

NS News Bulletin

NSDAP/AO: PO Box 6414 Lincoln NE 68506 USA www.nsdapao.org

#1075 22.10.2023 (134)

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Leadership between Folk Community and Elitism

Part 9

ERNST RÖHM

As uncontroversial as Rudolf Hess is in circles of the National Socialist community of thought all over the white world, as controversial is Ernst Röhm. And yet the chief of staff of the SA is also one of the great leader personalities of National Socialism, as much as he differs in type from Rudolf Hess. But precisely this shows how enormous the range of National Socialist leadership is.

Like no other, Ernst Röhm embodies the greatness and tragedy of the SA and thus of political soldiering in National Socialism: the Chief of Staff was the great rebel, the Landsknecht leader who broke all resistance, a revolutionary by nature, a fighter against the bourgeois bourgeoisie, a soldier by passion.

With boundless dedication and sacrifice, never-failing willpower, and an unstinting comradeship toward his men, he won the hearts of the rugged SA fighters and forged the SA into a revolutionary tool of the party that won victory and made the Third Reich possible.

At the Reich Party Congress of Victory in the fall of 1933, Ernst Röhm walked side by side with Adolf Hitler to honor the dead of the movement's fallen - never before or since had a party comrade been accorded such prominence and honor. It

was a symbolic expression of the Führer's gratitude and recognition for his only "Du" friend and his toughest and most successful fellow fighter!

The fighting alliance of these two men had begun very early: in the wild days of 1919 in Munich, the powerful Reichswehr captain Röhm, who secretly guarded the arsenals for a national upheaval and worked tirelessly to form a revolutionary military force for the "March on Berlin," was already promoting the then still largely unknown party leader of the small NSDAP, became a party comrade, and kept adding new men to their SA. When Röhm finally succeeded and the various revolutionary military associations joined together to form a unified "Deutscher Kampfbund," he also prevailed upon it to place itself under Adolf Hitler's political leadership. Thus Adolf Hitler, with Röhm's support, had already become the key figure of Germany's national rebirth in 1923 and was to remain so from then on.

Ernst Röhm, the passionate soldier who wanted to give soldiering its rightful place in the national community, who basically saw only the fighter as a real human being and a soldier troop as the tool of the national revolution, nevertheless came to the realization earlier than anyone else that the soldiers had to become political and had to subordinate themselves to a political leadership, a folk leader who could carry away and convince not only the fighters but the entire folk.

Personal ambition was alien to Ernst Röhm, he fought for his goal and for the man in whom he had recognized the chosen one of fate - the Führer Adolf Hitler!

The national uprising of November 9, 1923, failed - Ernst Röhm managed to escape legal condemnation despite his involvement in the events and his absolutely decisive role in the preparation of the attempted uprising. He was still protected by the uniform of the active Reichswehr officer, who knew too much about his superiors and his wavering loyalty to the system and the secrets of the Reichswehr. Thus he was able to continue working and after 1923 he took over the leadership of the, now forbidden, SA, as whose legal cover he created a new powerful military organization with the Frontbann. This was to prepare another attempted coup, but Adolf Hitler had drawn different - and correct - conclusions from the failed uprising and decided in favor of legal and political struggle.

Loyal to the Führer and the party, but, from his whole personality, unable to see the correctness of this decision, Ernst Röhm resigned from the leadership of the SA and later took on military training work in the Bolivian army. In this way he showed his discipline towards the party leadership and the general political line and proved himself to be a truly National Socialist leader. He knew his responsibility, recognized that others were better suited for this path, and did not want to stand in the way. He gave up everything he had built up politically and withdrew until the party needed him again.

At the end of 1930, after the great electoral success that made the NSDAP the second strongest party and irresistibly swelled its SA, the SA leadership of the time proved unable to cope with the necessities of the new stage of the struggle - the SA plunged into a deep crisis just as the party was preparing to fight for power in earnest and needed more than ever this political party army.

Adolf Hitler called back his old friend and fellow fighter - and Ernst Röhm came immediately and without hesitation. If he had once sacrificed everything politically out of a sense of responsibility and had withdrawn so as not to stand in the way, he now gave up his secure personal existence because the party needed him again and the Führer called him! These decisive years up to the seizure of power and beyond have become the eternal glories of SA history and are inseparably linked with the name and personality of the Chief of Staff.

At the turn of the year 1933/34, the Führer acknowledged this in an address of thanks and New Year's message that appeared in all German newspapers and praised Röhm's "imperishable services" to the National Socialist revolution. It concluded with the Führer's words:

"At the end of this year of the National Socialist Revolution, I am therefore urged to to assure you how grateful I am to fate to be able to call such men as you my friends and comrades-in-arms. In cordial friendship and grateful appreciation, Your Adolf Hitler."

Only seven months later, the chief of staff was overthrown by intrigues of the reaction and shot together with the best and most loyal SA-leaders. About these events and their evaluation within our community of the NEW FRONT, I have reported elsewhere on various occasions. That does not belong here, since it does not throw any new light on the leader personality of Ernst Röhm, but leads to the topic of the irreconcilable opposition of revolution and reaction, which will forever be mortal enemies - the chief of staff fell victim to this mortal enmity. He, too, was a tragic figure, since he fell by the bullets of his own comrades, in the name of the movement that would hardly have won without him and on the orders of the Führer, to whom he was deeply devoted as a friend and comrade-in-arms and with whose name on his lips he died - felled by reactionary machinations that were seen through too late.

At this point, it should merely be pointed out once again, in summary, that the Chief of Staff was ultimately right in his warnings and his ideas, and that the failure of the Third Reich was causally linked to the tragedy of June 30, 1934.

It should also be pointed out once again that Ernst Röhm never planned a putsch

against the Führer - the "Röhm putsch" was a putsch AGAINST Ernst Röhm and the National Socialist revolution, which put the Führer in all too many areas in dependence on those reactionary forces in the administration, the economy, and above all the Reichswehr, which brought down the first National Socialist folk state in history through treachery.

Our irrevocable and passionate commitment to this great fighter and rebel, this National Socialist leader who was THE Chief of Staff of the SA, may remain controversial among philistines and know-it-alls; for us it is the toughest declaration of struggle against the reaction and thus an oath to complete the Second Revolution! Our community of the NEW FRONT has declared the anniversary of the death of the rehabilitated chief of staff - June 30 - as a day of struggle against the reaction.

DR. JOSEF GÖBBELS

Dr. Goebbels, Reich Propaganda Leader of the NSDAP, Reich Minister for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, and the last German Reich Chancellor, is the third of those historical leaders of National Socialism whom we particularly revere - again, an entirely different character than party comrades Hess and Röhm, but again, a model and exemplary National Socialist leader personality:

Next to the deputy of the Führer, the political leader sacrificing himself in the service of duty and task, the passionate party worker, and next to the chief of staff, the vital political soldier leader breaking through all resistance, rebel against a suffocating normality and conscious revolutionary against the minus world, steps the ingenious orator and propagandist who has been called the only undefeated German commander of the Second World War.

Dr. Goebbels was responsible for the morale of the home front, for awakening, strengthening and maintaining the will to persevere, the sense of duty and the relationship of trust with the leadership around the German people - and he fulfilled this task with genius, never-failing willpower, imagination and tireless, self-consuming work and constant readiness for action. The home front, however, held - not only in the emotional upsurges of the great victories, not only in the anxious months of the wavering of the scales of fate, but right into the last days of the dying Reich - the people stood by the Führer, worked, fought, sacrificed and died in trust in the leadership and in the knowledge of the fatefulness of the struggle that would decide Germany's future for a long time to come. This is with, first and foremost, the merit of Dr. Goebbels.

His unwavering loyalty and his propagandistic influence on the future, to which

his last thoughts and his unprecedented sacrificial death together with his family and children were directed, have already been reported here in an earlier section.

Rudolf Hess, whose closing words at the Nuremberg Victory Tribunal, which was his last public appearance before he was buried alive, culminated in the proud phrase: "I regret nothing!" - Ernst Röhm, who died with the words "Mein Führer!" on his lips - Dr. Goebbels, who in his last great radio address on the Führer's birthday in 1945 professed his faith in Adolf Hitler and died his own sacrificial death a few hours after him, in which his wife and children followed him: they are all true models of National Socialist leadership, lived and died filled with loyalty and sacrifice to the death, as demanded by the party program of the NSDAP, in the final sentence of which party leaders commit themselves to the fulfillment of their task, at the risk of their lives.

None of them was concerned with personal power, none of them abused it for personal ends, none of them lost contact with the people and their followers - they all remained comrades and comrades of the people. They are all tragic figures of an enormous uprising against the minus world, which failed at the first attempt, and whose power as an example for future generations proves itself most clearly in its last and total consequence, in the sacrifice of their own lives.

However, Dr. Goebbels is not only a role model in death, but he is also a role model as a National Socialist leader during the first period of struggle and the years in power.

Dr. Goebbels joined the NSDAP in the mid-1920s and worked his way up in the party in tenacious detail - from minor secretary and tireless assembly speaker in the West German districts, to the office of Gauleiter of the Reich capital, which he took very seriously and retained until his death - as the conqueror of Berlin, winning the red capital of the Reich for National Socialism - to Reich Propaganda Leader, Reich Minister and finally Chancellor in the downfall, was the course of his destiny. Hard, tireless work made this rise of the nameless student and penniless academic to master of propaganda possible, as well as his genius and his fine and deeply artistic feeling for the currents of the German national soul and public opinion.

Propaganda was both art and science to him - and in both aspects he mastered it from the bottom up. He belonged to the radical, social-revolutionary wing of the party and remained throughout his life the ruthlessly anti-bourgeois revolutionary who suffered deeply from the compromises with reaction made by the Third Reich after 1934; yet he never wavered in his loyalty to the Führer and to the prescribed party line.

While the Fuehrer, more and more during the war, buried himself in military problems, hardly ever spoke publicly, and seldom concerned himself with questions of state and party leadership, Dr. Goebbels, not out of personal ambition, but out of a sense of responsibility born of knowledge of his own abilities and unconditional loyalty, tried to fill this gap. He thought it necessary for the Führer, for the time of the war, if he had already to control the conduct of the war himself, to entrust the practical arbelt of government to another; and he rightly believed that he was the most suitable man for the purpose! The worse the situation became, the greater became the sense of responsibility of the little doctor, who was everywhere on the spot and took on all the tasks that no one else wanted to do - it was he who faced the people to the end, went to the bombed cities and spoke to the embittered bombing victims, stirring them to new enthusiasm - he took on responsibility for civil air defense, was given almost unlimited powers after July 20, 1944, and became the head of the German Air Force. After July 20, 1944, he was appointed with almost unlimited powers as commissioner for the total war effort, and finally - much too late - he was appointed Reich Chancellor of the successor government in the Fuehrer's will.

But all the powers for him were too little and came too late. Dr. Goebbels braced himself with all his might against the downfall, but his power was not enough - he aspired to the office of Foreign Minister, even Chancellor, not to push himself into the foreground, but because he believed he could still turn the tide of fate. But he did not get a chance to try. As long as the Reich still had the power to shape its own destiny, in whole or in part, Dr. Goebbeis remained the mouthpiece of the party line and government policy, with no executive power of his own outside of propaganda - and by the time he gained increasing powers, it was too late for independent policy.

In the few hours of his reign, the revolutionary who became Reich Chancellor in the downfall, invoking a coming radical socialist united Europe under joint German-Russian leadership, offered Stalin a unilateral armistice and a reversal of alliances, but it was too late - it was a final gesture of that policy which this great revolutionary had long believed to be correct, but the Reich was on the ground, it could offer nothing more to the Russian "Vozd" ("leader," as Stalin preferred to be called). After a few hours of waiting and a temporary truce in Berlin, the rejection of the German offer and the demand for unconditional surrender came from Moscow. The last Chancellor of the Reich went to his death - voluntarily followed by his family: his wife declared for herself and in the name of her children that a life in a subjugated post-war Germany without the Führer and the National Socialist coinage of the state was unbearable, meaningless and worthless.

And so it has come! What alone can give value and meaning to life in today's minus world of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) society is the tireless

struggle and total personal commitment against the system and the world of the victors, for which the example, the life and the attitude of Dr. Goebbels, the little doctor with the fearless heart, gives us the strength!







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