

THE NAZI DICTATORSHIP

Roy Pascal

ROUTLEDGE LIBRARY EDITIONS:
RESPONDING TO FASCISM



THE NAZI DICTATORSHIP

ROY PASCAL



 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published in English 1934

This edition first published in 2010
by Routledge

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge

711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

First issued in paperback 2013

© 1934 Roy Pascal

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 13: 978-0-415-57699-4 (Set)

eISBN 13: 978-0-203-85012-1 (Set)

ISBN 13 978-0-415-85127-5 (Volume 3)

ISBN 13: 978-0-415-58078-6 (Volume 3)

eISBN 13: 978-0-203-85022-0 (Volume 3)

Publisher's Note

The publisher has gone to great lengths to ensure the quality of this reprint but points out that some imperfections in the original copies may be apparent.

Disclaimer

The publisher has made every effort to trace copyright holders and would welcome correspondence from those they have been unable to trace.

ROUTLEDGE LIBRARY EDITIONS:
RESPONDING TO FASCISM

THE NAZI DICTATORSHIP

THE NAZI DICTATORSHIP

By
ROY PASCAL



LONDON

GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LTD.

BROADWAY HOUSE : 68-74 CARTER LANE, E.C.

1934

THE NAZI DICTATORSHIP

BY
ROY PASCAL



Printed in Great Britain by Butler & Tanner Ltd., Frome and London

FOREWORD

its mode of expression and action, the possibility of overthrowing Hitlerism, are matters which can be forecast only if this underlying reality is comprehended.

FOREWORD

AMONG the many books and articles written against Hitler, two conceptions of National-Socialism are dominant. Some hold that it is the recrudescence of the old Imperialistic Barbarism which precipitated the Great War ; some that it is a passing disease, which decent Germans will soon throw off. Threats or blandishments will, it is hoped, shake Germany out of its folly.

In the present book Hitlerism is treated neither as a national German characteristic nor as a passing madness. It has been my aim to trace the conditions which encouraged the expansion of Hitlerism, and the permanent influence that National-Socialism has exerted on German society.

An unambiguous development is clear—particularly clear since Hitler came to power. Germany is now the State of Monopoly-Capitalism, of a Dictatorship, not of a set of gangsters, nor of a political Party, but of the great industrial and financial interests, whose might in the last eighteen months has been vastly strengthened and extended.

It is this State of Monopoly-Capitalism which I have described in the latter half of this book. National-Socialism is the political movement which formed this society. Its future policy, its strength,

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
	FOREWORD	vii
I	THE GERMAN REVOLUTION OF 1918 The Weimar Constitution and Socialism The Failure of the Revolution	1
II	THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC The Republic and the Possessing Classes The Republic and the Working-Class	17
III	THE CRISIS	35
IV	THE ORGANISATION OF THE NATIONAL-SOCIALIST PARTY Militarists and Monarchists New Masters—Industry The Civil Organisation	44
V	THE THEORY OF NATIONAL-SOCIALISM The Dominant Theory—Alfred Rosenberg Nazi-Radicals	62
VI	HITLER IS INDUCTED TO POWER Brüning conducts Democracy from the Scene Open Reaction—Von Papen The Army and the Trade Unions—or Hitler?	85
VII	THE VISION OF THE CORPORATE STATE Public Interest before Private Interest Banking Capital and Industrial Capital The Corporate State	108
VIII	HITLER TAKES OVER POWER The Suppression of the Communists The Persecution of the Jews The Trade Unions The Political Parties	124

THE NAZI DICTATORSHIP

CHAPTER I

THE GERMAN REVOLUTION OF 1918

IN the last days of the reign of William II, when the armies were in full retreat and revolt was sweeping over the land, Max von Baden summoned the Social-Democratic Party to take office. Ebert became the first Social-Democratic Chancellor, as the last rampart of the Monarchy. Immediately after taking office, Scheidemann, the Social-Democratic Minister, addressed the masses outside the *Reichstag*, exhorting them to stabilise the Socialist victory, as if the Revolution were already won. The first manifesto of the new government called on the German People to "leave the streets, preserve peace and quiet". Relations of confidence were established between the new government and the General Staff. Leaders of industry and representatives of Social-Democracy sat down together to fashion a "Working Association" between capital and labour.

But a real Revolution threatened from underneath. In 1916 the revolutionary Spartacus League had been formed. In 1917 the Independent Socialist Party had arisen out of a split in the Social-Democratic ranks. From this time a wave of working-class action against the War and the War governments, against the policy

THE NAZI DICTATORSHIP

of collaboration of the Social-Democratic leadership, had slowly mounted in Germany. There had been strikes and food-riots in 1917, culminating in the famous munition-strike of 1918—the “stab in the back”. There had been the mutiny in the Fleet in the spring of 1917. In November 1918 occurred the decisive blow, the mutiny at Kiel. The ships of war ran up the red flag, and were in the hands of Sailors’ Councils. This was the signal for the Revolution. In factories and in the army Councils of Workers and Soldiers were formed, on the model of the Russian Soviets. The old authorities were thrown out of their offices and stripped of power. On the basis of these Councils a new constitution was to be given to Germany, a Socialistic Republic was to be created. A great meeting of representatives of the Councils was called to Berlin for December 16, to constitute the new government.

Social-Democracy had quickly recognised where the new centre of power lay. They had thrown off their allegiance to William II, who had abdicated. Noske had been sent to Kiel, where he had been successful in asserting the control of the Social-Democratic Party over the insurgents.¹ Frenzied efforts were made by the Party to win the trust of the Workers’ and Soldiers’ Councils, to get its nominees sent to the Congress of December 16. The results were of tremendous significance. At the Congress all Parties were agreed that the Councils should form a government of People’s Representatives. But while Spartacus and the Independents demanded a govern-

¹ See Noske, *Von Kiel bis Kapp*.

THE GERMAN REVOLUTION OF 1918

ment of the working-class, the Social-Democrats opposed the idea of a class-dictatorship, and guaranteed, for the time, the security of private property. By virtue of their energetic protestations of their socialist faith, and as a result of their old and powerful organisation, the Social-Democrats won a decisive victory. Ninety-eight representatives voted under the leadership of Luxemburg and Liebknecht for a government of the working-class, 344 put their faith in the democratic tactics of the Social-Democratic Party, who promised socialism if a general election proved it to be the desire of the people. The provisional result was a coalition government of People's Representatives, consisting of three Independents and three Social-Democrats. For the time, the coalition with the Independents gave the Social-Democrats an appearance of radical determination. When the forces of Reaction, the Army, etc. had recovered a little they were able to throw off this alliance and joyfully announce that the Independents had left the Government.

The decisions of the Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils meant the cessation of much of the revolutionary activity. The first Manifesto of this government established certain liberties (of the Press, of Association, etc.) and social reforms such as the eight-hour day. The revolutionary movement had already gone far beyond these measures, and in many places was establishing control by the working-class. The government's chief political task became the "preservation of the Republic", i.e. the countering of this working-class movement. Under Noske's

THE NAZI DICTATORSHIP

leadership a Citizens' Defence Corps was organised to keep order. In this were absorbed the troops which had remained faithful to the Monarchy, under their old officers—a predominantly aristocratic class—and special troops of Irregulars, Black Hundreds. Among these was a Company under Ernst Röhm, at that time an open enemy of the new Republic, and later the organiser of Hitler's Storm Troops.¹ From this Citizens' Defence Corps was later recruited the Army of the Republic, to be officered by the same set of anti-republican professional soldiers.

For some time Berlin and Dresden and other large cities were in the hands of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils. But the policy of the Councils was confused, and immense obstacles were put in their path. Spartacus was an organisation of recent origin, and, in spite of its reputation, small—it is reckoned that its membership was never greater than 2,000. The Independents were still unwilling to break with the Social-Democratic Party. The revolutionaries were divided in their allegiance, believing still that the Social-Democrats would lead them to power and socialism. Everywhere there arose bitter struggles between the government of People's Representatives and the Workers' Councils. In Berlin workers' demonstrations were broken up by the police and Citizens' Defence Corps. Liebknecht and Luxemburg were captured and killed by the Defence Corps. Finally the bands of soldiers, organised and barracked by Noske outside Berlin, marched into the city, drove the representatives of the Workers' Councils out of

¹ See Röhm, *Geschichte eines Hochverrätters*, 1928.

THE GERMAN REVOLUTION OF 1918

their headquarters, and left the Social-Democrats—Ebert, Scheidemann, Noske—in charge. Similar tactics were employed in Saxon towns.¹ The Social-Democrats then called elections for a National Constituent Assembly, stating that they repudiated the authority given them by the Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils.

In Bavaria events followed a slightly different course. Here Social-Democracy had always been weaker and could not so easily control the masses. In March 1919 the Bavarian Commune was set up, under Kurt Eisner, to last for three weeks. For this time the working-class had control of the administrative and defence apparatus. But their forces were small, their methods confused, and they were isolated in Munich. When Eisner was killed even greater confusion reigned. Troops of the Republican Army were moved from the Bavarian frontiers to Munich, under the command of Hitler's later patron, General von Epp, and the Commune was crushed with great severity. For many years afterwards a reactionary, anti-democratic government ruled in Bavaria, giving moral and material support to Hitler's young movement.

THE WEIMAR CONSTITUTION AND SOCIALISM

For the time being, the revolutionary movement was beaten back. The Workers' and Soldiers' Councils were disbanded. But the fire of revolt broke out again and again, in more and more dangerous forms

¹ A moving picture of the events in Saxony has been given by Ludwig Renn in his novel *Nachkrieg*.

THE NAZI DICTATORSHIP

since the foundation of the Communist Party on January 1, 1919. Everywhere the influence of the unrest among the working-class population is evident. Even the middle-class political Parties promised socialisation of monopolies, the break-up of the large estates of the Junkers, the legal recognition of the Trade Unions. On all hands promises were made that the workers would be given a share in the control of the Republic. The Constitution was passed while huge strikes in the coal-fields of the Ruhr were raging. Through its concessions to the workers it could justly pride itself on establishing the "freest Republic" in the world.

The Constitution did not give socialism. But it promised the socialisation of all enterprises which were "suitable" for social administration. The government was to take part in the administration of industry. It could force firms to belong to the federation of their industry, and could send representatives to sit on the board of these federations. It made the Trade Unions the legal representatives of the employees, with the right of establishing conditions of labour with the employers. It further created Factory Councils, elected by the workers of each factory over a certain size, through which the workers could vent grievances and exert pressure on the factory management. District Workers' Councils and a National Workers' Council were promised, but were never realised. They had too much the appearance of Soviets.

All these concessions to the proletariat were granted in order to allay its suspicions of the new Republic.

THE GERMAN REVOLUTION OF 1918

The result was to strengthen the general faith in Social-Democracy, which was by far the biggest Party in the elections of 1919. The Trade Unions, largely under Social-Democratic control, reached the enormous membership of about 8 millions. In January of that year investigatory committees were set up to consider the socialisation of the coalmining and potash industries. At the end of 1919 a law was actually passed preparatory to the socialisation of the electrical industry. But all these measures proved abortive, and led at most to the establishment of employers' federations in these industries, whose decisions were backed by the State.

Disillusionment on the major question of socialism was accompanied by disillusionment on smaller matters. The years between the Revolution and 1924 were marked by a series of bitter strikes, which were aimed directly or indirectly against the Republic and its midwife, the Social-Democratic Party. Wage-agreements were found to be unsatisfactory, or even not observed; in 1924 the coal-owners under the leadership of Stinnes publicly repudiated them. The Factory Councils attempted repeatedly to assert their will over the factory owners, but with less and less success. In 1920 a Communist rising, under Max Hoelz, maintained itself for several weeks in Middle Germany. Again the revolutionary organisation proved itself weak, for the rising remained isolated, and was repudiated even by the Communist leadership of the time. Other armed risings in Hamburg, Saxony and Thuringia suffered the same fate.

The biggest and best-organised attempt to create

THE NAZI DICTATORSHIP

a Workers' Republic was carried out in the Ruhr. In January 1919 a general strike was declared, and the socialisation of the mines proclaimed. The workers were armed and took possession of administrative buildings. Again troops sent from Berlin beat back the insurgents. A year later a monarchist coup was carried out, the so-called Kapp Putsch. Kapp found a tacit ally in these same Republican troops. The predominantly Social-Democratic government had to flee, and called on the Red troops it had formerly suppressed to restore the Republic. The general strike, carried out by armed workers, defeated Kapp. But the action in the Ruhr swelled to large dimensions. The armed workers, driving back the reactionaries, made their objective the establishment of a workers' dictatorship. The government they had reinstated now turned on them. The army, which had looked on while Kapp marched into Berlin, now advanced into the Ruhr. The proletarian troops were destroyed. Afterwards Severing, the Prussian Minister of the Interior, a Social-Democrat, put the whole Ruhr under the closest police supervision, clearing it of arms, making impossible any future military action on the part of the workers. The Social-Democratic Prussian government preferred the risk of another reactionary rising to that of a renewed proletarian action.

Till the end of 1924 the Republic was not out of danger. The number of Social-Democratic members of the *Reichstag* dropped from 165 in 1919 to 100 in May 1924; Liberal-Democratic Party dropped from 75 to 28. The Parties of the Right grew, and the