

**Governmental Declaration by  
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Governmental Declaration

Now that the affairs of the Reich government have been assigned to us, it is our duty to announce the principles on which we will run the government and the objectives we want to achieve.

1. The first task is to restore the complete majesty of law. The government itself must carefully avoid any kind of arbitrariness. It must consequently establish orderly control through the people. During the war this control can only be organized provisionally. Meanwhile honest, proficient men from all social ranks will be appointed; we will be accountable to them and we intend to ask their advice. Above all, we will commission them to ascertain precisely the legacy we have inherited in every field. Every German will more or less consciously share our feeling of how weighty this legacy is. We refuse to begin discussing Hitler's responsibility in the tone of abuse that he introduced for opponents. Rather, we think it is necessary to establish properly and meticulously the facts from which this responsibility will emerge. The report drawn up by these men will be published immediately as far as the conditions of war allow; it will be published in full as soon as the situation permits.

We were once proud of our people's righteousness and honesty and the infallibility and quality of German administration of justice. This makes it all the more painful for us to see how it has almost been destroyed.

No human community can exist without law; nobody, even if he thinks he can disregard it, can do without it. For each man the time comes when he cries out for justice. When God established order in the universe, created human beings and gave his commandments, he prescribed the necessity of law applied justly and impartially. He gave us the insight and strength to create the worldly institutions to secure this. It is a crime not to follow this system. It is therefore necessary to restore independence, non-transferability and irrevocability of judges. We know well that many of them have only acted under the pressure of extreme terror, but there will be an extremely stringent examination as to whether, beyond this, judges have committed the crime of pronouncing judgment against the law and against their conscience. If they have done so, they will be removed; to restore the people's confidence in the administration of justice, lay people will be brought into the process of judgment in all penal matters. This also applies to the Courts Martial that will be operating temporarily.

The law will be cleansed. It is not the business of a judge to create new law; his task is to apply the law and to do this in the most scrupulous way. It is not the business of a judge to take account of an ideology that does not know itself what it wants and whose leader distorts its program to the utmost. It is unbearable that people should be sentenced who could have no idea that their actions were punishable. As far as the state has declared, for instance, that the actions of its organs are retrospectively exempt from punishment, actions that were in fact punishable, these decisions on exemption will be revoked as contrary to the nature of justice, and those responsible will be held to account.

The law will be enforced against everybody who has violated it. Every lawbreaker will receive the punishment he deserves.

The security of the individual and of property will be protected once more against arbitrariness. Only judges have license to inter-

vene lawfully in the personal rights of the individual, which are imperative for the existence of the state and for the happiness of human beings.

The concentration camps will be shut down, the innocent released, the guilty subjected to the regular judicial process.

But we also expect everybody to refrain from mob justice. If we want to restore the majesty of law we have to use all our energy to prevent personal revenge, although this would be only too understandable in human terms as a passionate reaction to violated rights and emotional wounds. Anybody with a grievance should lay a charge at any public office of his choice. His charges will be referred to the right office. But the charge must be genuine. False charges will be punished; anonymous charges will land in the waste paper basket.

2. We want to restore morality, and intend to do this in all areas of private and public life.

Senior dignitaries up to the highest ranks have fostered corruption to a hitherto unprecedented extent within our nation, which used to be so clean. While our soldiers fight abroad, bleed, are killed in action or lose their limbs, men like Göring and other bigwigs lead a life of luxury, steal precious gems, paintings and other valuables, fill their cellars and attics with supplies and urge the people to hold out. And meanwhile they and their entourage shirk the sacrifice being made outside. All evildoers will be brought to justice with the full rigor of the law; dishonestly obtained goods will be confiscated and returned to the injured parties.

The deferments for political reasons are abolished. Every man fit for military service can prove at the front what he is and how far he is capable of holding out. We do not intend to tolerate any more blustering about the ability to hold out.

Securing the law and propriety includes proper treatment of all human beings. The persecution of the Jews, which has been conducted with the most inhuman and merciless methods, in deeply shameful ways that cannot even be recompensed, is to cease immediately. Anybody who thought they could get rich with Jewish property will learn that it is a disgrace for any German to try to obtain property dishonestly. In fact, the German people want to have nothing at all to do with such marauders and sharks among God's creatures.

We feel it as a deep dishonor to the name of Germany that in the occupied territories crimes of every kind have been committed in the rear of the fighting troops and abusing their protective function. This is a stain on the honor of our fallen countrymen.

Anybody who has used the war outside to fill his pockets or has otherwise deviated an inch from the standard of honor will be brought to justice. From this moment on, the punishment will be particularly severe for those caught committing any crime against the accepted rules of international law and the laws of humanity. The first rules of humanity are learned by individuals in the family. One of the foremost tasks of the state is to restore the health of the family as the primordial unit of the national community. This requires the help of parents, the strength of religion and the collaboration of all the Churches. Clean and healthy family life can only be developed on the basis of a serious, consciously responsible conception of the life-long bond of marriage. If we do not want our

children to run wild, we have to combat double standards; for how can parents demand proper behavior from their children when they themselves do not obey discipline and fail to set the best example to them. The life of our nation will only be restored to health when families become healthy again.

We do not want our people to be divided. We know that many people entered the ranks of the National Socialist Party for idealistic reasons, because they were embittered about the dictat of Versailles and its effects in relation to certain national indignities, while others were compelled to join the Party under extreme economic or other pressure. The nation should not be divided on these lines. We hope we are all agreed that the only distinction to be made is between crimes and unscrupulousness on the one hand, and propriety and decency on the other. This is the basis on which we intend to work with all our might towards the internal reconciliation of our people. For only if we remain united, but on the basis of justice and propriety, can we win the struggle of destiny that God is imposing on our people.

3. We will fight against the lie; the sun of truth shall dispel its dense fog. Our people has been deceived in the most shameless way about economic, financial and political as well as military events. The true facts will be established and made public, so that every individual can check them. It is a great mistake to assume that a government has license to lie in order to persuade people to support its goals. God acknowledges no double standard in His order. Even the lies of governments have short wings and are always born of cowardice or lust for power. Success in asserting our national status, the happiness of the people and individual peace of mind can only be developed on the basis of truthfulness. We will consequently do all we can to serve the truth in all the information we give to the people. The truth is often harsh, but a nation that can no longer bear it at all is lost in any case. An individual can only summon the right strength if he sees the situation as it is. The mountain climber who underestimates the height of the summit he wants to reach, the swimmer who misjudges the distance he has to swim will realize that he has used up his strength too quickly. Everything to do with artificial propoganda is consequently abolished; this applies equally to the Reich Propaganda Ministry and the Wehrmacht's propoganda formations, which have been misused for play-acting, indeed for unscrupulousness. The life and death of our soldiers needs no propoganda; it is deeply engraved in the heart of every German wife and mother, indeed every German in our home country.

4. The shattered freedom of spirit, of conscience, of religious belief and of opinion will be restored.

The Churches are to regain the right to work freely for their confession. In future they will exist separately from the state because they can only fulfill their task properly if they are independent and remote from any kind of active political involvement. The work of the state will be imbued with Christian conviction in word and deed, because it is to Christianity that we owe the rise of the white peoples and the ability to fight the bad urges in ourselves. No national and state community can abdicate this struggle. But genuine Christianity also demands tolerance towards those with other beliefs, in fact towards every free thinker. The state will give the Church the opportunity once again to play an active role in the sense of true Christianity, particularly in the fields of welfare and education.

The press shall be free again. In wartime it must submit to the restrictions imperative for any country at war. Anybody who reads a newspaper shall be told who is behind that newspaper. The press will not be allowed to tell untruths consciously or negligently.

The editors in chief will ensure by strict disciplinary jurisdiction that the press observes the laws of propriety in relation to each individual and its obligation in relation to the welfare of the fatherland.

5. Young Germans in particular are calling for truthfulness. If there were any need for proof of the divine nature of human beings, we have it here. Even children, with instinctual awareness of what is true and false, turn away in shame and anger from the dishonesty of opinions and speeches they are forced to hear. The greatest crime has probably been to disregard and abuse this instinct for truthfulness and with it the idealism of our young people. We therefore want to protect and strengthen it – the young and their education is one of our main concerns. In the first place parents should be given responsibility for this education. In every school, elementary basic knowledge has to be implanted clearly and securely in the child. Education must once again be as general as possible, encompassing the heart and mind. The premature specialization in education, which is to blame for so many things, will be abolished. It is irresponsible because nobody can predict in which direction the greatest talents of the growing child will develop.

Education must once again be consciously based on the religious Christian principle, but should not violate the Christian laws of utmost tolerance towards people with other beliefs. On this basis the education and training system must once again be directed calmly and steadily and preserved from constant changes and disruptions.

6. The administration must be reorganized. Things that have proved their worth will not be overturned. But it is necessary immediately to restore clear responsibility and the freedom for independent decisions. Our once-proud administration has become a mass of machines and little machines blindly carrying out orders. Nobody dares to make an independent and correct decision any more. We will demand the opposite from public servants. They should do the right thing with great simplicity and minimal red tape.

The public servant must once again become an example in his whole way of working and living, because the people has entrusted him with public authority. Only a man who is honest, has acquired specialist qualifications, toughened his character and proved his efficiency may exercise this responsibility. There will be an end to public servants carrying party cards. The public servant shall once again obey only the law and his own conscience. He must show he is conscious and worthy of the distinction he enjoys that the national community guarantees him a secure life whereas others have to struggle for the bare necessities. In his public standing and authority he should dedicate himself completely to striving for the ideal of living up to his special position by special fulfillment of duty.

To enable public servants to work unimpeachably and to spare the people the effects of unworthy officials exercising public authority, all appointments and promotions made since January 1, 1933 are declared temporary. Each individual official will be examined as to whether he has broken the law or disciplinary rules, or violated the rules of propriety required of every public servant. If this is proved, the appropriate consequences will follow in terms of punishment, discharge, transfer etc. Disciplinary tribunals for public servants will be part of this process. Temporary officials whose performance does not meet the requirements of their office will be transferred to posts that suit their abilities or, if this is not possible, discharged. Luxury has no place in public offices; comfort is a matter for the individual in his own home. The heads of authorities are instructed to introduce the requisite measures immediately.

7. Regulation of the administration, just distribution and fulfillment of communal tasks are only possible on the basis of a constitution. A conclusive constitution can be laid down only after the end of the war with the agreement of the people, because the soldiers at the front have a claim to participate in this and exercise special influence. For the moment we shall all have to be content with a provisional constitution that will be proclaimed simultaneously with this declaration. It is binding for us as well.

Prussia will be absorbed into the Reich. The Prussian provinces, combined together in some cases, will become a Reich province like

the other German states. The regional administration of the Reich provinces, districts, and municipalities will be allocated those public tasks which are compatible in some way with the unity of the Reich and its purposeful governance. Genuine self-administration will be restored in conjunction with the people as soon as elections of some kind are possible. Meanwhile a temporary directive will ensure that honest men are appointed to administrative and consultative bodies and that it can work responsibly on its own.

In all the Reich provinces, Reich governors, whose nomination will take place immediately, will exercise supervision in the name of the Reich. As far as possible they will take a reserved position towards the organs of self-administration, but they will also act decisively to ensure the unity of the Reich.

8. During the war the economy can only be run in its present form of controlled economy and supervised districts. Everybody will understand that a freer economy is not possible as long as there is a lack of essential goods, unless we intended to get down to business and cold-heartedly disregard the existential interests of the less well off. We know only too well how repugnant this economy is, that it does not – as so often claimed – serve the real interests of the final consumer. For the moment we can merely simplify it and remove the obscurities, the confusion about competencies and the lack of awareness of responsibility. We will also revoke all measures that have encroached too far on the freedom of the individual and have destroyed livelihoods in trade, artisanship, business, industry and agriculture without due consideration or urgent necessity.

Even if this is unavoidable during the war – as is the case in any other country at war – we will still clearly pursue the objective of restoring complete economic freedom and access to the goods of the world. This should not be disrupted by state interventions that stifle the joy of creation and opportunities for creativity. Rather, economic freedom shall only be restricted by the law, by measures to guarantee genuine competition and by an upright attitude. Given the dearth of raw materials in our fatherland and the fact that we cannot feed ourselves from the products of our soil alone, autarchy is a cowardly abnegation of the opportunity to participate in the goods and achievements of the whole world through exchange of services.

The goal of just economic regulation is to give everybody a share in industrial goods according to his performance. It is not merely a case of establishing free initiative for capital ownership and forcing it to compete on the market. No, German workers must and will be given the opportunity to be involved creatively in responsibility as well. But we cannot exempt them from the effects of the natural laws that govern the economy.

Property is the basis of all economic and cultural progress; without it, man gradually degenerates into an animal. It will therefore be protected, whether it belongs to the big magnate or the smallest property owner whose only possessions are his household goods. We will combat the misuse of property as well as the concentration of capital, which is superfluous and merely increases people's lack of independence.

The regulation of economic activity will be developed on the basis of self-administration. The system of keeping people on a string from above, which has been practiced up to now, will be abolished. It is important to restore the beneficial effects of independent decision-making and thus responsibility; to restore everybody's confidence, including the workers', in the justice of the economic system to the greatest possible extent. Here, too, disciplinary tribunals must ensure the correct procedures.

9. The content of social policy, the state policy aimed at conciliation, emerges from this. Its intention is to protect weakness arising through no fault of one's own and to give people the opportunity to insure themselves jointly and severally against the adversities of life. It should also play a part in situations where the interest in preserving savings (capital) comes in conflict with the interest of securing the labor power of those who are living now.

Such conflicts of interest can arise in times of great political and economic tension. It would be very superficial to solve them in such a way that capital, i.e., savings, were simply wiped out. It would benefit the small saver just as little as it would serve the interests of the entire nation if, for example, all farms and all industrial firms suddenly had no machines. On the other hand these capital goods are worthless if they cannot be made more productive for the maintenance of the people who are living now. It is therefore a matter of being conscious of responsibility and scrupulous in finding a just conciliation, whereby each individual can be conscious from the start that he and everybody else has to make sacrifices.

If individual professional and industrial branches do not have sufficient strength and responsibility for such conciliation, all economically active citizens must be involved, and in extreme cases a just conciliation on the shoulders of the entire people must be secured by the state. To the extent that social institutions relate to the worker they have the right of complete self-administration.

But we should all be aware that the state does not have inexhaustible means. It lives entirely from what its citizens produce and pay to it in taxes. It cannot hand out more to individual citizens than it has available from the productive power of its citizens. We therefore refuse absolutely clearly and decisively to make promises about economic prosperity. We all know that somebody who has squandered his savings has to work particularly hard to restore his accustomed living standard. This is the case in the family, in every association and in the state as well. Any other notions are meaningless. Cheap promises that the state is capable of everything are unscrupulous demagoguery. The state is you with your strength. We and the organs of the state are merely your trustees. Everybody must muster his strength. It is obvious that after the tremendous destruction of this war we all have to work especially hard to provide replacements for clothing, damaged homes and workplaces, and destroyed household goods. And finally, we want to give our children the chance of a better life again. But we are convinced that we are all capable of this if we can only work once more under conditions of justice, propriety, and freedom.

10. The basic precondition of a healthy economy is the regulation of public budgets. Expenditure must be kept within the limits of the real income that the state, provinces, districts, and municipalities can collect from their citizens. It requires effort, character, renunciation and struggle to rebuild this regulatory system; but it is the most important and imperative basis of a stable currency and all economic life. The value of all savings depends on this. The foreign trade on which we have relied for over a hundred years is not possible either without it.

Taxes will be high; but we will ensure all the more rigorously that they are used economically. It is more important for the ordinary citizen to be left with enough for the necessities of life than for public administrations to embellish themselves with splendid facilities and take up tasks that are in contradiction to the simple lifestyle of individuals. We demand similar discernment from the private sector, which must become aware again that luxuriousness in the administration only serves individuals' comfort or need for status, yet everybody has to pay for this in higher prices, or the workers in lower wages. The abolition of the enormous costs of the National Socialist Party is already a start to the healing process.

The principle of regulated state budgets has been abandoned since 1933 by incessant and unscrupulous waste of public funds through increased debt. It was convenient to pretend to the nation that there had been success in raising the general living standard through extravagance. In fact, this was a deplorable method because it consisted of contracting uncontrolled debts. Consequently, during the war, at the very time when every state is forced to engage in enormous expenditure, we will establish the most extreme simplicity and cost-saving in all the public services. We can only begin working on genuine conciliation in every field after the end of this war.

We regard the growing debt burden of all the belligerent and neutral states as an incredibly great danger. It is threatening na-

tional currencies. After this war every state will find itself facing an extraordinarily difficult task. We hope to be able to find solutions for writing off these debts if trust and cooperation between nations can be successfully restored.

11. But the war is still going on. During the war we owe all our work, sacrifice, and love to the men who are defending the fatherland. We have to sustain them with all the emotional and material values we can possibly muster. We are standing side by side with them, but from now on everybody knows that the only sacrifice required is that necessary for the defense of the fatherland and the welfare of the nation, not that which serves a madman's lust for conquest and desire for prestige. And everybody knows that from now on we will fight this war with clean hands, with decency, with the honorable attitude that marks out every good soldier. The victims of the war so far merit our full concern. They do not expect cossetting, but loving kindness and the opportunity to still do something useful with their lives.

In our concern for the front we have to combine what is necessary with the greatest clarity and simplicity. We will put an end to the confusion caused by bombastic commands that are impossible to follow, that demand from industry unproducible numbers of tanks today, aircraft tomorrow and other weapons and equipment the day after. We will only request things that are necessary and serve a purpose. In contrast to the despotic tyranny up to now, we expect everybody assigned to perform tasks to point out errors and discrepancies at the earliest opportunity.

12. We warned against this war that has brought so much suffering to the whole of humanity, and we can therefore speak out frankly.

We believed, and still believe, that there were other possibilities for securing our existential interests. While national dignity requires that we refrain from bitter accusation at the moment, we will ensure that the issue of responsibility will be completely clarified in this matter as well. In the case of Germans, those responsible will be brought to account. Yet however necessary this is, it is more important that we strive for peace. We know that we alone are not masters of war and peace; we are dependent on the others. Although we are aware of this, it would be unworthy to complain about it now. We have to hold out and should not be surprised if we reap what we have sowed. But now at last we want to raise the voice of the real Germany. The Reich Chancellor will broadcast our thoughts about the peace on the radio.

We are deeply convinced that the world is on the brink of one of the gravest decisions that nations and their leaders have ever consciously faced. God himself poses the question of whether we match up to the system of justice he laid down, and whether or not we want to follow his commandments to respect freedom and human dignity and to help each other. We know that this system and these commandments have been dreadfully violated since the nations abandoned the path of blessed peace in the year 1914. Now we are facing the question of whether we use the bitter experience we have been forced to endure and want to move towards reconciliation, just conciliation of interests, and healing the terrible damage through cooperation.

At this hour we must proclaim to you that our most noble task is to clear the name of Germany – which has been deeply dishonored – courageously and patiently. We Germans alone can and must achieve this. Regardless of what material shape it takes, our future depends primarily on doing this with relentless earnestness and sincerity. For God is not there to be called upon as Providence for every passing occasion; rather, he demands that his order and his commandments are not violated, and watches over us to ensure this. It was a fatal error, whose roots originated in the disastrous dictat of Versailles – and which subsequently received sustenance from some things for which Germans were not to blame – to assume that our future could be built on the misery of other nations, on oppressing and despising human dignity. We have

fought against this and regret that we have not been able to tackle this error publicly until today.

We all want to avoid encroaching on other nations' sense of honor. We have to and want to grant everybody else what we demand for ourselves. We believe that it is in the interest of every nation that the peace is lasting. This can only be the case if the peace is just and smoothes a broad path for the cooperation of hands, hearts, and minds.

Trust cannot be forced and induced by talking. But whatever the future may bring: we abhor the cowardly abuse of opponents and are convinced that all the leaders of states want not only the best for their peoples but also a fruitful end to this fighting, and are prepared along with us to relieve as soon as possible the inhuman hardships of this thoughtlessly unleashed total war, hardships that will ultimately reverberate on all nations. [There is an insertion here referring directly to the actual situation.] Conscious of this, and with confidence in the inner strength of our people, we will unwaveringly take the steps towards peace that we are able to take without injury to our people. We know that the German people desires this.

Let us once again take the path of justice, propriety, and mutual respect! We all intend to do our duty in this spirit. Let us sincerely follow the commandments of God written in our conscience in everything we do; even if they are difficult for us, let us do all we can to heal injured souls and relieve suffering. Only then can we create the basis for a secure future for our nation in a family of nations imbued once again with trust, healthy work, and peaceful feelings. We owe it to our fallen soldiers, whose love of their fatherland and brave sacrifice have been outrageously abused, to do this with all our might and with deep sincerity. How many of them who were aware of this abuse felt the fulfillment of their duty become the bitterest moral distress! How much beautiful human happiness has been destroyed all over the world!

May God give us insight and strength so that the meaning of these terrible sacrifices may benefit future generations!