

Critical Notice to the Reader of *Mein Kampf*

Out of respect for the historical record and the memory of the victims of the Nazi regime, the publication of *Mein Kampf* today, in any medium, brings with it a particular responsibility and calls for an ethical, critical and educational approach. This means combatting the hatred and discrimination which the book propounds. Any publisher of *Mein Kampf* (including on the internet or social media) is therefore requested to refrain from advertising or promoting the book in any way, or seeking any financial profit from it.

The full text of *Mein Kampf* published here, or the extracts from it, are presented in full – no cuts or changes have been made to the original text. This concern for originality is justified by the nature and history of this book, which cannot be treated as an ordinary text. It was written by Adolf Hitler, one of the greatest criminals in history. *Mein Kampf* was also one of the best-sellers of the twentieth century, selling more than 12 million copies throughout the world. It accompanied the rise of the Nazi party, serving as a reference text which was compulsory reading for millions of Germans. For the duration of the Nazi regime, it formed the linchpin of the propaganda and murderous ideology which was implemented across continental Europe.

For in *Mein Kampf*, Hitler sets out a number of his theories on the march of history and the destiny of humanity. In it he distils various ideas that had first emerged in the nineteenth century, forging a new totalitarian ideology. He speaks about his childhood and schooling, his conception of European and world history, his vision of different human 'races', and the future. The ideas set out in *Mein Kampf* – along with other causes – lay behind the Second World War, the pressing of millions of human beings into forced labour and the subjugation of a whole section of the globe. They lay behind the creation of a network of 18 concentration camps throughout the Reich and of thousands of smaller camps where those who resisted Nazism were tortured, and where the most basic of human rights were denied. These ideas also led to the murder of between 250,000 and 400,000 Roma in Europe, who were considered to be members of an inferior 'race'. They lay behind the arrest and persecution of tens of thousands of homosexuals, 15,000 of whom died in the concentration camps. They led to the Holocaust, the genocide of the Jews in Europe. Six million were massacred in mass killing operations and deportations to the extermination camps. 60 million human beings perished during the Second World War, the most deadly war in human history.

Some will find it shocking that *Mein Kampf* is being published almost 70 years after the end of the Second World War. Survivors, along with the families of victims of National Socialism, may be distressed by the very fact that Adolf Hitler's work is still being made available. However, one must remember that *Mein Kampf* did not cease to circulate with the death of Hitler, and that it is still widely read, and even praised, throughout the world. The book is also easily available on the internet.

Racist ideas, xenophobia, antisemitism and hatred of the Other are still a reality in Europe and the wider world today. We are even witnessing a renewed proliferation of calls to hatred and violence, facilitated by the new technologies of the internet and social media. *Mein Kampf* is being disseminated through these channels, often in truncated versions which mask some of the ideas that

the reader is most likely to find repellent. The present notice reminds those who publish such material of their responsibilities, and stresses the need to understand that words can be deadly.

Mein Kampf is still in widespread circulation today and continues to inspire numerous criminals and terrorists, along with men and women who have been seduced by a form of radical and totalitarian politics. Teaching history – countering all ideas of exclusion, racism, discrimination and denial – constitutes a duty, and this alone must guide the reading of *Mein Kampf*. There is also a clear duty of memory towards the victims of Nazism and of the racism and the dynamic of hatred that it contains and seeks to promote.

If you come across an edition of the book which does not include a critical notice, please point this out to the publisher so that the present Notice might be inserted in the language of publication for educational purposes, and with the aim of criticising this incitement to destruction.

Hate Prevention Initiative – 2015

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