

The Conservatives Embrace Antisemitism: The Tivoli Program of the German Conservative Party (1892)

Abstract

In 1892, the German Conservatives [*Deutschkonservativen*] embraced antisemitism in an attempt to broaden their electoral base. This move marked the ascendancy of the ultra-conservative wing of the party, which was led by Wilhelm von Hammerstein, editor of the *Kreuzzeitung* (the leading German conservative newspaper). The Tivoli Program was named after the location where the party met.

Source

[...]

1. We desire the preservation and strengthening of the Christian life-view in the nation and the state and regard its practical activation in legislation as the indispensable foundation of every healthy development. State and church are institutions ordained by God; the cooperation of the two is the necessary precondition for healing our national life. On the one hand, we acknowledge that the state has the right, by virtue of its sovereignty, to regulate its relationship with the Church; on the other hand, we want no coercion of conscience and for that reason no encroachment of state legislation onto the sphere of internal church life. In that sense we will also support the right of the Evangelical Church to regulate its internal institutions autonomously. We regard the confessional, Christian *Volksschule* as the foundation of national education and as the most important guarantee against the increasing degeneration of the masses and the progressive dissolution of all social bonds. We fight against the often obtrusive and corrosive Jewish influence on our national life. We demand Christian authorities for the Christian people and Christian teachers for Christian students. [...]

3. We want to know that monarchy ordained by God will remain untouched, and we fight – with legally guaranteed civic liberty for all and with the effective participation of the nation in the making of law – every attempt to restrict monarchy in favor of a parliamentary form of government.

4. [...] We expect that the new Civic Law Code will be grounded in a German-national legal consciousness. [...]

6. We see in the full defensive capability of the German people an indispensable condition for the nation's position of power and for the maintenance of peace.

7. We support the measured continuation of a deliberate colonial policy under the protection of the Reich. [...]

10. When it comes to agriculture, which is suffering from an unfavorable world market, the international currency situation, and domestic economic developments, the existing customs protection is to be maintained. [...]

11. As for industry, the customs protection arising from foreign competition should be maintained and, if necessary, strengthened.

12. As for the trades, it would seem that support should be given chiefly to establishing proof of qualifications, strengthening the guilds and guild associations, and founding and promoting cooperative

associations. [...]

14. Those supporters of Social Democracy and of anarchism whose unpatriotic and subversive designs threaten large segments of our nation should be fought as enemies of the order of the state.

15. An unscrupulous press, which is undermining the state, the church, and society with its products, must be emphatically opposed.

The upholding of Christianity, monarchy, and Fatherland, the protection and promotion of all honorable work, the preservation of justified authority – these are the highest principles that the German Conservative Party has written on its banner.

Source: Wilhelm Mommsen and Günther Franz, *Deutsche Parteiprogramme I: Die konservativen Parteien von den Anfängen bis 1918*. Leipzig and Berlin: Teubner, 1932, pp. 25–27; reprinted in Rüdiger vom Bruch and Björn Hofmeister, eds., *Kaiserreich und Erster Weltkrieg 1871–1918*. Deutsche Geschichte in Quellen und Darstellung, edited by Rainer A. Müller, vol. 8. Stuttgart: P. Reclam, 2000, pp. 227–29.

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