

Walter Gross's Radio Speech on Race to German Youth (October 10, 1934)

Abstract

Dr. Walter Gross, head of the NSDAP's Racial Policy Office, delivered this radio address on October 10, 1934. One of his main tasks was to explain and popularize the racism at the heart of the Nazi worldview. In this speech, Gross admits that people were growing tired of the official discussions of race. In response, he aimed to reclaim the topic from boring academicians and bureaucrats and present it in a way that would energize younger generations. Race, as he argues, is a natural law—something that is inherited and determines the spiritual, physical, and intellectual prowess of an individual. Nevertheless, he is sure to remind his listeners that education, training, and engagement in the National Socialist cause are the preconditions for enjoying the full benefits of membership in the Aryan race.

Source

Race: A Radio Speech by Dr. Groß

German youth!

Since National Socialism took the leadership in Germany, one often hears people talking in all sorts of places about race. It was not always that way. Even two years ago, our opponents avoided the word or mocked it. The Marxist laughed if he even heard it, and those in the middle class just shook their heads. They all thought racial ideas to be unproven and worthless, or even dangerous. It therefore does not surprise us that in past years people waged war against the word "race."

Today everything is different, and some during the last eighteen months even seem to think that race is talked about too much.

Maybe even some of you have shaken your heads in annoyance and said: "We've heard enough about race. We don't want to be forced to become doctors or biologists or some other sort of learned creature."

Where that has happened, it is because people talked primarily about the scientific facts of inheritance or racial science or things like that. When talking about race these things are certainly important, but they focus on specialized facts while forgetting the real significance of racial thinking. The important points are not in the worlds of science and scholarship, but rather in the area of worldview and politics, the area that deeply moves us young people who are part of a spiritual revolution. It is also why yesterday's world is resisting the concept of race.

The old world was not distressed by a new science, but rather by the fact that a new worldview grew out of this science that destroyed the foundations of proletarian and bourgeois thinking, one that had to lead to a genuine revolution of soul and spirit.

Before we speak of the significance of worldview, we must quickly review a few facts about scientific racial research and racial science. First, we must consider what is meant by the word "race." As everyone has noticed in the last eighteen months, people often mean different things when using the word and therefore talk past each other.

The word "race" still has two primary meanings today. In one sense, it means all the inherited physical

and intellectual characteristics and abilities that a person has, in contrast to the abilities that he gains during his life. In this sense, “race” means something like inheritance or genetics. However, the word in its deepest and most important sense applies to whole groups of people who are separated from other groups of people by their common genetic inheritance.

Let us make clear what we mean by inheritance. That is important because the facts that science teaches us about inheritance are of great significance to our politics and our worldview. In the past people knew little about it, and as a result imagined that their value, or lack of value, was determined by the outside influences on their life. If someone was strong and tall, people thought that he must have been well nourished, or worked outdoors in agriculture, or played sports. If one was smarter than others, or had better character, it was the result of particularly good upbringing, whether in school, at home, or because of his friends.

That naturally led to placing too much importance on outside influences. Marxism believed that it could make people healthier and better and harder-working by giving them better economic conditions. The bourgeois believed that individuals and peoples could be raised ever higher through education and schooling.

In truth, that is not so. In recent decades, we have learned from science what any thinking and insightful person had always known:

The inherited characteristics than an individual or a whole people have are more important than environmental influences.

He who lacks the inherited traits that result in strength or height will never become strong or tall however good his diet or however much he is active in sports. Education and spiritual training can only benefit someone who has inherited clear understanding and a clear mind.

The physical and spiritual nature of each individual, you as well as me, is determined by his inheritance, that which we have received from our parents, grandparents, and ancestors. Our own efforts, or the education others give us, can only develop what we have inherited, or make it less effective. Such efforts can never change one person into another one, making him either better or worse than he was when born.

Science provides many examples of this, and you know that a lot is written and spoken about it today. The details are important only to experts. We are much more concerned about the implications it has for our outlook on life, individuals, and peoples. The first thing of importance to us is the close relationship between children, parents, and ancestors.

What we are, both body and soul, we have inherited from the generations before us.

And when, after 60 or 80 years we are no longer alive, our inheritance will live on in our children and our children’s children. When we realize this, we suddenly see clearly that great river of blood that flows to us through the centuries and millennia, and that is in truth the German people.

Each individual generation is a wave that rises and falls, replaced by the next one. As individuals, we are as a droplet in this stream, but we no longer see ourselves as the center of the world, which is what the liberal era believed and taught.

Such an understanding makes us modest, because we see how small we are in comparison to the eternal people. It also shows us that **everything we do and accomplish is not because of our own abilities, but rather the result of the inheritance that we have received.**

The man of the liberal era was proud of himself, his value, and what he had achieved. He acted as if he had done it all himself. We are more modest today, seeing what we do as new results of our people's ancient inheritance. That inheritance worked in countless former generations, and if we do not destroy it, will continue in the future through coming generations.

We ourselves, you and I, are today merely the carriers and guardians of German blood inheritance, both proud of this task but also humble before it.

Obviously, such an outlook could find no place in the old world of liberal and Marxist thinking. It results in a whole range of conclusions that throw out old views. If we cannot fundamentally change people into something their inheritance does not allow, the exaggerated Marxist welfare system loses its justification, as does bourgeois overemphasis on education and training.

We no longer see economic or spiritual improvement of individuals or peoples as the goal, but rather only the National Socialist principle of the selection of the most capable.

This does not mean we see things one-sidedly. True, we cannot change people and make them better than their inherited characteristics allow though intellectual improvement, education, economics, or social policy. But it would be wrong to entirely ignore these factors. Anyone who believes that, as a consequence of racial thinking, it is useless to try to improve the economic conditions of the poor through training and education is making a serious mistake. It is not enough for inherited characteristics to remain hidden within a person. Instead, they must come to expression. It therefore makes a big difference if in individual cases a physical or mental ability is encouraged, promoted, and developed, or whether it is hampered, suppressed, and held back. The best inherited traits are useless if we let a person starve or perish, for he will never be able to accomplish anything significant. The best mind with the strongest intellectual gifts can go unused for an entire human life if poor education hinders or misdirects them.

I say this only because the enemies of National Socialism have often said recently that: "Your doctrine of the overwhelming importance of inheritance necessarily leads to ignoring social issues and concerns, as well the need to properly educate and train people. Both charges are simply untrue. We simply reject Marxist and bourgeois exaggerations, since we have realized that the fundamental nature of a person is determined by what he has inherited. It is an obvious National Socialist principle that good traits in each individual, be they physical or intellectual, must be encouraged by every means, and that the undesired ones must be suppressed.

We were forced to reach these conclusions once we understood the word "race," which essentially means inherited characteristics. Yet as I already said, this use of the word includes only part of its meaning. Beyond that, the word "race" in its true sense means something like the Nordic race or the Mongolian race or some other racial group of people. You know that people in this world are not equal. They differ outwardly; one is black, another red, the third yellow or white, and within these large groups science has determined that there are many other particular races.

However, the differences between races are not limited to the physical and external. They extend to the character, to intellectual and spiritual traits.

That is clear to us if we compare a person from here in our German homeland with a Negro, or if we compare an Eskimo with a Mongol; their intellectual and spiritual differences are immediately obvious.

People knew all this before. However, in the past they not realize that these physical and intellectual racial differences are inherited and can never be changed by outside influences. In fact, in the past people taught and believed that the differences between peoples and races in this world were really only accidental, caused by the climate or history or level of culture. The Negro was black because the hot sun

in Africa crinkled his hair and darkened his skin. Had he been born somewhere along the North Sea coast with its grayness and lack of sun, he perhaps would have had light skin and blond hair, just like our fishermen in Friesland.

You can understand that these former views had very important political and worldview consequences. If the differences between the world's peoples and races are only the result of external conditions, one can overcome them. Advancing civilization would gradually eliminate social, cultural, and geographic differences. Formerly, people imagined that the differences between Europeans and Negroes could be eliminated by establishing schools, by civilizing Africa, by educating Negroes at European universities, thereby eventually ending the differences that still seem to exist today. People attempted to do this from every angle. They came to the logical conclusion that humanity could be brought to the same intellectual level, which would open the way for a single world state, united in governmental, political, and economic matters. The efforts of the *Internationale* were no more than the result of this fundamental idea.

I believe that that makes clear to us all why all the forces of former times fought a bitter battle against the concept of race. Racial science teaches us that all the essential differences between peoples and races in this world are inherited. They cannot be changed by educational or training systems. Humanity cannot change them.

The races are different because their blood is different, as the proverb says, not because civilization is further advanced in one place than it is in another. We have to accept that, just as we have to accept any natural law on this earth. That means that any attempt to establish international culture, government, or religion is fundamentally wrong and hopeless to attempt, since it ignores the great racial laws that the Creator himself set as finding laws for humanity. This knowledge provides the ultimate and deepest justification for our ethnic striving toward our own nature and uniqueness in politics, economics, culture, and perhaps also religion.

Since peoples differ racially, each must follow its own nature, keeping it pure from physical or intellectual corruption.

That is the great and essential conclusion that the National Socialist draws from an understanding of the racial teaching of science. Our common task will be to build a new age on this knowledge, and we believe and know that our future will then be happier because it will be based on foundations that are true.

Source of English translation: "Race: A Radio Speech by Dr. Groß," from the German Propaganda Archive. © 2011 by Randall Bytwerk. Republished with permission. Available online at: <http://research.calvin.edu/german-propaganda-archive/gross2.htm>

Source of original German text: *Rasse. Eine Rundfunkrede von Dr. Groß*. Berlin: Rassenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP, 1934.

Recommended Citation: Walter Gross's Radio Speech on Race to German Youth (October 10, 1934), published in: German History in Documents and Images, <<https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/nazi-germany-1933-1945/ghdi:document-5111>> [May 06, 2024].