

**Background:** This article from the Nazi Party's monthly for propagandists discusses Nazi propaganda battles with the Marxists, which to their minds included both the socialists (SPD) and communists (KPD). The article notes that National Socialism has gone about as far as it can in reaching the middle class. The target now has to be the workers, which the writer notes will be a difficult task. He directs some rather biting criticism at many Nazi propagandists. It was published late in 1932, at a critical time. Nazism had lost ground in the 6 November 1932 Reichstag election, and the party was weary after a year of almost constant elections. There had been two presidential elections, two Reichstag elections, and the Prussian state elections, not to mention a variety of others.

**The source:** Fritz Oerter, "Unsere Redner im antimarxistischen Kampf. Die Bilanz eines Wahljahrs," *Unser Wille und Weg*, 2 (1932), pp. 350-356.

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## Our Speakers in the Anti-Marxist Battle

by Fritz Oerter

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As we review the Reichstag, provincial parliament, and city elections of 1932, we must conclude that the day of huge mass meetings and mass marches is over, at least when it comes to winning new supporters for the National Socialist movement.

Those citizens whom we could interest in our world view through marches and mass meetings, the sensible members of the middle class, have been reached. The "middle class" reactionary front has been ground down — despite their election "victory" of 6 November. Nationalist circles are the ones that increasingly visited our mass meetings, that saw our marches with growing enthusiasm, and remain today about 95% of the attendees at our meetings, although they have long since been won over to National Socialism.

But this loyal core of National Socialist supporters will surely grow weary of filling our mass meetings. In some *Gaue*, it is already true that only the most prominent leaders of our party like Hitler, Straßer, Goebbels, Goering, Frick, etc., are able to bring out crowds in the tens of thousands. The high point of this form of propaganda is over, and we must now reach those circles which our propaganda so far has unfortunately been unable to reach in sufficient numbers.

Let us be honest with ourselves. The road is free and open, but our main enemy has done unexpectedly well in resisting the National Socialist advance. We have certainly succeeded in fragmenting the Marxist front and in winning a large number of former Marxists for our worldview. The Social Democrats are fighting desperately for their survival, and thanks to National Socialist educational work hundreds of thousands, even millions, of people who once were firm supporters of Marxist nonsense are beginning to waver. They are looking into the National Socialist movement, naturally against the wishes of their "leaders." Still, Marxist propaganda, and especially its press, regularly succeeds in leading people who have seen the light back into error, and bringing them back under the control of Marxist party leaders.

Why? In opposing Marxism, we oppose a deeply-rooted worldview that is based on over sixty years of intensive work. It is in turn founded on the still older liberal worldview and economic order. It enjoys not only the protection of tradition, but the strength a younger movement can bring to bear against an older one. Liberalism was not able to resist Marxism. The liberal parties and ideologies could only fight defensively against a worldview with greater strength and clarity of purpose. Even the Marxist worker who long doubted and sought for something better eventually had to conclude that Marxism is the only

worldview that can bring a new and better society and economic order. Who can hold it against him that he rejected the forces that denied him equality and a share in the results of his labor? The German worker absorbed Marxism in his parents' home, and was surrounded by people who thought the same in the workplace. In what remained of his sound understanding, he knew that there was a flaw somewhere in the worldview. He realized that there was a catch somewhere to the lovely teachings of "expropriating the expropriators," of "the equality of everyone with a human face," of "international brotherhood," of "international solidarity," but he did not know where, and there was no one to show him the contradictions, the weak points, in the thinking of Karl Marx and his followers.

Thanks to our ten years of educational work, he is suspicious. He became a seeker, a doubter, but unfortunately only a few of his comrades have found their way to us. The 1932 election results prove this. We have made inroads into the ranks of the SPD [**Socialists**] and the KPD [**Communists**], but not to the extent that the "leaders" of the Marxist parties have deserved as a result of their inability, incompetence, and contradictory policies.

Every National Socialist fighter who speaks to meetings of Marxist workers must recognize this and draw the necessary conclusions. The Marxist party "leaders" have made mistake after mistake. They have promised everything since 1918 and delivered nothing. They have worked a hundred times with Jewish racketeers and a thousand times with capitalism. They are responsible for all the need and misery of the German people, and of German workers. Yet if our Reich, *Gau*, and county speakers do not succeed in reducing the Marxist nonsense propounded by the Socialists and Communists to absurdity, their sacrificial work will not succeed in widening the breach in the Marxist front. Without that, the deceptive Marxist worldview will fail to collapse in the manner of those organizations that supported calcified liberalism.

**We should not take Marxism lightly!** To defeat the enemy, we must know its weapons. If its weapons are good, we must have better ones if we are to survive. Only when we know, and know precisely, what Marxism teaches can we succeed in convincing the Social Democratic and Communist workers of the unfruitfulness of this doctrine, thereby making National Socialists of them. Of course, it remains necessary to show German workers who are still enthused about the doctrines of Marx, Engels, Lassalle, or Lenin what kind of "leaders" they have. However, revealing the nature of their "leaders" and policies shakes only their confidence in their party, but rarely their attitudes about the worldview.

Our propaganda, our intensive educational work, must make clear to the German worker that the aims of the "Communist Manifesto" and the "Erfurt," "Görlitz," and "Heidelberg" programs, proclaimed for decades, are impossible and utopian, and that the materialist philosophy and economic system of the "Capital" are erroneous and lead in the wrong direction. We must show them that this is the reason for the behavior of many Social Democratic and Communist "leaders." They have no choice but to play such a treasonous role. Only if we do this will Marxism's supporters give up all hope of a future Marxist state and become willing to consider true German socialism.

The conclusion is simple: **Training, untiring and thorough training, is necessary!** It is necessary not only for the members, whom some functionaries and speakers handle as if they were a bit stupid, but for everyone at the political front. For officials and speakers, anti-Marxist training is of the greatest importance. Unfortunately, many of our speakers — and often not the worst ones either — have completely avoided training about Marxism. True, they understand National Socialist thinking, but not Marxist views and theses. They are like army officers who have good soldiers, but do not know how strong the enemy is or where he is located.

That is why there are complaints about this or that speaker in nearly every *Gau*. Party members want better education, better speakers, to enable them to hold their own against opponents, even if a question comes up that goes beyond current events. Marxist meeting visitors have been worked on through the

lies of an unscrupulous press. They are especially critical. A single ill-chosen phrase or the least sign of uncertainty drives these citizens away, and some who were making their way toward us are lost forever. Our work has made them distrust their own leaders, but the long rabble-rousing of their “leaders” has also left them suspicious about National Socialist thinking.

It is nonsense to think that a popular style of speaking (which often turns out to be vulgar) is enough to win sympathy for the speaker in a meeting of workers. The opposite! The Marxist worker can tell what is genuine and what is artificial. When he sees that a speaker has taken on a “popular” style of speaking, or that he wears a shirt without a collar, or rolled up sleeves or other things like that, he becomes reserved and critical. Obviously a workers’ meeting is not a university auditorium. The speech must be simple and clear. But coarse language and shabby clothing generally harm the overall impression, just as do an elevated, lecturing style and elegant dress.

There is too much of this going on, in part due to a lack of through training that is replaced by outward appearances. Unnecessary exaggeration is also harmful. For example, a speaker at a meeting of workers before the 6 November election announced that our vote total would rise significantly and that we would win 250 seats. The half-won Marxists lost faith in this prophet and the worldview he preached. Even worse, some National Socialist speakers who fail to understand Marxism’s idea of class struggle said that the NSDAP might call for a general strike if Herr von Papen dared to dissolve the newly elected Reichstag. Similar exaggerations, of which there were unfortunately many, destroy everything that the speaker thinks he accomplished in his speech.

One mistake is particularly common. When National Socialist speakers who were formerly Marxists speak in workers’ areas, the publicity often says : “The former Marxist union secretary so-and-so will speak on the theme “Marxism or German workers.” The Marxist worker attends such a meeting to hear a discussion of worldviews. He is deeply disappointed when he gets only a normal discussion of current events, which does not in any way make it easier for him to decide which worldview to support.

What good does such a meeting do the Marxist worker? He knows that his “leaders” have betrayed the “goals of the revolution.” He knows they supported the Young Plan. He knows that Soviet Russia is not a land of milk and honey. He knows that National Socialism is fighting von Papen. He knows that Hindenburg was supported by the Social Democrats and some in the KPD. He did not come to listen to a former Marxist speaker to hear these things again. He wants to hear something different. He wants to know why this former Marxist left the red flag and now fights for the swastika. He is a seeker. He has lost faith in Marx and his doctrines. His world is threatening to collapse, and he wants a new and better worldview.

The former Marxist who found a new worldview in National Socialism should help his former party members to make a final break with Marxism. He should make it easier for them to become National Socialists. The Marxist worker wants to hear why the speaker today opposes which he once honestly fought for, perhaps for more than a generation. He wants to know why the speaker chose National Socialism, and how it is superior to Marxist thinking.

The attitude of a large part of the Marxists who come to our meetings can be summarized in this way: They no longer believe their “leaders”; they doubt Marxist doctrine; they look to the worker-speakers of the National Socialist people’s movement to find a justification to bring them from Marxism to National Socialism.

They want a plausible justification and good reasons for doing what they instinctively feel. For decades the materialist worldview was pumped into them. They learned to evaluate everything from a materialistic and rational perspective. As convinced Marxists, they were ruled by cold, clear reason, not by feelings. Mind and stomach, not heart and soul, were the driving forces behind events. In their heart and soul, many of these former Marxist workers are already National Socialists; only their materialism

keeps them from breaking with the false gods of the past.

The movement's speaker has the task of making it easier for Marxist workers to break with the past. He must be ready and able to give these citizens a logical basis for their emotional longing for National Socialism. He can do that only by knowing the Marxist worldview as well as he knows his own. He must be able to deal directly with the ideas of Marxists in the audience. He must be able to handle even the best Marxist discussion speakers.

Can every National Socialist speaker do that? No. The news from the *Gaue* proves it. The order of the day is thus training and more training. Some good National Socialist literature already deals with the fundamentals of Marxism. The National Socialist who has read these materials and understood them is capable of dealing with the average Marxist speaker, but not with well-trained Marxist speakers who have a solid understanding of the writings of Marx and Engels and who have mastered them. Therefore, the training should be conducted by party comrades who have studied Marxist doctrine in depth and are able to cross swords with even the best opponents from the Marxist camp.

Unfortunately, many diligent speakers have the incorrect belief that they do not need to learn anything further, that it is enough if they keep up with current events. They will know better once they have participated in a well-organized training course in which Marxist workers with better than average political education defend their worldview against the attacks of National Socialism. In such a course, the National Socialist speaker learns what he is lacking in order to be able to win the German worker to National Socialism. In fair and factual ways, but also in compelling and precise form, these training courses discuss the worldviews of National Socialism and Marxism. These discussions prove that the National Socialist worldview is far superior to Marxist ideology, but also that Marxist spokesmen, including minor functionaries and speakers, enjoy training that could be of great value to some of our speakers in workers' meetings. The lack of such training is the reason that many of them lack the success they desire.

When our Führer determines Germany's fate, such training will be of particular importance. Hand in hand with the practical refutation of Marxist theories that will come by realizing National Socialism, we need an intensive theoretical education of the working masses in order to free the last German worker from internationalism and materialism. They need to be persuaded of German idealism, of the principle that "the common good goes before the individual's good."

This is hard work, but the goal is worth it. **Millions of German citizens will once again believe in their race, fatherland, and social justice.** To work, then, you National Socialist fighters against Marxism and Reaction! Prepare yourselves for the final battle against Marx and his followers! Then victory will no longer be denied us!