of humanity. The little man in the place of power has the position of indices---they manifest the level of those they represent. It is not the day of the aristocrat. Now, after that phase of the World War - I call it a phase because I don't think the war ever ceased. After that phase past, Germany found herself in a state of exhaustion and thus preceded social death and something<sup>that</sup> could have become a rather rotty state. We have signs of this. The long strain and the....German National Socialism arose as a new instrument. The answer to a breakdown to the fever of the race is an energising of the will. German National Socialism deserves credit for having established first that in the German Race. The way a doctor makes you live when you are sick is not the measure of an ideal life. Many things that you are directed to do are things you would not do when you are well.....We have to learn how to act when the tide is with us and how to act when it goes against us.....Now the German National Socialist movement has an object which I shall speak of presently. We must draw a very different line between objects and method.....Now the methods which he uses are any methods which are successful. In other words, "The end justifies the means." It's Machiav<sup>h</sup>ellian<sup>el</sup>, of course. All politics are Machiavellian. The English politician practices it but hates to look at the idea....Treaties are only a scrap of paper in most cases.....The collective psyche of man is very low....And so we find the morality of nations corresponding to that of a tiger or an alligator. Some ugly, grim facts, but true. The great problem of man is to make the sovereign principle a clean one.(?) This is probably the greatest problem confronting man. I am writing a book that has some sovereign principles in it.,.

So we must distinguish between the methods and the objects. I leave Machiavellian methods along. They are anything that looks as though they would work. Now German Nationalist Socialism has a two-fold meaning -- on one side its primary emphasis is to life and all who are oriented to vitalized philosophy will not find themselves at variance to this philosophy.... Germans have great organizing might. The French have great intuitive power. The strength of the present Germany is their intuitive power combined with their political power. That is why the Mohammedans were so strong - they combined military and religious power.... Now along with this goes the idea that the German or Aryan is the supreme culture bearing race in the world. And believing that they feel, therefore, it should predominate. This introduces the "Chosen Race". "The Chosen Race" idea is a slap in the face to the other fellow. If you are going to identify yourself as The Chosen Race you had better be pretty strong.... none of us like to be thought of as primitive. We don't like to look up to our superiors. It doesn't go down with me and I don't think it goes down with others... There is another aspect that can be accepted and that is a new way of life. The new way of life is not only something for the German people but concerns us vitally. We would rather choose our way of life than do what someone else wants us to do. Western world doesn't have to go to the Nazis to see the "We see to you". (WCTU) attitude. We have seen it from Christian proselytes. We don't seem to find our way of life and then let the other fellow find his way of life. We will have war until this is settled.... It is possible for Germany to be destroyed and yet their way of life prevail.... and what you have destroyed you will yourself

become. You will take on that which you have destroyed. ....First of all, in this case the way of life involves a religious attitude. ...But because it is religious it is curiously vital in a subtle way. ...We have to have people who can inspire a new religiosity and give themselves to completely and face death as readily as the Germans face death. Men don't do that unless they have been fired deeply... But it can never be done with an academic attitude towards ones basic religion....

Hitler assumes that you can not destroy an old form until ~~for~~ you substitute at the same time something else that takes the place of the old....And if we want a counter way of life we must admit that this new way of life has something in common with the Russian Communism. It has features in common with the Facistic form and also has features in common with the New Deal. But I don't know anything that is as opposed to them as true Americanism. It is collectivistic. The individual is actually violated for the supposed good of the collectivity. He is expected to renounce his opinions for the good of the whole. He is not supposed to arrange his life...That is also something to take into account. The collectivistic principle has become very strong throughout the world. And here we have the emphasis on the highly extroverted attitude. The introverted attitude is the ~~paraphrase~~ opposite.

The signs of the times point to greater extroversion... depressing the intellect. In the past ten years we see people much more interested in security than in freedom. It corresponds to the psychic ~~x~~ turnover. Even in education the good of the body is supreme. And then the necessary point is the training of will and determination. Hitler mocks the English because their leaders do not accept

responsibility. Evidently there is a lot of truth in what he says. It is a strong positive point....Thinking and the education of thought in the scientific sense is treated as the last item to be respected in the German National Socialistic order. The professors in schools and colleges have had to lower and lower their standards. Another feature is the exclusive domination of the political power. All life comes under this power. There is no room for a religious loyalty that is higher than the National entity. There is no room for international brotherhood. You might say how you like your potatoes done but in wider fields your thought would be proscribed. There is definite encouragement of all military virtues. Capacity to take it and capacity to die are two main virtues. ...To sacrifice ones own life for the good of the rest.... But the whole nation, at least at present, is organized in the terms of military thought....No army encourages thinking among the soldiers. If you think a good bit you may discover that physical courage is not such a great thing. The lower you go the more you find it (physical courage). Chinese regard physical culture as distinctly vulgar. This new way of life is strictly antiparliamentary.....For after all when you are dealing with technical matters why should the layman have a deciding vote in what is to happen. Progress says that in matters of engineering the non-engineering man has no voice in the matter. The group does not decide. The leader alone decides. He may listen to discussion but he decides....But that we see happening with us, too. A definite subordination to the judiciary and the executive receiving more power. Now one final feature and in this respect it differs from the Marxian theory. Hitler has contempt for the Bourgeoisie. There is one class he

never

never speaks of in any slighting way and that is the aristocracy of the blood.... Now we come to the great contradiction and this is the point. We see life becoming strictly regimentized. And on the other hand Hitler aims at a day of superior culture and the two things will not go together. The state that is being built is like that of Sparta. Sparta was largely composed of soldiers and about all Sparta is famous for is the 3,000 Thermopolians they fought... We do not think of any great work of art - any great music of Sparta. Those things come from Athens. The creative spirit recognizes freedom. You can't be Sparta and Athens both. And we, too, must take warning for we are going the way of organization. The life based on permits.