

Decree Establishing the Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda (March 13, 1933)

Abstract

Thus began one of the most odious institutions of the Third Reich: the Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda. Led by Reich Minister Joseph Goebbels (1897–1945), who was complicit in all Nazi crimes to one degree or another, it imposed state control over all forms of media—mass media, theater, music, broadcasting, literature, and the visual arts—and demanded complete ideological compliance. The ministry’s origins lay in the Nazi view that Germany had lost World War I because domestic squabbling among various factions had undermined the state’s ability to align its subjects behind national policies. The Nazis vowed to wage the next war without the encumbrance of popular dissent—it was the Reich Propaganda Ministry’s job to quash it.

Source

A Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda is herewith established for the purpose of enlightening and propagandizing the population with regard to the policies of the Reich Cabinet and the national reconstruction of the German fatherland.

The chief of this agency has the title “Reich Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda.”

The Reich Chancellor defines in detail the duties of the Reich Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda. In agreement with the other Reich Ministers concerned, he defines the duties which are transferred from their jurisdiction to that of the new ministry. This will be done even in cases where the jurisdiction of the ministries concerned is affected fundamentally.

Berlin, March 13, 1933

The Reich President
von Hindenburg

The Reich Chancellor
Adolf Hitler

Source of English translation: Office of the United States Chief Counsel for Prosecution of Axis Criminality, *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, Volume IV. Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1946, Document 2029-PS. Available online at: <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/imt/2029-ps.asp>

Source of original German text: “Erlaß über die Errichtung des Reichsministeriums für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda vom 13. März 1933,” *Reichsgesetzblatt* 1933 I, p. 104. Available online at: <http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?apm=0&aid=dra&datum=1933>. Also found at:

<http://www.documentarchiv.de/ns/propaganda.html>

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