

Hitler's First Radio Address (Excerpted Version)

On February 1, 1933, two days after he was appointed chancellor, Hitler spoke over the radio to the German people about his vision for the future of the country:

Over fourteen years have passed since that unhappy day when the German people, blinded by promises made by those at home and abroad, forgot the highest values of our past, of the Reich, of its honor and its freedom, and thereby lost everything. Since those days of treason, the Almighty has withdrawn his blessing from our nation. Discord and hatred have moved in. Filled with the deepest distress, millions of the best German men and women from all walks of life see the unity of the nation disintegrating in a welter of egotistical political opinions, economic interests, and ideological conflicts...

...All around us are symptoms portending this breakdown. With an unparalleled effort of will and of brute force the Communist method of madness is trying as a last resort to poison and undermine an inwardly shaken and uprooted nation. They seek to drive it towards an epoch which would correspond even less to the promises of the Communist speakers of today than did the epoch now drawing to a close to

the promises of the same emissaries in November 1918...

...Starting with the family, and including all notions of honor and loyalty, nation and fatherland, culture and economy, even the eternal foundations of our morals and our faith—nothing is spared by this negative, totally destructive ideology. . . . One year of Bolshevism would destroy Germany...

...The task before us is the most difficult which has faced German statesmen in living memory. But we all have unbounded confidence, for we believe in our nation and in its eternal values. Farmers, workers, and the middle class must unite to contribute the bricks wherewith to build the new Reich.

The National Government will therefore regard it as its first and supreme task to restore to the German people unity of mind and will. It will preserve and defend the foundations on which the strength of our nation rests. It will take under its firm protection Christianity as the basis of our morality, and the family as the nucleus of our nation and our state. Standing above estates [groups that make up society's social hierarchy] and classes, it will bring back to our people the consciousness of its racial and political unity and the obligations arising therefrom. It wishes to base the education of German youth on respect for our great past and pride in our old traditions. . . .

Germany must not and will not sink into Communist anarchy...

...The National Government will carry out the great task of reorganizing our national economy with two big Four-Year Plans:

1. Saving the German farmer so that the nation's food supply and thus the life of the nation shall be secured.
2. Saving the German worker by a massive and comprehensive attack on unemployment.

In fourteen years the November parties have ruined the German farmer. In fourteen years they created an army of millions of unemployed. The National Government will carry out the following plan with iron resolution and dogged perseverance. Within four years the German farmer must be saved from pauperism. Within four years unemployment must be completely overcome . . .

Despite our love for our Army as the bearer of our arms and the symbol of our great past, we should be happy if the world, by restricting its armaments, made unnecessary any increase in our own weapons...

...We, men of this Government, feel responsible to German history for the reconstitution of a proper national body so that we may finally overcome the insanity of class and class warfare. We do not recognize classes, but only the German people, its millions of farmers, citizens and workers who together

will either overcome this time of distress or succumb to it...

...We therefore appeal now to the German people to sign this act of mutual reconciliation. The Government of the National Uprising [the Nazi-led government] wishes to set to work, and it will work. It has not for fourteen years brought ruin to the German nation; it wants to lead it to the summit. It is determined to make amends in four years for the liabilities of fourteen years. But it cannot subject the work of reconstruction to the will of those who were responsible for the breakdown.

The Marxist parties [political parties including the Social Democrats] and their followers had fourteen years to prove their abilities. The result is a heap of ruins. Now, German people, give us four years and then judge us....