

## The Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg of the Robert Bosch Stiftung

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# DGAPbericht

Research Institute of the  
German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP)

Nº 11



Markus Lux und Gereon Schuch (publishers)

The Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg of the  
Robert Bosch Stiftung



DGAP

Deutsche Gesellschaft  
für Auswärtige Politik e.V.

The **Robert Bosch Stiftung** is one of the major German foundations associated with a private company. It holds 92 per cent of the share capital of Robert Bosch GmbH.

Established in 1964, it represents the philanthropic endeavors of Robert Bosch (1861-1942), focussing on the fields of science, health, international relations, education, society, and culture.

In Stuttgart, the foundation maintains the Robert-Bosch-Krankenhaus (Robert Bosch Hospital), the Dr. Margarete Fischer-Bosch Institute for Clinical Pharmacology, and the Institute for the History of Medicine.

Between 1964 and 2007, the foundation has made available approximately 840 million euros for projects. In 2007, approximately 59 million euros were spent on project funding.

The **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik** (DGAP—German Council on Foreign Relations) is Germany’s national foreign policy network. As an independent, non-partisan and non-profit organization, the DGAP actively takes part in the foreign policy decision-making process at all levels and provides political advice. More than 1,800 members and over 80 companies and foundations support the DGAP.

The DGAP consists of the Research Institute, the magazine INTERNATIONALE POLITIK, and the library and documentation center.

The Research Institute works as a think-tank at the intersection of politics, economy and science. It is interdisciplinary, service-oriented and concentrates on various aspects of German and European policy-making. More than 20 scholars work in a total of ten programs.

The **“Center for Central and Eastern Europe of the Robert Bosch Stiftung”** has been in existence at the DGAP since 2007. In the founding patron’s spirit of understanding among nations, the Center runs discussions, seminars and projects on current political developments in Central and Eastern Europe. The Center supervises various programs of the Robert Bosch Stiftung to promote and create a network of future decision-makers and young scholars from Central Europe, Eastern Europe and Germany.

As a think tank and driving force, the “Center for Central and Eastern Europe of the Robert Bosch Stiftung” generates new ideas and concepts and possesses the institutional know-how to implement innovative project models. The scholars working at the Center provide briefings and background analyses for politics and the media.

Markus Lux and Gereon Schuch (publishers)

Editor: Julia Pötter

# The Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg of the Robert Bosch Stiftung

Berlin 2009

# The Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg of the Robert Bosch Stiftung

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## Welcoming Speech

*by Dr. Ingrid Hamm, Member of the Board of Management of the Robert Bosch Stiftung*

In his famous lecture “Politics as a Vocation,” Max Weber wrote in 1919:

*“One can say that three qualities are pre-eminently decisive for a politician: passion—a sense of responsibility—judgment.”*

This characterization holds true for Carl Friedrich Goerdeler as it does for few others. For this reason it is a great honor for us that since May 2007 our fellowship program for young executives from Central and Eastern Europe carries a new name: Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg.

From my perspective, it is the sense of responsibility that manifested itself in Goerdeler’s thoughts and actions that remains highly impressive today. Some time ago, Helmut Schmidt said in Tübingen that for him “one’s own conscience remains the final authority” towards which one bears responsibility. The actions of Carl Friedrich Goerdeler and his comrades-in-arms reflect these questions of conscience, introspection, the meaning of resisting evil and the sense of what should come thereafter for the coexistence among people.

Even today, these actions must serve as a role model for us, and for those who bear political responsibility. This is the reason why our fellowship program for administrators from Central Europe was named after Carl Friedrich Goerdeler.

There are additional reasons that speak in favor of this, particularly the close relationship between Robert Bosch and Carl Friedrich Goerdeler. At first glance there may seem little common ground between the Prussian civil servant Carl Friedrich Goerdeler and the Swabian entrepreneur Robert Bosch. Yet it was the Bosch Company that offered Goerdeler support for resistance activities between 1937 and 1945 during the Second World War—incidentally, in close contact to Theodor Heuss. Despite all their personal differences, Bosch, Heuss and Goerdeler created a connection that went beyond rejecting National Socialism. They shared basic principles that also decisively shaped their sense of justice and of what was right and wrong.

Carl Friedrich Goerdeler assumed responsibility in one of the most extreme situations which Germany had ever gone through. He not only resigned his position as mayor of Leipzig in 1936 out of protest against deeds committed by the local



Ingrid Hamm

National Socialists, but as one of the co-founders of the civilian circle of conspirators around July 20th, 1944 also penned memorandums on constitutional reorganization and plans for a European Union.

And when all is said and done, Carl Friedrich Goerdeler was an administrative official: one could say that he was a local politician with heart and soul. After his beginnings in city administration in Solingen and as Second Mayor in Königsberg, he was elected Mayor of Leipzig in 1930. And although local politics always constituted a matter close to his heart, he was willing to take on greater tasks: the July 20th resistance movement planned for him to assume the office of Chancellor of the Republic in a government after a coup d'état.

The bond to Robert Bosch, the willingness to take on societal responsibility and actively shape the public sector also characterize the fellows of the Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg.

The fellowship program for young executives from Central and Eastern Europe was created in 2001. It promotes future leaders from Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, and since 2008 Romania and Bulgaria as well, who get to know the work in German public administration as colleagues working alongside others and who intend to take on societal responsibility in their own countries upon their return. The graduates are given the tasks of continuing to implement European standards in their own countries, participating in the build-up of new institutions and deepening integration. You bear great responsibility, whether in allocating EU appropriations, combating corruption, setting up cross-border contacts or reforming the administration. Your work contributes to the citizens' trust in their state and democracy and is at the same time a contribution to a better understanding among nations.

Naming our program after Carl Friedrich Goerdeler is a distinction and an honor for both the foundation and the fellows. We hope it also contributes to making the historical significance of the man it was named after known in more extended spheres of young executives.

## Speech on the occasion of the ceremony for the naming of the Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg on 24 May 2007

*by Dr. Marianne Meyer-Krahmer*

Honored guests, dear attendees,

This celebration belongs to you first and foremost, dear fellows, but you will understand if I first express my pleasure and gratitude to the Robert Bosch Stiftung. Thus, on the occasion of the ceremony for the naming of the Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg, I would like to bid a welcome once again to Dr. Gutberlet, Prof. Dr. Rogall and Dr. Hamm. You have not only given this day a ceremonial frame, you also enhance it with your presence. As the daughter of Carl Friedrich Goerdeler, this pleases me most especially. At the same time, I am aware that when naming their fellowship program for young executives from Central and Eastern Europe, the Robert Bosch Stiftung was by no means thinking only of the personal connections between Robert Bosch and my father—as important as they were—and that it is certainly not just honorary commemoration that is being linked with my father's name: after all, with the name the Stiftung is handing over to you, fellows of the program, something like a political bequest. This is what I want to speak about in the following.

My father was born in the West Prussian town of Schneidemühl (now: Piła) in 1884. He became a lawyer, was an officer in the First World War and then became mayor of Königsberg, today Kaliningrad, at the age of 35. In 1930, when he was 46 years old, he was elected Mayor of Leipzig. For him in this function it was a matter of course to make his decisions after consultations with a democratically elected city council, and not to obey the wishes of just one party. My father was a passionate representative of local self-government; he stressed time and again that administration requires expert knowledge, but also closeness to the citizens, namely that citizens should be involved in their community's essential decisions.

As is known, the National Socialists came to power in 1933 and were soon the only party allowed in Germany. You can imagine that given his basic outlook my father quickly found himself in conflict with the regime, as he did not intend to accept the domination of this radical party.

On the other hand, until 1935 he was still hoping to be able to have a mitigating influence on the leadership of the NSDAP, especially as Hitler appointed him in 1934 to the position of Reich Commissar for price regulation, a function he had



Marianne Meyer-Krahmer



already occupied under Chancellor Heinrich Brüning during the global economic crisis. It was in this function that he got to know Hitler's irrevocable intentions: he was promoting the armaments industry in order to make Germany a leading great power once again. My father quickly realized that Hitler would not shy away from a war. What he found particularly alarming was that it was on the verge of becoming not a war between nations, but rather one between allegedly "superior" and "inferior" races. For Hitler, the Germans and the English belonged to the "superior" Germanic race with a natural claim to leadership. The inferior people were to be vanquished and dominated, for instance Jews, Slavs and people of color. For Goerdeler, conducting such a war was a crime, and the domination of the criminal Hitler regime a peril for all of humanity.

Already in 1935, Hitler let my father know that he no longer set any value on his advice. In December 1936, my father resigned from his position as Mayor of Leipzig; in so doing he protested against a hush-hush operation in which the Nazis had removed a monument to the composer Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. For the National Socialists, this composer was a Jew who for that very reason did not deserve such a monument. For my father, this action was cultural disgrace.

Now a decided opponent to the National Socialists, Carl Friedrich Goerdeler advocated above all to circumvent the war intended by Hitler. Like other opponents of the regime, he traveled to England and France, later to the USA and Canada, and there warned of the danger that derived from Adolf Hitler. In those days it was unusual for a conservative politician to warn against his own country's government. The then governor of the Bank of England, Sir Montagu Norman, pointed out critically: "It's not gentleman-like, speaking like this about your own government." But the foreign governments underestimated Hitler, accommodated him once again at the Munich Conference in September 1938, and forced Czechoslovakia to cede Sudetenland to Germany. Eventually, with the invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939 Hitler began the murderous Second World War.

I believe that for you as young Central and Eastern Europeans a document from Carl Friedrich Goerdeler from the first year of this war is of particular significance. It is a memorandum from July 1940—by that point in time, the German army had already occupied Poland, France, Belgium and the Netherlands—bearing the title "Moral State of Affairs." In it, Carl Friedrich Goerdeler addresses first and foremost the military leadership of the German Reich. He cites their "great successes" and at the same time poses a critical question: What do your military successes signify in light of the inhuman treatment of the vanquished peoples? I quote: "The plans for forcible relocations in Poland, Norway, Alsace-Lorraine and

northern France are known. The scheme of creating a density of population in poor, industry-less East Poland corresponding to that of Belgium, thus implying a slow death by starvation, of pressing down on Poland with a primitive school education, is the most diabolical that has ever been systematically devised in the history of mankind.”

As you all know, this abominable war found an end in May of 1945, and as my father had predicted, the war ended—for Germany too—in catastrophe. In the ice-cold winter of 1945, millions of refugees trekked from East Prussia and Silesia towards the west.

But it was certainly not just the perception of imminent defeat that drove my father and other regime opponents before him to attempt to end the Nazi system. They were in despair about the crimes that had been committed in the name of their people to other peoples and to the Jews. Thus my father ended a letter: “We must be grateful for exceeding mercy if they ever forgive us.”

Perhaps you know of the fact that on July 20, 1944 through Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg’s assassination attempt a last attempt was dared to end the reign of terror. The attempt miscarried, and Hitler took brutal revenge. My father too—and with him his entire family—was arrested; my father landed in excruciating solitary confinement. He was executed on February 2, 1945. Even during his



Dr. Marianne Meyer-Krahmer with Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg fellows

six months in prison, Carl Friedrich Goerdeler was engaged with the future of the continent, maltreated by the National Socialists, with ideas for a peaceful coexistence of Europe's people; these now form part of his political legacy.

And now I turn to you personally, dear members of the Kolleg. I hope you will be able to contribute to shaping the political future of your home countries in Carl Friedrich Goerdeler's terms. And I would like to embolden you, based on my own experience from my long life, to truly shape. How much an individual can change became clear to me in 1990—almost half a century after the collapse of the Nazi regime—at a celebration on the occasion of the fall of the Berlin wall and German reunification. The most important guest at this ceremony to which the city of Leipzig had invited me was the Polish ambassador Janusz Reiter; towards him and towards Poland were directed gratitude for their contribution to the liberation from the GDR's one-party rule. Without Lech Wałęsa, without the Polish strike movement, without the help of the Hungarians, the people in the former GDR would not have achieved their freedom.

Many of you, dear participants in the fellowship program, will return to your homeland after successfully completing the Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg and take up your work again in local administration. In my long professional life, I have come to know the important tasks but also the pitfalls of administrations. The purpose of administration is to enable varied individuals a peaceful coexis-



Dr. Marianne Meyer-Krahmer in dialogue with Dr. Ingrid Hamm and Prof. Dr. Joachim Rogall

tence by applying the same laws and regulations. In practice, however, you will keep being confronted with people who are not easy to integrate into the existing administrative schemes. I wish you all empathy, fantasy and courage to discover ways to satisfy the needs of individuals. The German word “Verwaltung” [administration] contains the word “Gewalt” [force]. One should keep reflecting on whether with administration one is also exerting force; a force that runs the risk of making the other person small so that you can feel big yourself. Thus I wish you personally all the best and that you will be able to achieve good things.



## The Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg—a fellowship program for young executives from Central Europe

*by Markus Lux, M. A., program director, Robert Bosch Stiftung, and Dr. Gereon Schuch, head of the DGAP's Center for Central and Eastern Europe of the Robert Bosch Stiftung*

Europe is in an ongoing unification process. The accession of ten states to the European Union in May 2004 and two additional states in January 2008 implies major challenges for the public sector in the new member states—and also in the old ones. The Robert Bosch Stiftung, together with the Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg, takes on the challenges of the transformation process in the new member states of the European Union in an exemplary way; their intention is to contribute to coping with these tasks and at the same time to Germany's understanding with its neighbors in Central Europe.

The main objective of the program is to enable qualified professional and intense cultural experience in the public sectors of Germany and of the EU, particularly in German public administration, for young executives who are striving to attain a professional leadership position and want to take on societal responsibility. It was first announced in 2001 for the countries of Poland and the Czech Republic, and has since been expanded to include Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria.

The prerequisites for participation include, besides specific country citizenship, an excellent university degree and at least one year of professional experience in the public sector (administrations, public companies, non-governmental organizations, etc.), as well as a sense of societal responsibility, motivation, assertiveness and leadership qualities. For actively working within German institutions, very good knowledge of German is of course indispensable; improving it will be supported before and during the fellowship. Annually, up to 25 scholarships are available.

In the Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg, the fellows get to know the public sector in Germany intensely during the program year (September–May) and familiarize themselves with European regulations, usually by completing two-month to four-month internships in German authorities at the federal, state or local levels or at institutions in the economy and civil society and working as visiting colleagues. These stays are planned and implemented essentially in accordance with the fellows' ideas and expectations. The stay is complemented by intensive seminar phases: thus at the start the participants receive a comprehensive introduction to the state and society of Germany in Stuttgart and Berlin; they attend further training in leadership skills at a seminar in January; and they experience the institutions



Markus Lux



Gereon Schuch

and players of the European Union in Brussels in March/April. Get-togethers to prepare, take stock and exchange experiences round off the seminar offerings. In the process, the Kolleg fellows meet each other and participants in other foundation fellowship programs on a regular basis. This connection with other programs fostering international young academics enables a broad network of contacts. The Goerdeler-Kolleg fellows also serve as “ambassadors” of their countries, communicating information about their home administrations and their home countries to their German partners.

Conducting such a program would certainly not be possible without the assistance of competent partner institutions. For many years, the most important partner of the Goerdeler-Kolleg has been the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP). Since 2007, the DGAP has also established the Center for Central and Eastern Europe of the Robert Bosch Stiftung. In the founding patron’s spirit of understanding among nations, the Center runs discussions, seminars and meetings with experts and background discussions on current political developments in Central and Eastern Europe. Several of the Robert Bosch Stiftung’s programs are supervised by the Center. This includes preparation and execution of the seminars of the Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg in Berlin, Stuttgart and Brussels. In addition, the foundation works closely with the DGAP in setting up the program, supporting the visiting fellows and coordinating the internships of the Goerdeler-Kolleg.

Since 2001, 165 visiting fellows have benefited from the fellowship program; in most instances, they have returned to institutions in the public sector, some of them to EU institutions in Brussels. Many of them make use of the contacts to German colleagues and other former visiting fellows, thus accessing a functioning network. The Alumni Association SKARB, founded in 2002, organizes seminars and meetings for alumni and interested third parties once or twice a year. These regular get-togethers cement the contacts among the alumni and serve the program’s further development, as the program itself receives a significant impetus on an ongoing basis through the active collaboration of the fellows and the alumni. By the same token, the alumni are called upon to share the knowledge they have acquired in Germany and the experience they have gathered in their home institutions. That this can work beyond the borders of their destination countries was impressively proven with an advanced training program for administration employees from the Western Ukraine, supported by Goerdeler-Kolleg alumni during their internships in Poland, Hungary and Slovakia. When cooperating with Central European authorities and institutions in the public sector, the German guest

institutions are also increasingly making use of their contacts to the Kolleg fellows who have returned to their countries of origin.

The participants' experiences and the outcome of the numerous evaluations lead to ongoing further development of the program. For instance, the college character of the program was enhanced with optimized training sessions and seminars. While extending geographically to new target countries, an extension of the target group also took place; by now, the group extends far beyond pure administration and also includes societally relevant institutions like non-governmental organizations, public companies and educational establishments. In addition, the cooperation with the DGAP was intensified to contribute to the advancement and networking of future decision-makers and young scholars from Central Europe, Eastern Europe and Germany. In the future, an emphasis will be placed on the young scholars' professional background and task areas. In this way, it is conceivable to link the internship with specific participant projects in their originating institutions, as is a specific topic that would change each year as framework for the invitation to the Goerdeler-Kolleg.

Towards the outside world, the most obvious sign of the change was renaming the institution "Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg" in May 2007. The name serves to commemorate the excellent administrator and mayor of Leipzig, Carl Friedrich Goerdeler, who worked for Bosch from 1937 until he was executed as one of the



Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg fellows



leading heads of the “July 20th plot” in 1945. Robert Bosch, Theodor Heuss and Carl Friedrich Goerdeler were banded together by shared basic beliefs that shaped their sense of what is right and wrong and challenged their moral courage. A willingness to take on societal responsibility and actively shape the public space in the international context also characterizes the program’s participants. Thus the name Carl Friedrich Goerdeler-Kolleg is addressed not just towards future participants, but also expressly as a distinction for the activities of the alumni.



Prof. Dr. Joachim Rogall and Dr. Heiner Gutberlet (from the left) when presenting certificates to the fellows

## Carl Friedrich Goerdeler and Robert Bosch

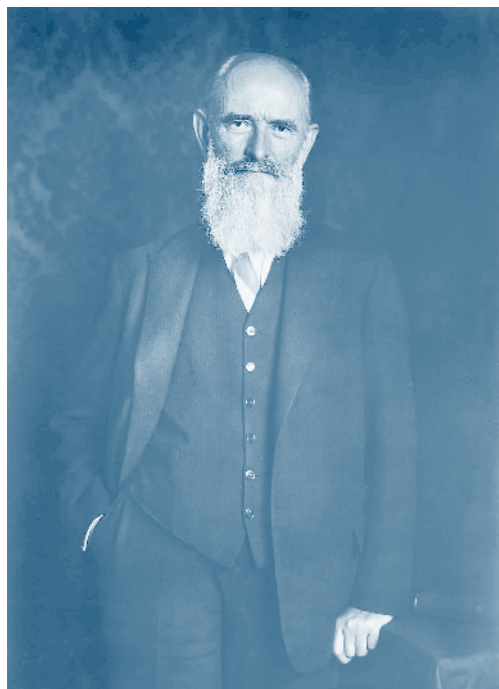
by Dr. Sabine Gillmann, historian

In the time after the National Socialists seized power, Carl Friedrich Goerdeler, local and Reich politician who was later called the “motor of the resistance,”<sup>1</sup> contracted a connection that may appear astonishing in retrospect: he worked for the Bosch Company, making use of this appointment to expand his connections with foreign countries. This connection is astonishing because at first nothing seemed to link the two men. Even just a quick glance at the photos from the 1930’s shows two very different characters: on the one hand you see Bosch, over 70 years old, with a full beard and posed informally: a southern German democratic entrepreneur in the social-liberal tradition of Friedrich Naumann. On the other hand you see Goerdeler, just turned 50, clean-shaven in a typical passport photo pose: a Prussian civil servant and administrative lawyer from the German national camp.

At first glance, there was no common ground between Carl Goerdeler and Robert Bosch. Nonetheless, the Bosch Company financed Goerdeler in the years between



Sabine Gillmann



Robert Bosch and Carl Friedrich Goerdeler

1 The designation of Goerdeler as the “head and motor” of the group of civilian conspirators derives from the sentence of the People’s Court dated 8 September 1944 and was later taken over in academic research. Cf. the sentence of the People’s Court dated 8 September 1944; reprinted in Hans-Adolf Jacobsen (editor), *Opposition gegen Hitler und der Staatsstreich vom 20. Juli 1944. Geheime Dokumente aus dem ehemaligen Reichssicherheitshauptamt*, 2 vol., special edition. Stuttgart 1989, p. 533 et seq. Cf. also Ger van Roon, *Widerstand im Dritten Reich. Ein Überblick*. 6th revised edition, Munich 1994, p. 132.

1937 and 1945 and enabled him to conduct his resistance activities during the Second World War. Despite the more than 20-year age difference, despite the differing geographical and social origins, despite their different political opinions, Bosch and Goerdeler created a bond that will be examined more closely in the following against the backdrop of Carl Goerdeler's biography. To this end, let us consider the three most important turning points of this time period: the end of the First World War 1918–19, the National Socialist takeover of power in 1933, and the beginning of the Second World War with the German invasion of Poland in 1939. Where are Goerdeler and Bosch to be classified in these historical contexts; what opinions did they hold at these moments; and how did they view the events? And while searching for answers to these questions, finally, the question about the similarities between the two men will be pursued. What induced them to go into a connection that appears to us at first so very improbable?

#### The End of the First World War

At the end of the First World War, before the Treaty of Versailles was signed, Robert Bosch was already 58 years old, and his »Werkstätte für Feinmechanik und Elektrotechnik« [Workshop for Precision Mechanics and Electrical Engineering] had become the leading large firm in the German electrical industry: he employed more than 7,000 laborers and white-collar employees. Bosch was a typical patriarchal entrepreneur, who felt himself socially beholden to his workers but in return demanded achievement and obedience from them. His social management policies, in a manner of speaking as an alternative to the socialist class struggle, included task wages and overtime pay, from 1906 onwards an 8-hour working day, also social protection and professional training offerings for his workers. He was interested in socialism—the moderate variant of majority social democracy; he was left-liberal and a convinced democrat. He had no sympathies whatsoever for Emperor Wilhelm II, considered the world war a calamity and used the bulk of his war gains to finance the Neckar Canal and charitable foundations. Bosch was indeed a nationalist, but moderate through his support of the League of Nations founded in 1920. As a supporter of the left-liberal Deutsche Demokratische Partei [German Democratic Party], he defended the Weimar Republic against attacks from the right, advocated German-French cooperation and hoped for a European Community. Bosch engaged himself for the understanding among nations and in educational policy; he was one of the main patrons of the Hochschule für Politik [Institute of Politics] in Berlin.<sup>2</sup>

2 For more on Bosch's career in the German empire, cf. the still most reliable biography by Theodor Heuss: *Robert Bosch. Leben und Leistung*. 10th edition Stuttgart 1987. About Bosch's engagement in the Weimar Republic cf. also Joachim Scholtyseck: *Robert Bosch und der liberale Widerstand gegen Hitler 1933 bis 1945*, Munich 1999, p. 87 et seq.

Carl Goerdeler was more than 20 years younger than Bosch—born in West Prussia in 1884, he spent his school and university years in East Prussia. His father was the third family generation of lawyers working in the Prussian civil service, and Carl Goerdeler followed the same path. After finishing his studies he entered local politics; he experienced the First World War as field officer on the Eastern front.

After his demobilization in February 1919, the imminent cession of his homeland West Prussia to Poland as a consequence of the Versailles Treaty induced him to get politically involved. In mid-June 1919, Goerdeler entered the crucial battle around appealing the Allied conditions of peace, and he was instrumentally involved in preparing the “Aktion Frühlingssonne” [“Spring Sun” Action]: An advance of the German army and volunteer troops to Warsaw was planned, with the intention of ushering in the conquest of all of Poland. Goerdeler represented an extreme position in the constellation, adopting the demand for a “military prostration of Poland” and thus going along with the military officers’ most extensive planning.

Unlike his comrades-in-arms, who turned away from the young republic after such plans failed and the peace treaty was signed, Goerdeler reacted pragmatically: from his basic national-conservative outlook and stemming from the Prussian civil servant tradition, Goerdeler found his way to a government-friendly attitude; a fundamental rejection remained alien to him.<sup>3</sup>

Once again by way of comparison: in the time immediately after the war, we see Bosch as a left-liberal democrat, who welcomes the Weimar Republic and supports the Deutsche Demokratische Partei [German Democratic Party]; he promotes educational institutions and organizations fostering international understanding. At the same time we see Goerdeler, who can resign himself to the new republic only with an effort and who will become a so-called “rational republican”; he joins the Deutschnationale Volkspartei [German National People’s Party], thus initially committing himself to the right fringe of the republic’s spectrum of parties.

### The National Socialist Seizure of Power

We will consider the turning point of the National Socialist seizure of power in 1933 against the backdrop of the same questions as 1919: Where do Bosch and Goerdeler stand now, and what opinions do they hold in this time of upheaval?

When Hitler became Reich Chancellor, Robert Bosch was preoccupied with completely different activities: in the winter of 1932, he once and for all reached the

3 On Goerdeler’s participation in the “Spring Sun Action” cf. his report about it in BAK, N 1113, Vol. 21.

conviction that the official diplomatic efforts of Germany and France at reconciliation had to be promoted through personal dedication. In December he traveled to a meeting with like-minded French industrialists, from which he returned in a very optimistic frame of mind. His declared goal was a “close federation” of the two nations, which was intended to smooth the way to a European economic block. For Bosch, the German-French agreement was thus an important prerequisite for a more comprehensive international understanding. At the same time he declared in a personal letter: “I am less interested in the things going on domestically, probably simply for the reason that I see I cannot help there at all.” His attention at this time was so strongly focused on his foreign policy efforts that he practically blocked out domestic policy events. In addition, there were errors of judgment, as when Bosch initially made plans to win Hitler over for his politics of understanding: in February 1933 he wrote that the right moment had come for Hitler to make an offer of understanding to France.<sup>4</sup>

Bosch had never come to grips with the propaganda of the National Socialists; his political judgment was directed more towards individual politicians. He may well have become more critical of German parliamentarianism, as did many others towards the end of the Weimar Republic, but he was nonetheless fundamentally optimistic, the more so as he saw the end of the economic crisis within reach. However, the appointment of a National Socialist state government in Württemberg in March 1933, resulting in planned and arbitrary persecutions, suspensions from office and arrests, did bring Bosch face to face with the changed political situation. For some time it was discussed in the company’s board of directors whether Bosch should go abroad to evade a possible arrest. Bosch feared reprisals, particularly from Württemberg’s National Socialists. However, he believed Hitler’s appeasing words at first, and into the following years, it was a mixture of being taken in and deluding himself. The first years under National Socialism are characterized by ambivalence, in which criticism and praise, rejection and acceptance were mixed.<sup>5</sup>

In the meanwhile, Carl Goerdeler first went to Königsberg as Second Mayor; from 1930 he was Mayor of Leipzig. After the National Socialist takeover of power on January 30, 1933, he remained in office, although he was one of the few metropolitan mayors who was not a member of the NSDAP. While the new government of the German Reich courted him to work with it in both economic policy and local constitutional law, working together with the local National Socialists in Leipzig proved to be increasingly difficult. Goerdeler got into increasing tension with the

4 Cf. letter from Robert Bosch to Wilhelm Keppler; quoted from Heuss, *Robert Bosch* (note 2), p. 567.

5 Scholtyseck, *Robert Bosch* (note 2), p. 120.

party members, particularly with his deputy, who called himself the “first responsible party member in Town Hall.” As Goerdeler found himself in ever greater opposition to the government of the Reich, his possibilities to win recognition in Leipzig worsened. On November 25, 1936, when the Mendelssohn-Bartholdy monument was removed from in front of the Leipzig Gewandhaus [Concert Hall] during his absence and against his explicit instructions, Goerdeler drew the consequences and submitted his petition of resignation.<sup>6</sup>

Once again by way of comparison: in the phase of the takeover of power, we see Bosch strongly withdrawn from domestic politics; there are even reports that describe him as “surprised” by the seizure of power. He continues to be intensely involved in educational policy projects and in the policy of understanding with France. Both Bosch and Goerdeler are ambivalent towards the new regime. In both cases, it is clear that they first have greater difficulties with the local National Socialists than with the Reich government. Goerdeler even hoped at first to have a stronger say in the policies of the Reich.

#### The Beginning of the Cooperation between Bosch and Goerdeler

There are various policy fields in which Goerdeler cooperated with the Nazi regime: at first there was a reform of the Municipal Code in 1933–34, with which



Dr. Sabine Gillmann during her speech about Carl Friedrich Goerdeler and Robert Bosch

<sup>6</sup> Cf. on this in detail Ines Reich: *Carl Friedrich Goerdeler. Ein Oberbürgermeister gegen den NS-Staat*, Cologne and others 1997, p. 257 et seq.

he wanted to force through an authoritarian constitution of the mayor's office. His assistance, however, did not lead to the results he had hoped for, and he was very critical of the German Municipal Code of January 1935. This was his first cooperation with the National Socialist government, and it ended with disillusionment. He also resigned from his function as price commissar in July 1935 with the sobering insight that it was not possible to reach any agreement about his competences with the competing Reich authorities. A year later, in the summer of 1936, he was forced to recognize that he would not be able to prevail with his liberal economic convictions in the increasingly dirigiste Nazi economic policy making.<sup>7</sup>

Goerdeler's disaffection from the Nazi regime in the second half of the 1930's emanated from both sides: at first the National Socialists availed themselves of both Goerdeler's eminence and his expertise in economic and local policy matters. Only once it became clear that he would engage with the regime's policies in only a limited way, and only when the regime was sufficiently consolidated, was the rupture with Goerdeler condoned, or in fact even forced. Right from the start, Goerdeler had conflated hopes and fears in equal measure with the National Socialist seizure of power: hope of an increasing scope of influence for himself, fears that were quickly confirmed. At the time of the seizure of power he was almost 50 years old, at the height of his career—he was a politician who wanted to have a say and influence. Then too, an attitude of refusal was alien to him as a Prussian official and he also had considerable financial obligations as the father of a family. His basic attitude did not change at first, even after 1936, after Goerdeler had fallen out of favor with the government of the Reich and had resigned from his prestigious position as mayor of Leipzig. External circumstances changed: at the age of 52 he had to cast about for a new position.

Already in the spring of 1936, Goerdeler was negotiating about his admittance to the three-man Krupp board of directors, but this failed due to Hitler's objection. From the summer of 1936, Goerdeler was also in contact with representatives of the Bosch Company; this contact came about via Theodor Bäuerle, with whom Goerdeler had been familiar since the 1920s and who was charged by Bosch with heading up institutions for adult education. Shortly after Krupp retracted their offer, an informal contractual relationship was established between Goerdeler and Robert Bosch and Goerdeler became an advisor to the company in financial issues and their representative to the Berlin authorities, though without sharply defined obligations.<sup>8</sup> How did it happen that Hitler obstructed Goerdeler's hiring at Krupp,

7 Cf. *Politische Schriften und Briefe Carl Friedrich Goerdelers*, edited by Sabine Gillmann, Hans Mommsen, München 2003, p. 261 et seq.

8 Cf. the memorandum from Hans Walz, »*Meine Mitwirkung an der Aktion Goerdelers*«, in: *Widerstand und Erinnerung. Neue Berichte und Dokumente vom inneren Kampf gegen das Hitler-Regime*, edited by Otto Kopp, Stuttgart 1966, pp. 95–120.

but accepted his appointment at Bosch? This fact can probably only be explained with the differing mentality of the two entrepreneurs: in pre-emptive obedience Krupp had asked Hitler whether engaging Goerdeler would meet his approval. Such subordinate behavior was alien to Bosch. Upon hiring Goerdeler, he presented the National Socialist rulers with a *fait accompli*.<sup>9</sup>

Supported by Robert Bosch and his oppositional circle in Stuttgart, Goerdeler ventured on extended journeys abroad in the years before the war to build up connections and influence European policies toward Germany as he saw fit. In lengthy reports to Göring and Hitler, he warned at the same time against underestimating England and France and pointed out the negative impact abroad of Nazi policies regarding the church and the Jews.<sup>10</sup>

#### The Outbreak of the Second World War

With the German invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939 our last turning point arrives, the beginning of the Second World War. Bosch had hoped until the very end not to have to live to see a repeat of the First World War. The failure of his hopes for peace also meant the failure of his decades of work for the understanding among nations, since he was certain that the war would hardly end with a victory over Poland. The outbreak of war, however, also signified for Bosch the necessity to safeguard his assets held abroad—here Goerdeler played an important role as mediator; he was also able to take an opportunity to keep alive the image of an “other Germany” on his journeys abroad.<sup>11</sup>

Even during the spring and early summer of 1939, Goerdeler had hoped through foreign interventions to have a moderating impact on the National Socialist politics and thus to stave off imminent war. At the same time, from 1939 he increasingly strived to build up contacts with other critics of the regime. Not least because of Goerdeler’s untiring search for contact, other personalities and groups, linked at first primarily by their opposition to war, rallied around the three-man group of Carl Goerdeler, Ludwig Beck and Ulrich v. Hassell. While the attempts to prevent an expansion of war were at first supported by the emerging military opposition its attitude changed after the victory over France.

Goerdeler’s memorandums of 1940 are to be read against the backdrop of the euphoria of victory in Germany; he held to his opposition to war and criticized the National Socialist conduct of war and occupation policy quite strongly. His status

<sup>9</sup> Cf. on this the correspondence between Gustav Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach and the Chancellery of the Reich; HA Krupp, FAH 4 E 154.

<sup>10</sup> A selection of the travel accounts is printed in *Politische Schriften und Briefe Carl Friedrich Goerdelers*, p. 525 et seq.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.



reports from the second half of 1940 represent unusually severe opinions for the period of successful National Socialist warfare and significantly differentiate him from other conservative critics of the regime, such as von Hassell or Popitz. While the Prussian Minister of Finance Johannes Popitz was leaning towards the Reich's National Socialist thinking from the constitutional law side, von Hassell, who was influenced by the thought of Central Europe, set his sights on a European reorganization in which southeast Europe was to serve as an economic "Extended Region" of the German Reich. In contrast, in his status reports Goerdeler attempted to draft a positive counter-image to the Nazi regime with his plans for a European Union.<sup>12</sup>

We refer once again to Goerdeler's participation in an attempted "military prostration of Poland" in the year 1919—21 years later, when just this demand had been fulfilled by the German armed forces, one can read something different in Goerdeler:

*»Someone who has brought about the conditions in administration and economy, in law and culture, in the upbringing of youth and in morals in his own country—conditions which have yet to be described separately—or someone who has simply allowed these to develop, according to an immutable law of nature does not become wise and moderate after his conquest, but rather ever more ambitious, brutal and obsessed with conquest. The plans for forcible relocations in Poland, Norway, Alsace-Lorraine and northern France are known. The scheme of creating a density of population in poor, industry-less East Poland corresponding to that of Belgium, thus implying a slow death by starvation, of pressing the Poles down with a primitive school education restricted to the ages of 7 to 12, without middle and higher schools, is the most diabolical that has ever been systematically devised in the history of mankind. (...) A foreign policy situation is not equivalent to a military situation. Militarily, additional, indeed the most extreme successes may be possible. For the future of our people, these successes have lost their significance. Success will only be determined by whether we succeed in time in establishing morality, justice and truth in public order, finances and economy. What foreign policy fruit can be picked ensues from the proper treatment of all other peoples, the timely dying away of the feelings of hate and contempt which are erupting around us.»<sup>13</sup>*

Thus already in November 1940, Goerdeler prognosticated that the war, irrespective of its outcome, would have to end in catastrophe. A military victory on Germany's part would be meaningless in view of the stated moral breakdown; a

12 Cf. on this also in detail Sabine Gillmann, *Die Europapläne Carl Goerdelers. Neuordnungsvorstellungen im nationalkonservativen Widerstand zwischen territorialer Revision und europäischer Integration*, in: Thomas Sandkühler (ed.): *Europäische Integration. Deutsche Hegemonialpolitik gegenüber Westeuropa 1920–1960*, Göttingen 2002, p. 77 et seq. (= *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus*, Vol. 18).

13 The memorandum is printed in its entirety in: *Politische Schriften und Briefe Carl Friedrich Goerdelers* (note 7), pp. 769–777, and here pp. 29–36.

military defeat of Germany would have terrible consequences given how warfare and occupation policy had been conducted.

The status reports from 1940 signify a turning point in Goerdeler's writings in several respects: firstly, they signal a final step towards resistance to the Nazi regime. Goerdeler had indeed already acted in opposition during the preceding years through his resignation in Leipzig, his increasing criticism of the regime and through the aims of his journeys abroad; but with the German invasion of Poland the juncture has been reached at which he turns away completely from the regime. Secondly, the 1940 status reports show Goerdeler's intensified turn towards Europe, towards plans for a European Community. He expanded these plans in the following years. The federative element was constitutive in them—the voluntary federation of equal states, whose representation towards the outside world was to be shaped in an increasingly joint fashion, while national sovereign powers decreased in significance. Here too there were similarities with Robert Bosch's views. The third point to emphasize here is the moral integrity that speaks from Goerdeler's writings. One should keep in mind that Goerdeler had fought and argued against the Polish “corridor” and the division of his Prussian homeland after the Versailles Treaty. 20 years later, once his aim has been achieved with the German invasion of Poland, he orients himself against it and refuses to take part in the German euphoria of victory. A moral-ethical basis in accordance with the rule of law becomes evident in Goerdeler, something which is very impressive.

Even though Goerdeler's travels naturally decreased during the war years, he remained relatively mobile through his position for Bosch. His conviction that under the National Socialist regime the war could not—and should not—be won resulted in the composition of numerous texts with which he hoped to win allies against the regime.

#### Bosch's Death and Goerdeler's Execution

In September 1941, Bosch celebrated his 80th birthday in Baden-Baden, a celebration to which Goerdeler was also invited. For the celebration, Goerdeler wrote a commemorative speech for Bosch in which he honored his life's work.<sup>14</sup> Only a few months later, Bosch fell ill; he then died in March 1942. In the years before, he had already increasingly withdrawn from the company management so that his death did not signify any change in company policies. The company's close connection to Goerdeler also persisted and the personal loss did not bring about any change in Goerdeler's employment relationship.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Carl Friedrich Goerdeler, Robert Bosch zum 80. Geburtstag, in: *Die Deutsche Rundschau* (October 1941); a copy of the essay can be found in Goerdeler's estate in the German Federal Archive (BAK N 1113/39, Vol. 4).

While Goerdeler was setting out and explaining his concepts for a new structure of the state to his fellow conspirators, from 1943 onwards he strived increasingly to find attentive ears among the Allies. With writings to the British government, he aimed to provide the foreign policy basis for his plans for a new domestic political order. In particular, he targeted the retraction of the demand for unconditional surrender made by the Allies at the Casablanca Conference in January 1943.<sup>15</sup>

In the course of the years 1942 and 1943, a series of documents were developed that were intended to provide a basis for the planned takeover of government. The group of civilian conspirators around Goerdeler drafted lists for the political representatives and liaison officers for the military districts and formulated first announcements of the revolutionary government. These were programmatic bulletins, tantamount to manifestos for the time after the planned takeover of government. While from the civilian side, the preparations were thus concluded for a coup d'état, the conspirators waited for the military spark.<sup>16</sup>

Another year and a half passed, and the military situation in National Socialist Germany got significantly worse before the military actually became active. Goerdeler was planned as the new Chancellor for the time after the assassination on July 20, 1944. The events are well-known—the assassination attempt failed, the planned overthrow of the government was uncovered and Goerdeler was forced to flee. It can be seen in the so-called “Kaltenbrunner-Berichte” [Kaltenbrunner Reports] that Goerdeler’s position within the civilian conspiracy was known to the Nazi regime by July 25 at the latest. From August 1, 1944, a bounty of a million Reichsmark was placed for his apprehension; on August 12—by then Goerdeler was staying in East Prussia—he was recognized and immediately arrested. Goerdeler was sentenced to death by the People’s Court on September 8, 1944 as a “traitor” and “political war spy.” While the death sentences against his co-defendants Ulrich von Hassell, Paul Lejeune-Jung and Josef Wirmer were carried out on the afternoon of the very same day, almost five months of harsh imprisonment in the Gestapo prison in Prinz-Albrecht-Straße in Berlin passed until Goerdeler’s execution.<sup>17</sup>

15 Cf. Goerdeler’s position paper for the British government; printed in: *Politische Schriften und Briefe Carl Friedrich Goerdelers* (note 7), pp. 944–949.

16 The conviction of the civilian group of plotters that there would be no course of action for them without a military spark becomes clear in an exemplary way in the diaries of Goerdeler’s co-conspirator Ulrich v. Hassell. Cf. for instance the diary entry from April 20, 1943; Ulrich v. Hassell: *Die Hassell-Tagebücher 1938–1944. Aufzeichnungen vom Andern Deutschland*. Edition revised and expanded acc. to the manuscript with the cooperation of Klaus Peter Reiß, ed. by Friedrich Freiherr Hiller von Gaertringen, Berlin 1988, p. 363.

17 Cf. the sentence of the People’s Court of September 8, 1944, loc. cit. (note 1). Cf. also Otto Thierack’s telegraphed message to Martin Bormann dated September 8, 1944; BAB, NJ 17548, Vol. 2.

Goerdeler apparently received news while he was imprisoned that his entire family had been taken into “Sippenhaft” [a form of collective responsibility whereby



Robert Bosch

family members are liable for the misdeeds of their relatives]. He knew that his assets had been confiscated and that he would leave his family destitute. Apparently he was also informed that his grandchildren—both infants—had been deported. In addition to the emotional torments that anxiety about his family must have caused him, there were physical deprivations. From the reports of survivors, Goerdeler’s descriptions of the external conditions have been confirmed: solitary confinement and inadequate provisions, blinding light that shined in the cells all night, the constant use of handcuffs and the psychological wearing down through targeted leaking of information. During his incarceration, Goerdeler, like his detained fellow conspirator Johannes Popitz, wrote a series of memoranda upon the request of the Nazi regime. He was to answer questions on reconstruction and write memoranda on price control and setting up administration. Through his writing, Goerdeler was probably hoping for a deferment of the execution of his death sentence, which, with a rapid victory by the Allies, could have led to his liberation; in addition, the activity gave him the possibility to draw up secret notes, in which he again summarized his ideas and cleared himself against his conviction as a “war spy.” During his long incarceration, Goerdeler also wrote an extensive series of private writings. In them, he grappled with the dictatorship and his own role in it, described the aims of the group of conspirators and summarized his

ideas about a new political order. In all his writings, his concern about his family also emerges—besides the request to German and foreign friends to assist his family, financial arrangements and suggestions for his descendants can also be found.<sup>18</sup> As one of the last main parties involved in the July 20, 1944 conspiracy, Carl Goerdeler was executed in Berlin-Plötzensee on February 2, 1945.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, we return once again to the initial question: What do the conservative Prussian civil servant Carl Goerdeler and the left-liberal industrialist Robert Bosch have in common?

Some of their common ground should have become clear in this essay; it can be recapitulated on the basis of the commemorative speech that Goerdeler held for Bosch's 80th birthday in September 1941, a few months before Bosch's death:

Initially, the two were linked by their liberal economic mindset. Goerdeler emphasized in his writings that free competition and individual initiative were the basic preconditions for a flourishing economy. He stressed these aspects as well in his commemorative speech as Bosch's "secret of success": individual achievement as criterion for possibilities to advance and receive further training, task wages and an upbringing towards a joy in responsibility. The two of them also called for a free economic system from an international perspective: the ideal image was an open world economy with free competition.

The second commonality was their dedication to international understanding between nations—Bosch advocated it from the end of the First World War; for Goerdeler the realization came only later, during his journeys abroad, before and during the Second World War.

As the third and most important common element between the two of them, I see an ability to know right from wrong, one that they continued to assert unwaveringly even under the Nazi regime. The Nazi regime was indeed based on written texts with the formal quality of law, starting with the "Enabling Act" of 1933. What is intended with the term "sense of right and wrong" for Goerdeler and Bosch is their conviction that there is an autonomous validity and sovereignty of law. It was their belief in this autonomy of the law that led to them to turn away from unlawful appropriation of the law by the National Socialists. The sovereignty of the law was invoked by both of them against the claims set by the state.

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<sup>18</sup> A selection of Goerdeler's late writings is printed in: *Politische Schriften und Briefe Carl Friedrich Goerdelers* (note 7), p. 1192 et seq.

Goerdeler corroborated this legal opinion in his commemorative speech for Robert Bosch, in which he summarized his conviction:

*“A man of character can, like all great men in German history, only stand up for law and freedom, for law and the freedom of the individual, for law and the freedom of the people. What he wants to accomplish for his own people, he must accord to other peoples as well, in accordance with eternal laws.”<sup>19</sup>*

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Carl Friedrich Goerdeler: *Robert Bosch zum 80. Geburtstag* (note 14); a copy of the essay can be found in Goerdeler's estate in the German Federal Archive (BAK N 1113/39, Vol. 4).



## Moral State of Affairs

Typewritten memorandum by Carl Friedrich Goerdeler<sup>1</sup>

1 July 1940

The Wehrmacht has proven, thanks to excellent planning by the General Staff, thanks to brilliant leadership, thanks to the soldiers' courage and not least thanks to the most ruthless deployment of destructive technology, what they are able to achieve. This victory gives them great power and even greater responsibility.<sup>2</sup>

Wars may not be fought for their own sake. Moltke himself emphasized this, Clausewitz and all the great statesmen and military leaders have acknowledged it,<sup>3</sup> reason and a sense of responsibility tell us this. The aim is always only honorable and happy peace. The honor is contained in our respect for ourselves, in our independence from alien will. Peace is happy that leads to an adequate status of life upon exerting all one's efforts, enables one to improve it, ensures freedom of conscience and progress of science, keeps emotional powers in balance and enables the development of real culture: only that peace will be lasting in which man does not slacken and does not forget that he is subject to the commandments and the authority of God.

We are more distant from such a peace today than ever; it is necessary to attain full, albeit dreadful clarity about this. This is because this war is not serving a well-planned build-up, but rather fantastic plans, last entertained in Napoleon's times. This war would not be needed at all to have that type of peace. It can be substanti-

- 1 This memorandum is cited in accordance with: *Politische Schriften und Briefe Carl Friedrich Goerdelers*, ed. by Sabine Gillmann, Hans Mommsen, Munich 2003. Goerdeler did not give it a title; in later writings, however, he refers to it by the name "Moral State of Affairs."
- 2 At the time this memorandum originated, the German Armed Forces was registering victories on all fronts: Poland, Norway, Holland and Belgium had been conquered, and Denmark had been occupied without a struggle; France was divided into occupied and unoccupied parts with a conservative authoritarian collaboration government. The reports of military success seemed to confirm the National Socialist Blitzkrieg strategy and gave the impression of almost unrestricted possibilities of expansion, which threw the better part of the German people into a frenzy of victory. Cf. for an overview Lothar Gruchmann, *Der Zweite Weltkrieg. Kriegführung und Politik*, 10th revised and updated edition Munich 1995, and Gerhard L. Weinberg, *Eine Welt in Waffen. Die globale Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkriegs*, Stuttgart 1995.
- 3 Helmut Graf von Moltke (1800–1891), as Prussian Field Marshal General and as head of the large General Staff, made a decisive contribution to the victories over Austria in 1866 and over France in 1870–71. Carl von Clausewitz (1780–1831), at first also a Prussian general and after the conclusion of the French-Prussian military alliance in 1812 in Russian service, was interested in military-theoretical-philosophical issues and taught at the Allgemeine Kriegsschule [General War Academy] in Berlin from 1818 onwards. With his treatise *Vom Kriege* [On War] Clausewitz argued for the primacy of political leadership as opposed to the military by characterizing war as the continuation of politics by different means. Moltke, on the other hand, like many of his contemporaries, though he accepted and adopted Clausewitz' military-theoretical explanations, granted the military sector a role more independent from the civilian sector. Moltke argued the notion of an autonomy of war, whose outbreak is indeed determined by politics but that is subordinate to all politics while it lasts. Cf. Volkmar Regling, *Grundzüge der Landkriegführung zur Zeit des Absolutismus und im 19. Jahrhundert*, in: *Deutsche Militärgeschichte*, Vol. 6, pp. 11–425; on Clausewitz pp. 307–327, on Moltke pp. 379–425, and Jan Philipp Reemtsma, *Die Idee des Vernichtungskrieges. Clausewitz – Ludendorff – Hitler*, in: Hannes Heer und Klaus Neumann (ed.), *Vernichtungskrieg. Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941–1944*, Hamburg 1995, pp. 377–401.



ated at any time that the allied western powers, at least since 1932, were prepared to reach an understanding on all the questions that are essential for us, as would have satisfied our honor and our vital force. In particular, it can be proven that Poland, placed under pressure by England, consented on August 31, 1939 to negotiate in an accommodating way about the eastern issues.<sup>4</sup> Upon comparing the forces of Germany and Poland, this accommodation could have very soon been a perfect one, as well given the allied western powers' desire for peace. But the Reich leadership preferred war, because they wanted it and had to have it.

The opinion that the English merchants want this war due to envy is a sentiment. The fact is that since 1925 precisely English merchants have been influencing the English government towards a peaceful accommodation most strongly. No businessman, and least of all an Englishman, denies that only an organic or balanced peace can revive trade and create possibilities for profit, that modern total war destroys more prosperity and possibilities of development than can be reaped in temporary profits. In the City of London of all places we have heard again and again at least until 1939 (the occupation of Czechoslovakia) that they saw in Hitler the great savior from bolshevism, the welcome destroyer of inconvenient unions and workers' demands.

In the light of the excessive and senseless hate propaganda against England, decency demands that we stand up for those Englishmen who have proven to be honorable, peace-seeking people—and that is the great majority. The claim that one must crush England to have peace in Europe is particularly contrary to truth and senseless. Name a war wanted by England before 1914 that was directed against German interests. Friedrich the Great won his wars against Austria through the alliance with England. The liberation of Prussia from Napoleonic subjugation would not have been possible or would only have been possible later or would not have been possible so completely without the cooperation of England based on sharing the same interests; England did not hold it against Prussia that they were compelled by Napoleon to be in official enmity against England in 1807–13. The quick and successful consummation of the war of 1870–71 would not be conceivable without England's favorable neutrality. Precisely the 19th century proved that a long-lasting, happy peace was possible in Europe by drawing

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<sup>4</sup> Despite the termination of the German-Polish Non-Aggression Pact in April 1939 as well as the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact concluded four months later, Poland appeared very willing to compromise even at the end of August. It was already evident to contemporary observers that Great Britain's feverish attempts at mediation even on August 31, 1939 fell through due almost exclusively to the provocative behavior of the National Socialists. Cf. the very detailed depiction of the sequence of negotiations in the last days of August in Horst Rohde, *Hitlers Erster »Blitzkrieg« und seine Auswirkungen auf Nordosteuropa*, in: Klaus A. Maier, Horst Rohde, Bernd Stegmann and Hans Umbreit, *Die Errichtung der Hegemonie auf dem Europäischen Kontinent*, Stuttgart 1979, p. 85 et seq.

on England.<sup>5</sup> In conclusion, it can assuredly be proven from the archives and the recollections of contemporaries which are awaiting publication that since the turn of the century England has sought and attempted to create a basic understanding numerous times, indeed even a cooperative alliance in a way that would certainly not impede Germany's development.

In the eyes of history, it will not be possible to place the responsibility for this war on others; the German Reich government wanted it and consciously conjured it up. It will also be proven that there is no national interest in obliterating this matter of fact. Had England and France remained neutral, they would have fallen under the knife in 1940 or 1941 without fail. This is because the leadership of the Reich has been following plans of conquest since 1938, plans which only fools could deny would have to come into conflict with France's and England's vital interests. This leadership, not Germany, was at its wits' end financially and economically. Its financial and economic policy—which defy all laws of nature and reason—had led us, as could be predicted, into scarcity and price increases. This was already perceptible from 1938 onwards. Even without war, they would have had to implement [food ration] cards last winter and let the people freeze. As the consequence of war, a people puts up with such a situation for some time; as the contents of peacetime such a situation drives them to dissatisfaction and ultimately to turning away. No one knows this better than the current rulers. Instead of doing their patriotic duty of returning to reason or relinquishing power, they chose war, thus setting down the path of all such dictatorships.

Let us allege that the island of England too will be wrestled down; let us allege that America is not conducting the war, namely that they're asleep; let us allege that the others are signing some type of peace; indeed let us allege that we are repelling or overthrowing bolshevism. Let us allege that Germany has military control over the region from the North Cape to the Cape of Good Hope, from the Atlantic to the Dnieper or the Ural, that the German people can wage the wars necessary to do this and display the power necessary for this on an ongoing basis without depletion and without emotional damage. Even with this optimum of military successes and political displays of power, the European peoples living in this region could only cover the necessities of life—after essentially 10–20 years—if all nations in this region were to work wonders. This, however, is only

5 While Goerdeler's appraisal of the German-British relationship in the 19th century is comprehensible, the Prussian-Austrian Wars under Friedrich the Great are if anything an unfortunate example. The British victory over France in 1743 and the decision of the War of the Austrian Secession in Maria Theresia's favor provoked the Second Silesian War between Austria and Prussia in 1744–45. The British participation in the Seven Years' War (1756–63) on Prussia's side was likewise not unproblematic, as Great Britain through separate peace negotiations with France and through the discontinuation of subsidy payments to Prussia significantly jeopardized Prussia's situation. Cf. in summary Hans-Joachim Schoeps, *Preußen. Geschichte eines Staates*, Frankfurt/M. und Berlin 1966, p. 62 et seq.; p. 132 et seq.; p. 238 et seq.

possible if their honor and their political freedom are preserved so that these peoples consider this wider area and a shared economy within it as serving their own best interests.

A system that in Germany lives from financial madness, from economic force, from political terror, from lawlessness and immorality, that consigns youth ever more systematically to ignorance and arrogance, that treats Christian thinking, feeling and acting with scorn and even persecutes it does not think about such an inventive structure of free peoples under German leadership.

The plans for forcible relocations in Poland, Norway, Alsace-Lorraine and northern France are known.<sup>6</sup> The scheme of creating a density of population in poor, industry-less East Poland corresponding to that of Belgium, thus implying a slow death by starvation, of pressing down on Poland with a primitive school education restricted to the ages of 7 to 12, without middle and higher schools, is the most diabolical that has ever been systematically devised in the history of mankind.<sup>7</sup>

Every human community, whether family, state or union of peoples, requires three preconditions: balance in revenues and expenses; law in the hands of independent judges; immutable morality based on religion. No living German is able to prove that even just one of these three prerequisites exists in Germany today. But if even just one of them is lacking, breakdown in accordance with the law anchored in this nature by God is completely certain sooner or later. A tyrant can, as proven by history and by psychological observation, always erect only a tyranny; someone

6 The National Socialist objective of a reorganization of Europe linked an aggressive expansionism with biological-racist politics of national character. While eastern Europe, particularly Poland, was to serve as a new "settlement area" for Germans abroad, the north and west of Europe were planned as extension of the "Germanic Reich." The resettlement policies in the actual sense as a progression of expulsion, extermination of unwanted and settlement of wanted segments of the population were, however, strongly concentrated on Poland (right) from the start; cf. on this in detail Götz Aly, *»Endlösung«. Völkerverschiebung und der Mord an den europäischen Juden*, Frankfurt/M. 1995. In Alsace-Lorraine and in occupied northern France, it was first the practice to "evacuate" unwanted groups of persons (besides Jews, Gypsies and others, this included criminals "of foreign race," homeless people and anti-German agitators) into the southern French area of the Vichy government; on this in detail Lothar Kettenacker, *Nationalsozialistische Volkstumspolitik im Elsaß*, Stuttgart 1973, especially pp. 249–267. In Scandinavia, on the other hand, which was defined as part of the "northern European common destiny," severe coercive measures constituted an exception. Due to the varying status of the individual Scandinavian countries—while Denmark and Norway were occupied, Finland was at first an ally and Sweden maintained its neutrality—it was also easier for endangered segments of the population to escape National Socialist persecution. Cf. Hans-Dietrich Looock, *Nordeuropa zwischen Außenpolitik und »großgermanischer« Innenpolitik*, in: Funke, *Hitler, Deutschland und die Mächte*, pp. 684–706, and Martin Moll, *Die deutsche Propaganda in den besetzten »germanischen« Staaten. Norwegen, Dänemark und Niederlande 1940–1945. Institutionen – Themen – Forschungsprobleme*, in: Robert Bohn (ed.), *Die deutsche Herrschaft in den »germanischen« Ländern 1940–1945*, Wiesbaden 1997, pp. 209–245. In detail on Norway id.: *Reichskommissariat Norwegen. »Nationalsozialistische Neuordnung« und Kriegswirtschaft*, Munich 2000.

7 The German occupation policy in Poland aspired to the "degradation of the General Gouvernement to the reservoir of a denationalized working population, robbed of their leadership and culturally pressed down to an elementary level, half-free." Cf. in detail Martin Broszat, *Nationalsozialistische Polenpolitik 1939–1945*, Stuttgart 1961; quote from p. 22. Particularly in the west Polish regions annexed to Germany, the German rulers practiced an "education policy" that aimed at educating Polish children exclusively for a working life under German domination; cf. Bolesław Pleśniarski: *Die Vernichtung der polnischen Bildung und Erziehung in den Jahren 1939–1945*, in: Manfred Heinemann (ed.), *Erziehung und Schulung im Dritten Reich. Part 1: Kindergarten, Schule, Jugend, Berufserziehung*, Stuttgart 1980, pp. 160–175.

who has brought about the conditions in administration and economy, in law and culture, in the upbringing of youth and in morals in his own country—conditions which have yet to be described separately—or someone who has simply allowed these to develop, according to an immutable law of nature does not become wise and moderate after his conquest, but rather ever more ambitious, brutal and obsessed with conquest.

Far from only satisfying these three preconditions in Germany, the current system—which in fact only dominates thanks to the soldiers—will directly or indirectly introduce its lack of principles, laws and inhibitions into all dominated areas. Preparations are in full swing; the transfer of financial intemperateness is already comprised in its realization. Through this, however, not only are the motivation and energy of the dominated peoples ever more meager, their life status will be increasingly repressed, their hate will become even deeper, but it is also impossible to trade the products that will have to be conveyed to this region for one or two decades; by the same token, the German people's standard of living, perhaps after a short-term rebound after sucking other peoples dry, must continue to fall.

It seems indeed possible that the United States of America will make the first attempt to trade with the “new” Europe; this is in accordance with their materialistic mindset and the naïve ideas they have about the link between business and politics. Such trade would be possible for a few years, namely as long as the gold found in Europe suffices. And then this illusion, too, would fall apart, because this Europe would not fulfill those indispensable prerequisites of a state entity and of economic life, but rather would sink into poverty.

What has been done so far to initiate this situation, which is only for the moment retreating behind the military successes, and is gradually but inexorably moving even more dominantly into the foreground, is quite considerable: destruction of the intelligentsia and the German national traditions in the Baltic provinces, destruction of the intelligentsia in Poland, Bukovina and Bessarabia, confusion and imminent famine in the western Balkans, destruction of national freedom, beginnings of hardship, more or less intense devastation that of course needs to be removed with human manpower and that cannot carelessly be considered as nothing in Finland, Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium and France; beginning destruction of the economy in Switzerland, beginning sinking into poverty and impending demoralization in Italy; destruction of millions of human lives, including many women and children, destruction of happiness of millions of families in all countries mentioned, shock to morality, to concepts of honor, to law, to religious and psychological peace, a sweeping up into the leadership of brutal

natures, of opportunists and individuals lacking experience and knowledge.<sup>8</sup> That thereby the best on the German side have been disappearing for years should not be underestimated in its consequences, after already losing the most honorable and bravest men in the world war. Thus, were one to set the task of spreading bolshevism under narcosis, it would have to be resolved approximately in the style of the development of this liabilities side.

But it is not yet over. That Canada would follow the USA seems, taken superficially, tolerable; but the German element in North America would thus be squeezed into a hopeless position. It would be more appealing to the racial politician and the position of the white race were Australia, New Zealand and Dutch India to fall to Japan, even if the Japanese are currently indicating something different; that India would lapse into internal dissolution and thus finally 500 years of European accomplishment—that lay before 1933, however—would be wiped out. Or does the conquest of India perhaps beckon, the dream of all tyrants who have so far blessed Europe with their—thank God—short-term entanglements?

That is, roughly, the picture given an optimum of military successes! What, however, if one of the assumptions made on page 3 does not occur? It will be left to your consideration to clarify the consequences for each combination. They are implacable and only induce the inevitable breakdown even more quickly. Intoxicating here, for instance, would be the possibility that Bolshevism appears on the Mediterranean, while the European continent starves.

That the collapse does not drag our people and nation into its maelstrom is the task before us. It will primarily be a moral one, because without morality there might be a happy personal or state existence worth living for others, but not for Germans. If just for that reason, the first matter is to re-establish the morality that has been strongly shaken and is approaching gradual dissipation. It is based on respect for God's commandments. It has entrusted our conscience with clear orders. Let us make an end to the pernicious situation that is leading to ruin, with inexperience, insanity and crime deceiving the people of their best, namely their soul. The people can do nothing against this deceit as long as those dark forces violently keep the people distant from the real facts and thus from proper recognition of the danger under the protection of weapons. The task is not to be delayed towards the soldiers who are risking and have risked their lives for the nation and may not be abandoned in their homeland to emotional pauperization.

8 Cf. in summary on the economic exploitation through the National Socialist occupation policies Umbreit, *Kontinentalherrschaft*, pp. 121–135; 210–233. On the individual occupied states, cf. the collection of essays from Gerhard Otto, Johannes Houwink ten Cate (ed.), *Das organisierte Chaos. »Amterdarwinismus« und »Gesinnungsethik«: Determinanten nationalsozialistischer Besatzungsherrschaft*, Berlin 1999.

“I consider it important to shatter the chains with which the bureaucracy is restricting the recovery of human activity, that spirit of greed, of impure advantage, to destroy that dependency on the mechanical that dominates this form of government. One must accustom the nation to administering her own forces and business and emerge from that state of childhood in which an ever more restive government wants to keep the people.” (letter from Baron vom Stein to Hardenberg dated December 8, 1807.)<sup>9</sup>

“For the honest man, there is no salvation but in the conviction that the reprobate is capable of all evil, and that one acts in accordance with this conviction with speed, decisiveness and perseverance. To have believed in the man about whom one said with so much truth that he has hell in his heart, chaos in his head, is more than self-deceit, it is a high degree of foolishness. Unfortunately, the credulousness of the weak is just as inexhaustible as the ingenuity of the evil; without trusting the evil, the credulous can always be staved off with hopes. ... If then in this case nothing is to be expected but unhappiness and suffering, one should rather grasp a decision that is honorable and noble and that offers compensation and reasons for consolation in the case of an evil success.” (memorandum by Baron vom Stein dated October 12, 1808.)<sup>10</sup>

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9 The quote is from the letter with which Stein transmitted the Nassau memorandum to Hardenberg. In this context, the quotation forms a plea for principles of self-administration. Cf. the reprint in the French original: Freiherr vom Stein. *Briefe und Amtliche Schriften*, newly edited by Walther Hubatsch, reworked by Peter G. Thielen, Vol. 2, Part 2: *Das Reformministerium (1807–1808)*, Stuttgart 1960, p. 561 et seq.

10 The quotation is from a memorandum of Stein's in which he argues against the ratification of the Paris Treaty; the treaty achieved a link between evacuating Prussian areas and Prussian tribute payments. In the quote, Stein refers to Napoleon's lack of observance of the treaty and pleads for a Prussian uprising against French domination; cf. the reprint *ibid.*, pp. 889–891.



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