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**PAUL SCHIEMANN AND 'THE NEW NATIONALIST WAVE.'
CONTEXT AND INTERPRETATION
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Abstract

Paul Schiemann was a formidable opponent of destructive nationalism. An ethnic German resident of Latvia, he wrote some of his most poignant essays in the 1920s and early 1930s. This article interprets and translates one of his most important essays.

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**PAUL SCHIEMANN AND ‘THE NEW NATIONALIST WAVE.’ CONTEXT
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Paul Schiemann (1876-1944) was a Baltic German whose advocacy of independence for the majority Baltic peoples before and during the First World War brought him hostility from the then powerful Baltic German élites. However, with the collapse of the German Empire and its dreams of annexing the Baltic provinces, Schiemann’s political record won him an important voice in the evolution of a new German *Ostpolitik* after 1918 – one based on friendship between the Weimar Republic and the newly independent Baltic nations. Schiemann, who had worked for the influential liberal paper, *Rigasche Rundschau*, since 1907, became its editor in 1919. He also led his own political party as well as chairing the German fraction in the Latvian parliament, where he campaigned for Baltic Germans to accept their loss of power as irrevocable and urged them to work alongside Latvians to build a genuinely multi-ethnic state.

Paul Schiemann also became a leading exponent of minority rights on the wider European stage. He was a co-founder of the European Nationalities Congress in Geneva in 1925 and dubbed by his contemporaries ‘the thinker of the minorities movement’ for his work among other things on the theory and practice of cultural autonomy. German Foreign Minister, Gustav Stresemann, who met and talked with

Schiemann several times, clearly recognized that since German minorities dominated the Nationalities Congress it had considerable potential to help German redefine its role peacefully in Europe. However, the same circumstances opened the Congress in due course to manipulation by German nationalists after Stresemann's death and in the years leading to Hitler's seizure of power in 1933.

Schiemann, who wrote one of the earliest extended critical analyses of National Socialism, offered unflinching resistance to all forms of political extremism. In particular he opposed from the outset the Nazi infiltration of the German minorities movement and through this the Nationalities Congress. In 1933 he had to give up his work for the *Rigasche Rundschau* and chose to leave Latvia to live in Vienna. From this city between 1933 and 1938 he subjected both Hitlerism and communism to relentless criticism in the rare German-language newspapers agreeing to print his articles. He returned to Riga in 1938 to escape imprisonment when German forces took over Austria. Retaining his convictions to the last, he refused to have anything to do with Hitler's mass resettlement of Baltic Germans in 1939/40 on land taken from Poland.

He endured and commented scathingly on his experience of life under the first spell of Soviet rule in the Baltic states. Severe ill health confined him to his house in Riga, where he was allowed to remain when the German armies returned in 1941, on condition that he ceased all political activity and journalism. Although the Gestapo monitored his movements he secretly collected data on Jews killed in Latvia. His memoirs, which he began to dictate to a young Jewish girl concealed in his house, testify movingly to his ideas on minority rights, on extremism and on Europe's future.

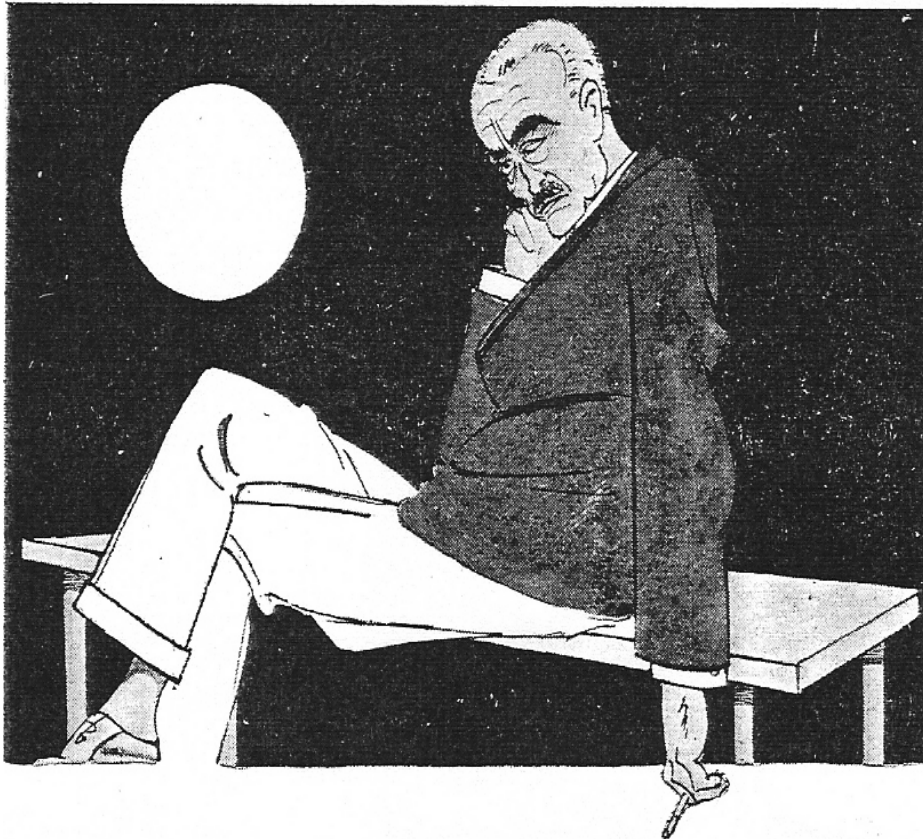
The following speech is one he gave to the *Verband der deutschen Volksgruppen* at a critical moment in 1932. Although fellow members of the executive board of the *Verband*, notably Ewald Ammende and Werner Hasselblatt, tried to prevent Schiemann from upsetting Hitler and the National Socialists in his keynote address, Schiemann refused to be muzzled and duly attacked ‘German nationalism’ in his speech. He made quite clear Germany’s major impulse to the ‘new nationalist wave’ sweeping across Europe and threatening the multi-ethnic societies in Eastern Central Europe.

For more detail see: J. W. Hiden, Defender of Minorities: Paul Schiemann, 1876-1944. London: Hurst. 2004.

Image 1: Paul Schiemann in the 1920s



Image 2: A cartoon of Schiemann from the Latvian satirical journal *Svari* (1929)



Paul Schiemann, ‘The new nationalist wave.’ His speech to the annual congress of the Association of German *Volksgruppen*. Baden near Vienna, 26 June 1932. Published originally in *Nation und Staat* 5, 12 pp.1-13.

When we gather in the coming days for the 8th session of the European Nationalities Congress all of us will surely be struck by the way in which the ideology, from which our movement sprang and on which it has built, is at a critical stage and is confronted by an ever growing torrent, which in place of our attempted resolution of existing antagonisms in the lives of human communities strives to sharpen those antagonisms for power political reasons. The spirit of freedom is in deficit. This is not to say that

warlike conflicts are currently being deliberately engineered, rather than the conceptions from which mankind today derives its political viewpoint, the psychological foundations of attitudes towards the state and national community, derive from the spirit that informed World War. It is the spirit of war, seeing peace merely as a continuation of conflict by other means, that holds sway today. A spirit that had to be particularly strong, for in our time the urge to community, the attempt to offset one's sense of inferiority and loss of personal identity through the awareness of community, has grown to an unprecedented extent. Not that the flight to community had not already played a major role in human social life before the war.

The flight from self to community expressed itself before the war in the formation of the most varied private organizations, with the most diverse aims and symbols. Yet during the War and post-war years the awareness of the individual's dependence on the fate of the state or nation became so strong and urgent, that instinct impelled the mass of people with all force towards the political community. In this way – independently of regime – the masses became the decisive factor of political life, where personal conviction was no longer the major consideration, but rather allegiance to a symbol, to the irrational. As a result, service to the masses became the essential political goal, from a belief in the wisdom of the people that formerly played a role only in the life of the Russian people and its thinkers, be it Bakunin or Tolstoy. On this theme, of a 'sociology of the masses', Professor Stavenhagen has done some interesting research, something of which, I hope, he can tell us here.

Conditions of war demanded that one single aim, one purpose, stood at the centre of the community's interest – the desire to destroy the enemy. During war the state community and its concerns are placed above all other human ties, so that they take priority not only over all other actual social relationships but also over the constraints of morality. Carrying over such concepts- inevitably necessary in war – to the peace is characteristic of what we call nationalism, as opposed to healthy national sentiment or national self-awareness. It [nationalism] is characterised by a fusion of the concepts of national community and state community.

For the [minorities] movement, which wishes to place national life on the basis of law, a direct danger arises whenever such nationalism becomes the core of the political message in party power struggles.

When at the end of the middle ages religious wars, arising from the attempt to equate state community with confessional community, were replaced by dynastic wars, the princes and kings, who were battling to extend their spheres of power, could already be seen trying to give these conflicts the appearance of national quarrels, so as to tie their subjects emotionally to the fate of their [royal] houses. Subsequently, when the community of peoples in a given territory, described in the west as the 'nation', became subjects of the state instead of the monarch, the militant conflicts arising from the rivalry of state economic spheres within the capitalist system were automatically perceived as national matters, that is to say as matters for the community of national culture, language and origin. The national slogan was the means of intensifying the state community of interest. But since the heightening of national tension, occurring

whenever the economic interests of a territorial unit seemed in any way threatened, automatically resulted in a heightening of national tension in the opposing state territory, then lasting overheating of the international climate was unavoidable, pushing towards militant conflicts fuelled by national passions.

Since nationalism at all times could be and was used to reinforce the citizen's feeling for the state, it was natural that the state showed itself concerned to nourish national sentiment and to anchor it in mass consciousness as the supreme civic virtue. Indeed, we in Europe today are universally prepared to acknowledge nationalism as a virtue, enhancing humans and determining their inner being, without once asking what really is the essence of this virtue, the substance of this moral value. National sentiment is the feeling for the holiness of the ties forged by the national community. National sentiment is the recognition that only within the firm embrace of the culture of origin can humankind develop intellectually soundly and naturally. National sentiment is the individual's sense of responsibility for the fate of his people. National sentiment is a devoutness of mind. But just as religious piety is a virtue only so long as it is a self-evident fundamental quality of the human spirit, manifesting itself in behaviour, but ceases to be a virtue once it is labelled as such and demands reward, so national sentiment also loses its moral worth, once it ceases to count as the self-evident condition of human engagement in public life. That happens, however, the moment national sentiment is torn from the service of the community and made the basis of a party whose aim is the seizure of power within another community....

Our epoch, which very probably does have a sense that it is unacceptable for an individual to boast of piety and expect reward for it, is, through the fusion of the concepts nation and state, insensitive to the moral crudeness of pride in national virtue. Admittedly, national fervour in the nation state and in its majority people also has serious and important purposes; both in relation to fellow countrymen within and beyond the state. These are tasks that demand great readiness to sacrifice and will to work. Work and sacrifice, not looking for political reward, but necessarily effected for their own sake and not on behalf of an urge to power directed at the apparatus of state. It is quiet work, unsuited to the razzmatazz of party business demanding clamour, struggle and action directed abroad. How can national feeling, an inner, psychological emotion, be reconciled to such externally directed goals? Only by manifesting itself not as love of one's own people but as hatred towards another. This hatred first offers the cement for a community born of party political conflict. Thus when national fervour goes beyond the limits of its essential purposes and places itself at the service of a struggle for political power it ceases to be a virtue and becomes self-righteousness, preached on street corners. Whoever most loudly abuses a fellow citizen of foreign origin wins the glory crown as the best patriot. National zeal, converted into demonstrations of hatred, destroys the basis of one's own national community, the moment its venom is directed at fellow citizens with different political allegiances, and it destroys the basis of the state community once it is directed against fellow citizens of different nationality.

While therefore the moral worth of nationalism as the emotional basis for building a political party is thoroughly problematic in nature, there is a direct moral threat when

nationalism claims to be the ethical measure in relation to all spheres of public life. This first occurs in the form of giving absolute priority over all other human ties to the service of the nationality's real or imagined interests. But such service cannot be placed above morality unless we wish utterly to destroy the significance of the moral code. Nor can service to the nation be placed a priori over all ties arising from other communities. Questioning the ranking order of various human community ties is as misguided as the query of the Pharisees, to which Jesus answered: Give to the Emperor what is his and to God what is God's. That is to say that both communities, the religious and the political, between which a clash of interests might be construed, rest on different levels, so that in practice a collision of their concerns is not possible. There can be absolutely no question about the moral code or the national interest taking precedence; rather if such a conflict actually occurred the state of affairs would have to be taken as a sign that both communities were not properly defined.

If today we encounter at every step conflicts between national and state interests, then we cannot expect a solution to emerge from a solemnly determined ranking of those interests, but only from a clear demarcation of the communities as such and their fundamental concerns. State interests must be derived from the state territory itself, and from this alone can state laws grow. National interests must derive from the national community, and again from these alone can grow the rights of the people. The same holds true of the interests and rights of communities of belief and in the last resort of general human rights, which must derive from all humankind's interest in the moral code. That is the purpose and essence of the struggle for nationality rights in our time, the purpose and essence, in my view, of our movement. Opposed to it is

nationalism as a historically evolved, emotionally based ideology, which in the last resort derives all public human rights from membership of the state alone and from the duties in respect of this state, thereby casting doubt on national rights, in so far as they are not founded in membership of the state, while political rights are to be quashed once they are no longer underpinned by membership of a specific nationality.

I believed that I had to incorporate the aim of national rights in the demand for the anational state, and it is repeatedly held against my call, that the state is so weakened by stripping it of the national idea that it cannot withstand the storms of this era. It is an essential task of the study of nationalities, which our movement has brought to the fore, to determine how old in reality is the fusion of the concepts of state and nation that is taken for granted today. The research is still only in its infancy, despite Meinecke, Mitscherlich and others. It seems to me urgently necessary to give this research our liveliest attention.

I am perfectly willing to enter the thought processes of a majority people and admit, that it is easier, for the patriotism necessary to state policy, to arouse and maintain the direct interest in the state, in the form of a people welded together by blood and culture. I am also willing to admit that national sentiment is easier to nourish through the example of unanimity in the state sphere. But in spite of this I have to insist that the mixing of state and national sentiments must in the last resort impact adversely on both communities. The idea of state is premised at least in theory on the fact that it can be accepted by all of its members. The state can adjust to the fact that in practice this or that element opts out on account of this or that political conviction. But it is utterly

intolerable for a state if by its nature its acceptance is impossible from the outset for a part of its citizenry. Yet this impossibility arises if granting a citizen state rights is made dependent on belonging to a specific nationality; if a citizen belonging to another nationality is either encouraged to change his nationality; or if his state rights are quite simply denied once and for all because of his nationality. That might practically still be conceivable in West Europe and in part of Central Europe, where national minorities constitute a numerically dwindling percentage. It is completely untenable and amounts to a negation of the state as such in the countries of the East, where those national groups not belonging to the majority people make up a quite significant proportion of the state population.

Yet the national idea suffers even more from its stereotypical coupling with the state idea. We know today that the many peoples of the East, who in Europe had no state of their own, after emigrating to America maintained their national characteristics even in a foreign land as a matter of course; they formed strong nationally aware groups. Yet the German emigrant, the more his national feeling had been linked to the concept of state, ceased to recognise any moral obligation to maintain his national cultural heritage. After the foundation of the Bismarckian German Empire the Reich German for decades went abroad feeling that he now ceased to be German, in order to become Russian, American or whatever. And if we examine the current attitude of German nationalism towards the minorities question, then we see very clearly, that the German nationalist cannot conceive of a right to nationhood as such, wholly detached from state territory. Naturally, it is nonsense to say that Adolf Hitler has betrayed the South Tyrolese; or that National Socialism has no feeling for the need of German minorities.

For National Socialism, however, the concept of state is so closely tied to the concept of nationality, that it can only conceive the support of the *Auslanddeutschtum* by way of its inclusion in German territory, or at any rate only through the direct application of political pressure. Thus where, on foreign policy grounds, neither inclusion in the state territory nor forcefully pressing the state's demands are seen as attainable, then nationalism is denied all possibilities of establishing a legal claim to support the nationality. We see also among western peoples brought up in the tradition of the nation state, a decided emphasis on their emigrants retaining citizenship. The Italian state now spends large sums to ensure that pregnant Italian women abroad return to Italy for their confinement, thereby guaranteeing citizenship for their children. For only the citizen has an inalienable right to his nationality. Nationalism does not recognize a national right as such.

It is interesting that Soviet Russia abandoned the idea of nation state authority as soon as the nationalist-democratic monarchy collapsed, and instead formally recognized nationality as a private affair of citizens, from which arose certain corporative rights for the national communities. Nevertheless, Soviet Russia has not hesitated to shore up its concept of state power with sentiments taken over from an alien community. This is the community of atheism, the abandonment of religion. For this reason Soviet Russia is indeed today no nation state, but rather a confessional state with completely reversed premises. And all the hardships and cruelties of mental repression, which in Europe derive from the state's will to power, must in Russia be attributed to the state's authority in matters of the beliefs of its citizens. The intellectual assault, that Russia seeks from its concept of state to mount on the relationship of its citizens to God, the

nation states of Europe demand with respect to the attitudes of their citizens to their nationality.

That is the nationalism of contemporary Europe, which derives its strongest impulse from the undeniable victory of the nationalist idea in the World War. The declaration of the right of national self-determination gave new theoretical foundations to the idea of trying to bring about an identity between belonging to a people and belonging to a state. The battle for national justice that we feel called to lead has no other aim than to destroy this enforced identity in humanity's consciousness.

Although the nationalist ideology was generally the dominant principle of the post-war era it is nonetheless possible to speak of certain wave like motions, which allowed the nationalist idea within the individual European states at times to be stronger or weaker in action, depending on how strong the counter currents, in the form of the League of Nations ideal, of the nationalities movement or of the work for European rapprochement, were pushing against the purely nationalist concept of power. This nationalist concept was less strongly developed in the successor states of the old Russia that collapsed through nationalism, than in the other European states, in which the national spirit was either triumphantly celebrated or intolerably suppressed. The Russian democracy that destroyed old Russia grew to a very great extent from the battle against the nationalist idea. Leaders of foreign origin played a decisive role here. When called on to form their own new states they found completely alien an ideology that could aspire to use the state idea to repress other peoples. Already in 1905 the demand was made for national freedom for all citizens alongside that of religious

freedom, and the ideas of the Austrian Social Democrats, above all Karl Renner, have always played a decisive role in the political position of Russian democracy. Although this ideology could not be effective in Poland, that can be explained to a very great extent by the direct influence of western nationalistic thinking from other parts of the state territory. In the Baltic states the influence of the ideology of Russian democracy was at first completely unmistakable; in full self-awareness the founders conceived their new states as a collection of all the peoples living with equal rights within the territorial space. There is a new nationalist wave, slowly but surely washing such ideas away and now carrying the nationalist concept of power to our lands too. The reasons for this unprecedented strengthening of a new nationalist wave in Eastern Europe might essentially be as follows:

1. The League of Nations' complete failure in all aspects of its work, but particularly in regard to national matters. Nobody any longer believes in the League. In this respect the Manchurian crisis has perhaps delivered the fatal blow. There is still less belief in the readiness of the League of Nations to defend national rights. In this respect the grotesque ruling in the Ukrainian question has probably contributed crucially to the loss of trust. There is certainly no doubt that the real League is merely a new outer form and complicated apparatus for the old nationalist-imperialist state policy; that it is in practice, through its work, the direct opposite to the League of Nations ideal. The conclusion should be to intercede against the League and for the League of Nations' vision in a purer and truer form. Instead there is a regrettable misunderstanding and disappointment over the actions of League is giving rise to a bitter struggle against the *idea* of a League of Nations, which is the very opposite of League *practice*.

Be that as it may, at any rate the failures of nationalities policy in the Committee of Three and in the League Council have meant that reluctance to infringe minority rights guaranteed by treaty has generally vanished. Thereby, however, the last barriers in the way of nationalist political violence have also disappeared, and even the most modest concessions to national rights of citizens are no longer seen as meeting an obligation but as acts of charity, which can be undone at any moment.

2. However, the economic crisis, burdening the whole of Europe more heavily day by day, plays an important role. It is clear that the individual state is almost powerless in the face of this crisis. But for the masses a scapegoat must be found, who is responsible for the needs of time and country. In such a situation it is obviously most comfortable to hold those of foreign origin responsible and to promise the nation a cure from a purely nationalist government, which would render all foreign elements harmless. And when it comes to questions of cutting state budgets, questions of taxation, it is thus quite clear to the great majority that these cuts must be made in the first instance at the cost of foreign interests, that tax policy must first impact on foreigners. Through such recourse to nationalist instincts even the most hopeless finance minister can today win a degree of trust from the patriotic masses.

3. What seems to me most decisive, however, is the unstoppable advance over all the peoples of Europe of the nationalist vision as a purported new ideology. This is doubly disastrous for any bearers of the fight for national rights. The feeling for national justice among the majority people is deliberately undermined. The idea of fairness is made laughable as a doctrine, perceived as weakness and as an unworthy sacrifice of

nation state interests. I have already said that in our eastern states there was originally a feeling for the free right of nationality. If there were forceful measures in plenty against minorities, then its manifestation was an enormous material desire of those masses suddenly attaining state sovereignty. There were excesses behind which, however, always stood something like a bad conscience, which it was sought to appease through socio-political constructions. Now it is completely different. The suppression of minorities is no longer perceived as an unavoidable injustice in the interests of the state but as a patriotic duty. While in Latvia today certain measures have been undertaken against the cultural autonomy of national minorities, what I see as directly threatening is not so much the specific measures and their effects, but the spirit in which those decisions are defended and propagated; in a spirit which no longer recognizes our national right as such and sees in the repression of that right a direct duty of state.

This is a sentiment with which youth is almost ceaselessly imbued, so that were it to take over there would be no possibility whatsoever of any life for national minorities; a sentiment that prioritises nationalistic trends even at the costs of the interests of the state and its own people. We have recently had a new language decree. I don't believe that we Germans will be destroyed by this decree. But what is one supposed to say about the motives behind a language law that relieves all civil servants of the obligation of knowing any language other than the state language, that insists the youth of a nation of one and a half million souls know no language other than its own. For centuries we have been familiar with the idea of a vernacular, which could be understood and spoken on average by the inhabitants as a whole. With time the nation

state concept has made this people dumb not only in respect to fellow citizens but fellow humans. The moral robe with which nationalist propaganda clothes itself makes every objection against such tendencies increasingly difficult. Social Democracy has in cultural matters always stood firmly in favour of national cultural autonomy for minorities. The words of the Second International are quite clear in this respect and Latvian Social Democracy has [hitherto] adhered to them. Today we can already see two currents, the larger of which repeatedly maintains that it is in no position to oppose the increasingly nationalistic tendencies in the broad masses without endangering the prestige of the party.

In such an atmosphere a Minister of Culture hoping for mass approval very easily arrives at the idea of earning the cheap laurels of a national patriot by curtailing our autonomy. Latvian school autonomy has been able uniquely to ensure individual minorities independent management of their entire schooling. Now the government has intervened and conjured up the ideal of a uniform state culture, purportedly handing over to Latvians alone the arrangement of intellectual life. The first step in this direction is the imposition of the Latvian curriculum on all minority schools in Latvia. One does not need to be a schoolmaster to see very clearly that a school forced to educate its pupils in two languages, the mother tongue and the state language, must follow a programme different from that of the purely state language schools. The decrees of the Latvian Ministry of Education threaten the cultural being of schools. Denationalisation will naturally not succeed, but will certainly lower the intellectual standard of our schooling, thereby self evidently best pandering to the hate sentiments of chauvinism.

I have taken this example from my own homeland, but no doubt every one of you could report something similar or even worse from your own work. In the struggle for justice nationality groups are running into a wall, which at the least excludes any development of the idea. If I still see no threat to the existence of my own people, that is largely because in spite of everything our [Latvian] state holds resolutely to the democratic bases of its constitution. For as long as we have untrammelled freedom of the press and the right to public meetings and associations, that is for as long as we have the possibility to remain in direct contact with our kin, explaining to them, all the more urgently and convincingly the worse these times become, the necessity of standing firm on the soil of their fathers, then for so long we can believe that the foundations of our national existence cannot be destroyed.

But alas it is not the case that the spreading nationalist ideology is confined to our particular majority peoples, rather that the nationalist ideology is professed with the same zeal and passion by an ever growing part of our own great [German] nation. Although I have mentioned the security offered by the unassailability of civic rights in the [Latvian] state, I cannot close my eyes to the fact that our own younger generation at home is increasingly captivated by the sermon coming from the West, which regards the destruction of such fundamentals as the essential task of purposeful national youth. Yet this is no mere matter of political doctrine. It is rather that the ideological foundation on which our struggle for national justice rests is slowly being eroded by our own kinfolk. The idea that in every state only the racially pure members of a nation enjoy unrestricted rights as a citizen has been raised to a national axiom. The fusion of the concept of nation with that of state has throughout become the essential

content of the national idea. German nationalism rejects the application of this thinking to our circumstances, on the grounds that one nationality cannot be equated with another; that a state law possibly applied to citizens of lesser worth, cannot be used in respect of such an exalted nation as the German. This, however, ignores the fact that the value of an individual people and its culture within the state is determined only by the majority people in that state. And there can be no question that, particularly in the East, the German is often perceived as a threat very similar to that which the Jew is supposed to represent in Central Europe. (We are referred to the coming power. We are told of conquests, of preferential settlements for us through political pressure. Anyone aware of how closely the land question is tied up with the national question throughout the East can have no doubt that even the suggestion of such plans furnishes powerful weapons to our enemies for rejecting any claim to national justice). How are we supposed to continue our battle for justice and full equality? For free choice of nationality to be the yardstick for belonging to a nationality? How can we fight for justice and freedom when day by day it is objected that precisely those rights are basically contested by an every growing number of our fellow Germans?

What conclusions can be drawn from such a situation? We must just at such moments of heaviest danger, as in any battle, inwardly reaffirm our feeling for justice. We have to arm ourselves with the firm belief in the justice of our cause and our mission, and continue the fight for the right of free nationhood, which can only grow from the national community itself. But we have to wage it not only against nationalism in foreign lands, and of our majority hosts, but must also campaign resolutely and

righteously against the nationalism in our own camp, against the nationalism of our own people. This cannot be a question of interfering in the domestic politics of the Reich. As to the political promises and hopes of German nationalism, only the German people within the Reich can decide whether it wishes to or can believe in them. But on the principles which directly concern us, which represent the essence of our national work, we have not only the right to make a stand. I believe we have a duty to do so.

Is there any hope at all that we can triumph in a fight for justice that must be waged on all fronts? That we will be in a position to bring about an intellectual change, based on a clear separation of different concepts of community? I entertain no illusions. At a moment when national tension has perhaps reached its highest point, is it not hopeless to refer the idea of nation to a position that amounts to a denial? Yet Europe is undergoing at the moment not just a nationality crisis but also an economic crisis. Although national need makes itself felt more in the mental sphere, economic necessity has a much more direct and perceptible impact. No matter what sort of exits from this economic crisis might be hoped for, the fundamental need and indispensable precondition of salvation is under all circumstances the creation of a far reaching European economic space, which facilitates the binding together of economically viable territories. If Soviet Russia still retains an astonishing vitality, then this has far less to do with the regime and more with the possibility of cultivating a self sufficient economic space. The present economic crisis will and must also lead Central Europe to create such a space.

We have until now always insistently pointed out that the solution of the nationality question is the first and unavoidable precondition for creating a large economic space. Our conviction in this matter cannot change. Even so, it seems likely that the impulse towards a reorganization of Europe will stem from economic thinking and not from national understanding. The moment economic necessity compels the realisation of such a plan, then the need must also become self evident for a revision of existing nation state imperatives; for effecting a relaxation of economic and national borders. Geiselher Wirsing's book, *Zwischen-Europa*, which must be taken very seriously and is based on real knowledge, details the basis of the economic structure of East and Central Europe which must lead to economic union. His Central Europe is based on federal unity from Reval (Tallinn) to Belgrade. In this respect he expressly rejects my idea of the anational state and believes it possible solely through federation to overcome the errors of nation states. Such a federation can either be an alliance of existing states, perceiving themselves as nation states; whereby a solution to the nationality issue will be postponed, as with Coudenhove, to the distant future, a future where the atmosphere of national tension diffuses itself. Alternatively, it is a federation not just of politically administered [territorial] spaces but also a federation of peoples, of independent transnational national communities, with their own rights and own spheres of interest. Only then would states be denationalized and the national communities given their due. Yet I believe in this era of hopelessness that such must be the aim of our struggle for national justice.

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