

Anti-Capitalist Strasserism

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The name Strasserism came to be applied to this form of Nazism that developed around the brothers. Although they had been involved in the creation of the National Socialist Program of 1920, both called on the party to commit to 'breaking the shackles of finance capital'.^[1] This opposition to "Jewish finance capitalism," which they contrasted to "productive capitalism," was shared by Adolf Hitler himself, who borrowed it to Gottfried Feder.^[2]

This populist and anti-Semitic form of anti-Capitalism was further developed in 1925 when Otto Strasser published the *Nationalsozialistische Briefe*, which discussed notions of class conflict, wealth redistribution and a possible alliance with the Soviet Union. His 1930 follow-up *Ministersessel oder Revolution* ('Cabinet Seat or Revolution') went further by attacking Hitler's betrayal of the purported socialist aspect of Nazism, as well as criticizing the notion of Führerprinzip.^[3] Whilst Gregor Strasser echoed many of the calls of his brother, his influence on the ideology is less due to his remaining in the Nazi Party longer and his early death. Otto, meanwhile, continued to expand his argument, calling for the break-up of large estates and the development of something akin to a guild system and the related establishment of a Reich cooperative chamber to take a leading role in economic planning.^[4]

Strasserism, therefore, became a distinct strand of neo-Nazism that, whilst holding on to previous Nazi ideals such as militant nationalism and anti-Semitism, added a strong critique of capitalism and framed this in the demand for a more "socialist-based" approach to economics.

It is disputed, however, if Strasserism effectively represented a distinct form of Nazism, or not. According to historian Ian Kershaw, "the leaders of the SA [which included Gregor Strasser] did not have another vision of the future of Germany or another politic to propose." But they advocated the radicalization of the Nazi regime, and the toppling of the German elites, calling Hitler's rise to power a "half-revolution," which needed to be completed.^[5]

References:

1. ^ C.T. Husbands, 'Militant Neo-Nazism in the Federal Republic of Germany' in L. Cheles, R. Ferguson & M. Vaughan, *Neo-Fascism in Europe*, 1992, p. 98
2. ^ Ian Kershaw, *Hitler: A Profile in Power*, first chapter (London, 1991, rev. 2001)
3. ^ Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship*, 1973, pp. 230-1
4. ^ Ernst Nolte, *Three Faces of Fascism*, 1969, pp. 425-426
5. ^ Ian Kershaw, 1991, chapter III, first section