

ARTICLE 4

The Reich Economic Minister in consultation with other Reich ministers whose competencies are involved are empowered to issue regulations required by this decree. They may permit exceptions insofar as this is necessary for the transfer of Jewish firms into non-Jewish hands, the liquidation of Jewish businesses, or in special cases to insure the availability of supplies.
Berlin, 12 November 1938

The Commissioner for the Four Year Plan
Goering, Field Marshal

Source: *Reichsgesetzblatt* 1938, I, p. 1580

The German nationalist mindset

The following extract from a letter by former Army Commander in Chief Werner von Fritsch, written only a month after the *Kristallnacht* Pogrom, reveals the extent to which the goals of non-Nazi nationalists and Nazis overlapped. Although a year earlier he had cautioned Hitler about the risks of war against the Western powers (see Doc. 4.10), he clearly shared Hitler's belief that the restoration of German power required suppression of the left, subordination of the Catholic Church, and exclusion of the Jews. Fritsch, demoted to commander of an artillery regiment, was killed in the assault on Warsaw in September 1939.

4.14 Werner von Fritsch, letter, 11 December 1938

From: Freiherr v. Fritsch
To: Baronin Margot v. Schutzbar

Achterberg, 11 December 1938

My dear Baroness:

Many thanks for your two letters ... It is really peculiar that so many people should look to the future with increasing fears, in spite of the Führer's indisputable successes during the past years. Herr von Wiegand's letter interested me very much and I am returning it herewith. Unfortunately, I am afraid he is right when he speaks of the profound hate which is directed to us by a large part of the world.

Soon after the war I came to the conclusion that we should have to be victorious in three battles, if Germany were to become powerful again:

- 1 The battle against the working class – Hitler has won this.
- 2 Against the Catholic Church, perhaps better expressed against Ultramontanism, and
- 3 Against the Jews.

We are in the midst of these battles and the one against the Jews is the most difficult. I hope everyone realizes the intricacies of this campaign ...

[signed] Fritsch

Source: Office of the US Chief of Counsel for Prosecution of Axis Criminality, *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. IV* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1946), p. 585 [Doc. 1947-PS]

Hitler threatens destruction of the Jews

On 30 January 1939 Hitler delivered his first major speech after the so-called *Reichskristallnacht* pogrom of 9 November 1938 (Doc. 4.13), which resulted in the loss of dozens of Jewish lives and enormous damage to Jewish property. In this long speech Hitler addressed the strong criticisms directed against Germany by the world community as a result of the pogrom. This speech contained Hitler's notorious prediction that in case of war the Jews in Europe would be annihilated. Hitler hoped to use threats against the Jews as leverage to dissuade the Western powers from intervening to prevent German expansion to the east. Note also that Hitler was able to exploit for propaganda purposes the evident reluctance of other countries to accept an influx of indigent Jews. Germans were particularly receptive to Hitler's invocation of German suffering as a result of the post-First World War settlement.

4.15 Hitler's Reichstag speech, 30 January 1939

... The German nation has no feeling of hatred towards England, America, or France; all it wants is peace and quiet. But these other nations are continually being stirred up to hatred of Germany and the German people by Jewish and non-Jewish agitators. And so, should the warmongers achieve what they are aiming at, our own people would land in a situation for which they would be psychologically quite unprepared and which they would fail to grasp. I therefore consider it necessary that from now on our propaganda and our press always make it a point to answer these attacks, and above all bring them to the notice of the German people.

The German nation must know who the men are who want to bring about a war by hook or by crook. It is my conviction that these people are mistaken in their calculations, for when once National Socialist propaganda is directed toward answering the attacks, we shall succeed just as we succeeded inside Germany herself in overcoming, through the convincing power of our propaganda, the Jewish world-enemy. The nations will shortly realize that National Socialist Germany wants no enmity with other nations; that all the assertions as to our intended attacks on other nations are lies – lies born of morbid hysteria, or of a mania for self-aggrandizement on the part of certain politicians; but that in certain states these lies are being used by unscrupulous profiteers to salvage their own finances. That, above all, international Jewry is hoping in this way to satisfy its thirst for revenge and gain, but that on the other hand this is the grossest defamation that can be brought to bear against a great and peace-loving nation. Never, for instance, have German soldiers fought on American soil, unless it was in the cause of American independence and freedom; but American soldiers were brought to Europe to help strangle a great nation that was fighting for its freedom. Germany did not attack America, but America

attacked Germany, and, as the Committee of Investigation of the American House of Representatives concluded: from purely capitalist motives, without any other cause. But there is one thing that everyone should realize: these attempts cannot influence Germany in the slightest as to the way in which she settles her Jewish problem.

On the contrary, in connection with the Jewish question I have this to say:

It is a shameful spectacle to see how the whole democratic world is oozing sympathy for the poor tormented Jewish people, but remains hard-hearted and obdurate when it comes to helping them – which is surely, in view of its attitude, an obvious duty. The arguments that are brought up as an excuse for not helping them actually speak for us Germans and Italians.

For this is what they say:

- 1 "We," that is the democracies, "are not in a position to take in the Jews." Yet in these empires there are not even ten people to the square kilometer. While Germany, with her 135 inhabitants to the square kilometer, is supposed to have room for them!
- 2 They assure us: We cannot take them unless Germany is prepared to allow them a certain amount of capital to bring with them as immigrants.

For hundreds of years Germany was good enough to receive these elements, although they possessed nothing except infectious political and physical diseases. What they possess today, they have to by far the largest extent gained at the cost of the less astute German nation by the most reprehensible manipulations.

Today we are merely paying this people what it deserves. When the German nation was, thanks to the inflation instigated and carried through by Jews, deprived of the entire savings which it had accumulated in years of honest work, when the rest of the world took away the German nation's foreign investments, when we were divested of the whole of our colonial possessions, these philanthropic considerations evidently carried little noticeable weight with democratic statesmen.

Today I can only assure these gentlemen that, thanks to the brutal education with which the democracies favored us for fifteen years, we are completely hardened to all attacks of sentiment. After more than eight hundred thousand children of the nation had died of hunger and undernourishment at the close of the war, we witnessed almost one million head of milking cows being driven away from us in accordance with the cruel paragraphs of a dictate which the humane democratic apostles of the world forced upon us as a peace treaty. We witnessed over one million German prisoners of war being retained in confinement for no reason at all for a whole year after the war was ended. We witnessed over one and a half million Germans being torn away from all that they possessed in the territories lying on our frontiers, and being whipped out with practically only what they wore on their backs. We had to endure having millions of our fellow countrymen torn from us without their consent, and without their being afforded the slightest possibility of existence. I could supplement these examples with dozens of the most cruel kind. For this reason we ask to be spared all sentimental talk.

The German nation does not wish its interests to be determined and controlled by any foreign nation. France to the French, England to the English, America to the Americans, and Germany to the Germans. We are resolved to prevent the settlement in our country of an alien people which was capable of snatching for itself all the leading positions in the land, and to oust it. For it is our will to educate our own nation for these leading positions. We have hundreds of thousands of very intelligent children of peasants and of the working classes. We shall have them educated – in fact we have already begun – and we wish that one day they, and not the representatives of an alien race, may hold the leading positions in the state together with our educated classes. Above all, German culture, as its name alone shows, is German and

not Jewish, and therefore its management and care will be entrusted to members of our own nation. If the rest of the world cries out with a hypocritical mien against this barbaric expulsion from Germany of such an irreplaceable and culturally eminently valuable element, we can only be astonished at the conclusions they draw from this situation. For how thankful they must be that we are releasing these precious apostles of culture, and placing them at the disposal of the rest of the world. In accordance with their own declarations they cannot find a single reason to excuse themselves for refusing to receive this most valuable race in their own countries. Nor can I see a reason why the members of this race should be imposed upon the German nation, while in the states, which are so enthusiastic about these "splendid people," their settlement should suddenly be refused with every imaginable excuse. I think that the sooner this problem is solved, the better; for Europe cannot settle down until the Jewish question is cleared up.

It may very well be possible that sooner or later an agreement on this problem may be reached in Europe, even between those nations which otherwise do not so easily come together.

The world has sufficient space for settlements, but we must once and for all get rid of the opinion that the Jewish race was only created by God for the purpose of being in a certain percentage a parasite living on the body and the productive work of other nations. The Jewish race will have to adapt itself to sound constructive activity as other nations do, or sooner or later it will succumb to a crisis of an inconceivable magnitude.

One thing I should like to say on this day which may be memorable for others as well as for us Germans: In the course of my life I have very often been a prophet, and have usually been ridiculed for it. During the time of my struggle for power it was in the first instance the Jewish race which only received my prophecies with laughter when I said that I would one day take over the leadership of the state, and with it that of the whole nation, and that I would then among many other things settle the Jewish problem. Their laughter was uproarious, but I think that for some time now they have been laughing on the other side of their face.

Today I will once more be a prophet: If the international Jewish financiers in and outside Europe should succeed in plunging the nations once more into a world war, then the result will not be the Bolshevization of the earth, and thus the victory of Jewry, but the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe!

For the time when the non-Jewish nations had no propaganda is at an end. National Socialist Germany and Fascist Italy have institutions which enable them when necessary to enlighten the world about the nature of a question of which many nations are instinctively conscious, but which they have not yet clearly thought out. At the moment the Jews in certain countries may be fomenting hatred under the protection of a press, of the film, of radio propaganda, of the theatre, of literature, etc., all of which they control. If this nation should once more succeed in inciting the millions which compose the nations into a conflict which is utterly senseless and only serves Jewish interests, then there will be revealed the effectiveness of an enlightenment which has completely routed the Jews in Germany in the space of a few years.

The nations are no longer willing to die on the battlefield so that this unstable international race may profiteer from a war or satisfy its Old Testament vengeance. The Jewish watchword "Workers of the world unite" will be conquered by a higher realization, namely "Workers of all classes and of all nations, recognize your common enemy!"

Source: *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler, April 1922–August 1939*, ed. by Norman H. Baynes (New York: Howard Fertig, 1969), Vol. I, pp. 736–41