



Government Declaration

Since the government of the Reich has been transferred to us, it is our duty to announce the principles by which we will run the government, and the aims for which we strive.

1. The first task is the reinstatement of the absolute majesty of law. The government itself must be intent on avoiding all despotism, and must therefore submit itself to orderly supervision by the people. During the war, this supervision can be arranged only on a provisional basis. For the time being, sincere, knowledgeable men of all classes will be appointed; we will explain our actions to them, answer any of their questions, and seek their advice. Above all, however, we will commission them to determine precisely the legacy we have taken on in all areas. Every German

will have a more or less conscious understanding for how heavily this legacy weighs upon us. We refuse to address Hitler's responsibility by engaging in the kind of slandering of the enemy that he practiced. Rather, we consider it imperative to practice decency and diligence in establishing the facts, from which this responsibility will result. As far as the war allows, the report that these men will compose will be announced immediately; to the extent possible for the time being, full publication will follow as soon as the situation allows.

We were once proud of our nation's justice and integrity, of the reliability and quality of the German judiciary. All the greater must be all our pain at seeing it almost destroyed.

No human community may exist without law and justice; no man, not even he who believes he may hold it in contempt, may go without it. For every man comes the hour when he calls for justice. God, in his ordering of the universe, in his creation of man and in his commandments, set out for us the necessities of justice, of its fair and impartial administration. He gave us the insight and the power to create worldly institutions to secure it. It is a crime not to follow this order. To do so, it is necessary to reinstate judges' independence and exemption from transfer or dismissal from office. We are well aware that many of the judges were acting under the pressure of extreme terror, but it will be investigated with unrelenting rigor whether judges committed the crime, beyond that, of dispensing justice against the law and their conscience. These judges will be removed from office; to re-establish the nation's trust in the judiciary, laymen will be involved in the adjudication of all criminal cases. This also applies to the drumhead court martials used on a temporary basis.

Justice will be cleansed. It is not the judge's business to impose new law; his task is to apply the law and to do so as meticulously as possible. It is not the judge's business to accommodate an ideology that does not know what it wants and sees its ideas severely deformed by its leaders. It is intolerable that people are sentenced who could not know that their actions were liable to prosecution. Should the state, for instance, have declared retroactively, for example by law, actions of its organs exempt from prosecution, which are in truth punishable, these exemption regulations will be rescinded as incompatible with the nature of the law and those responsible will be called to account.

The law will be imposed on every person who has violated it. All lawbreakers will be given the punishment they deserve.

The security of the individual and of property will be once again protected against despotism. Only a judge may intervene according to the law in these personal rights of the individual, which are indispensable for the existence of the state and for the happiness of the individual.

The concentration camps will be closed down, the innocent released, and the guilty will be tried before an orderly court.

However, we also expect that no one will practice lynch law. If we are to reinstate the majesty of the law, we must expend all possible energy against personal revenge, which would be only too understandable in human terms, out of suffering from violated justice, out of injuries to the soul. Anyone with something on his mind shall file a complaint, to whichever public body he chooses. His complaint will be sent to the correct body. But the complaint must be true. Untruthful

complaints will be punished; anonymous complaints will be disposed of.

2. We intend to re-establish morals, in all areas of private and public life.

Corruption among high and the highest officials has grown, in our previously so pure nation, to an extent never before existing in the world. While outside the country our soldiers are fighting, bleeding, and falling, losing their limbs, men like Göring and others of standing lead a life of luxury, stealing jewels, paintings, and other valuables, filling their basements and attics with provisions, demanding that the nation persevere, and cowardly protecting themselves and their friends and relatives from the sacrifices made outside the country. All miscreants will be held to account with the full rigor of the law; dishonestly obtained property will be confiscated and returned to the damaged parties.

Temporary exemptions from service for political reasons are rescinded. Every man fit for military service can prove on the frontline what he is and how much will he has to persevere. We will no longer tolerate perseverance in name only.

Securing justice and decency includes the decent treatment of all individuals. The persecution of Jews, which has taken place in the most inhumane and ruthless, deeply shaming, and absolutely irredeemable forms, shall be immediately ceased. Anyone who believed he could enrich himself with Jewish assets will learn that it is a disgrace for any German to strive for dishonest possessions. In truth, the German nation wants nothing to do with such marauders and hyenas among God's creations.

We consider it a deep defilement of the German name that crimes of all kinds have been committed in the occupied territories behind the backs of fighting troops and abusing their protection. The honor of our fallen soldiers is sullied by these crimes.

Anyone who has used the war years out there to fill his own pockets or has otherwise strayed one millimeter from the line of honor will be called to account. The punishment will be particularly strict for those who are found violating the general rules of international law and the laws of humanity in any way, from this hour on. The individual learns the first rules of humanity in the family. Healing the family as the cradle of national community is one of the state's most noble tasks. To do so, the state requires the help of parents, the power of religion, the cooperation of all churches. Clean and healthy family life can develop only on the basis of a serious, responsible idea of the life partnership of marriage. War must be declared on double standards if our children are not to degenerate; for how can parents demand cleanliness from their children if they do not keep discipline themselves and set the best example for their children? The life of our

nation will only return to health if families become healthy again.

We do not want a division of our nation. We know that many joined the ranks of the party out of idealism, in resentment over the diktat of Versailles and its effects on many a national indignity; others joined under the extreme pressure of economic and other factors. The nation must not become divided along these lines. We hope we are all in agreement that the only division to be made is that between crimes and lack of conscience on one side and decency and cleanliness on the other. On this basis, we intend to pursue the inner reconciliation of the nation with all our might. For only if we remain united, albeit on the foundation of justice and decency, may we survive the struggle of fate into which God is forcing our nation.

3. We declare battle on lies; the sun of truth shall dissolve their thick fog. Our nation has been lied to in the most shameless way about its economic, financial, and political affairs and about military events. The true facts will be established and made known, so that every individual may check them. It is a gross mistake to assume that a government would be permitted to win over the nation for its aims by means of lies. God knows no double standards in his order. The lies of governments will be found out and are always born out of cowardice or craving for power. Success in maintaining the nation's position and the happiness and peace of mind of its people may be built upon truthfulness only. We therefore will do what we can to serve the truth in every instruction of the nation. Truths are often hard; but any nation that can no longer suffer them is lost in any case. The individual can find sufficient strength only when he sees the situation the way it is. The mountain climber who underestimates the height of the peak to be scaled, the swimmer who does not correctly assess the distance to be swum, will see his strength used up prematurely. Everything to do with artificial propaganda shall therefore be eliminated; this applies as much to the Reich Ministry of Propaganda as to acting, and indeed to the unscrupulousness of misused Wehrmacht propaganda information. The life and death of our soldiers do not require propaganda; this has been deeply impressed upon the heart of every German wife and mother, indeed of every German in the homeland.

4. The shattered freedom of the mind, of conscience, of belief, and of opinion shall be restored.

The churches shall once again have the right to act freely in the interests of their confession. In the future, they will exist separately from the state, because they can fulfill their task only in autonomy and at a distance from all political activity. The actions of the state will be imbued with Christian convictions in

word and deed; for it is to Christianity that we owe the advancement of the white peoples, the ability to combat the base urges within us. No national or state community can do without this fight. However, genuine Christianity also demands tolerance toward people of other faiths, indeed toward every free-thinker. The state will enable the church to once again operate in the sense of true Christianity, in particular in the areas of charity and education.

The press shall be free again. During the war, it must submit to the restrictions that are imperative for a country in any war. Anyone who reads a newspaper shall know who is behind that newspaper. The press will no longer be allowed to state untruths, either with intent or through negligence.

The editors will ensure, through a strict jurisdiction of honor, that the laws of decency toward every individual and the duty to the good of the fatherland are also observed in the press.

5. It is above all German youth who are calling for the truth. Were there any need for proof of the divine nature of man, we have it here. Even children, in natural recognition of what is true and false, are turning away in shame and horror from the untrue nature of conviction and speech burdened upon them. It was presumably the greatest crime to disregard and abuse this sense of truthfulness and with it the idealism of our youth. We therefore want to protect and strengthen it—the youth and how to raise them is one of our main concerns. The responsibility of raising children shall be primarily entrusted to the parents. Elementary knowledge must be implanted in children simply, sincerely, and safely in all schools. Education must once again be as general as possible, appealing to the heart and the mind. Premature educational specialization, which is to blame for so much, will be abolished. It is irresponsible, as no one can predict the direction in which the growing child's best abilities will develop.

The raising of children must be returned to its Christian religious basis, without the Christian laws of utmost tolerance toward people of other faiths being violated. On this basis, the system of raising and educating children must be run calmly and consistently once again and remain safeguarded against constant changes and upsets.

6. The administration must be reorganized. That which has proved itself will not be overturned. However, it is necessary to immediately restore clear responsibility and freedom for autonomous decisions. Our once so proud administration has become a heap of senselessly implementing machines and devices. No one dares any longer to make an autonomous and correct decision. We will demand the opposite of public servants. With little paperwork, they shall act correctly and with the utmost simplicity.

The public servant must once again set an example in his entire office and way of life, for the nation has entrusted him with public authority. This authority may be exercised only by those who are sincere, who have obtained knowledge of their field, have steered their character, and proved their ability in their post. We will put an end to the party-member public servant. The public servant shall once again obey solely the law and his conscience. He must show himself conscious and worthy of the distinction that the national community grants him a secure life while others must struggle for the most necessary requirements. He shall thrive in his respect and in his rights, in the idealistic striving to do justice to his particular position by fulfilling his duty with utmost diligence.

To enable public servants to return to this faultless way of working and to spare the nation the exercise of public authority by unworthy individuals, all appointments and promotions made since 1.1.1933 are declared provisional. Each and every public servant will be checked as to whether he has violated the law, disciplinary rules, or the decency required of every public servant. When a violation is established, the corresponding consequences will be enforced by means of punishment, dismissal, demotion, etc. Courts of honor made up of public servants will be involved in this procedure. Provisional public servants whose performance does not meet the requirements of their office will be demoted to positions of which they are capable or, if this is not possible, dismissed. There is no place for luxury in public offices; comfort is the domain of each individual's home. The heads of administration are instructed to initiate the required measures immediately.

7. The organization of the administration, fair distribution, and fulfillment of community tasks are only possible on the basis of a constitution. A final constitution can only be adopted with the people's approval once the war has ended. The soldiers on the front have a right to be involved to a particular extent in this project. Thus, we must all content ourselves for the time being with a provisional constitution, to be announced simultaneously. We too are bound to this constitution.

Prussia is dissolved into the Reich. The Prussian provinces and the other German states, in some cases combined, are to become *Reichsgaue*. The self-administration of these regions, and of the districts and municipalities, will be entrusted with those public tasks compatible in any way with the unity of the Reich and the purposeful running of the Reich. Genuine self-administration will be restored in affinity with the people as soon as any elections are possible. For the time being, provisional ordinance will ensure that the administration appoints sincere men to its administrative and advisory bodies and is able to work autonomously.

In all *Reichsgaue*, supervision in the name of the Reich will be performed by Reich governors, who will be appointed in the very near future. They will exercise as much restraint as possible with respect to the organs of self-administration, but also act energetically in favor of the unity of the Reich.

8. During the war, the economy can only be continued in its existing form of coerced economy and supervised circles. As long as there are shortages of essential goods, everyone will concede that a freer economy is not possible, unless one were to coldheartedly return to business as usual, ignoring the interests of those of small means. We are well aware how repellent this form of economy is, and that it does not, as so often maintained, serve the true interests of every last consumer. For the time being, we can only simplify it and liberate it from unclear elements, a muddle of competencies, and a wanting sense of responsibility. We will also abolish all measures that have interfered too severely in the freedom of the individual and have destroyed economic existences in retail, the trades, industry, and agriculture without consideration or strict necessity.

While this is unavoidable during the war, as it is incidentally in all other states at war, we nevertheless are equally pursuing the goal of restoring full economic freedom and access to the goods of the world. This may not be disturbed by state intervention, which suffocates creative joy and creative possibility; instead, economic freedom shall be restrained only by the law, by securing fair competition, and by decent conviction. In view of our fatherland's paucity of raw materials and the fact that we cannot nourish ourselves from our own land alone, autarchy is a cowardly relinquishment of the possibility to take part in the goods and services of the entire world through the exchange of services.

The goal of a fair economic system is that every individual is granted the share of economic goods corresponding to his performance. It is not merely a question of establishing the free initiative of capital ownership and forcing it to compare performance in competition. No, the German worker too must and will receive an opportunity to take part creatively in responsibility. However, we cannot release him from the effects of the natural laws prevailing in the economy.

Property is the foundation of all economic and cultural progress; otherwise man gradually descends to the level of animals. It will therefore be protected, not only in the hands of the large property owner, but also in the hands of the smallest property owner, whose only possessions are his household goods. The abuse of property will be combatted just as much as the superfluous agglomeration of capital, which only increases people's lack of independence.

The organization of the economy will be founded on self-administration. The previously practiced system of patronization from above will be abolished. The aim is to make the autonomy of a decision and thus responsibility once again a beneficial force; the aim is to restore the trust of all, including the workers, in the justice of the economic system to the greatest possible extent. Here, too, courts of honor must ensure fairness.

9. The result of this is the content of state policy aimed at equalization—social policy. This policy is intended to protect those weak by no fault of their own and give them the opportunity to secure themselves against life's adversities by means of solidarity. It should also take effect where the interest in retaining savings (capital) comes into conflict with the interest in securing the labor of those living now. Such conflicts of interest may occur in times of political and economic turmoil. It would be very reckless to solve them in such a way that capital, i.e. savings, is destroyed. That would appeal to the modest saver just as little as it would serve the interests of the nation as a whole, if for instance all farms and all factories were suddenly without machines. On the other hand, these capital goods have no value if they cannot be utilized for maintaining those people living now. Thus, the aim is to use responsibility and conscientiousness to find a fair balance, in which every individual is aware from the outset that he must make sacrifices, just as everyone else must.

Should the strength and responsibility of the individual professions and industries not suffice for such equalizations, all economically active citizens must take part, and in the most extreme case the state must secure a fair balance on the shoulders of the entire nation. In cases where social institutions concern the workers, the institutions will receive the right to full self-administration.

However, we must all know that the state does not have inexhaustible means. The state, too, lives only on what its citizens produce and contribute to it. It cannot give more to individual citizens than it has available from this economic strength of its citizens. We therefore refuse, with all clarity and resolution, to give promises of economic prosperity. Every one of us knows that he who has dealt unwisely with his savings must work particularly hard to regain his accustomed standard of living. Just as it is in the family, in every association, so it is in the state. Any other ideas are pointless. Cheap promises that the state can do everything are unscrupulous demagoguery. The state is all of you with your strengths. We and the organs of the state are merely your trustees. Everyone must mobilize his strengths. It is obvious that, after the terrible destruction of this war, we must all work particularly hard to produce replacements for clothing, for destroyed homes and workplaces, and for obliterated household goods. And ultimately, we want to enable our children to lead better lives. However, we are convinced that we are all capable of doing so, if only we can once again work in a state of law, decency, and freedom.

10. The basic prerequisite for a healthy economy is the organization of the public budgets. Expenditure must remain within the parameters of the genuine income that the state, *Gaue*, districts, and municipalities can draw from their citizens. Restoring this order demands effort, character, sacrifice, and struggle; however, it is the most important and indispensable foundation of a secure currency and of all economic life. The value of all of our savings depends upon it. Without it, no foreign trade is possible, which we have relied on for more than a hundred years.

Taxes will be considerable; however, we will ensure all the more strictly that they are used sparingly. It is more important that the citizens are allowed what they need to live than that the administration equips itself with magnificent offices and undertakes tasks that conflict with the individual's simple way of life. We demand such an insight from industry, too, which must come to appreciate once again that elaborateness in administration serves only the comfort or the craving for prestige of individuals, but must be borne by everyone in the form of higher prices or by the workers in the form of lower wages. The cessation of the party's enormous expenditure has made a start toward healing this problem.

The principle of ordered state budgets has been abandoned since 1933 through the constant and unscrupulous wasting of means through the mounting of debt. It was convenient to lead the people to believe, by means of profligacy, that the state had succeeded in raising general wealth. In truth, this method was deplorable, for it consisted of uninhibited piling up of debt. We will therefore, particularly during the war in which every state is forced to make enormous expenditures, establish extreme simplicity and frugality in all public services. Genuine balancing can only begin everywhere once this war has ended.

We regard the growing burden of debt in all warring and neutral states as a very great risk. It is a threat to national currencies. Every state will face an extremely difficult task after this war. We hope to find solutions to redeem the state's debt, if it proves possible to restore trusting cooperation between the nations.

11. Now, however, we are still at war. In wartime all of our work, sacrifice, and love is due to the men defending the fatherland. We must supply them with all of the emotional and material values we can possibly produce. We stand in rank and file with them, but all now know that only those sacrifices necessary for the defense of the fatherland and the good of the nation are demanded, not those serving an insane man's craving to conquer and demand for prestige; all know that we will further conduct this war with clean hands, with decency, with the sense of honor that distinguishes every good soldier. The victims of this war up to now deserve our full concern. They expect not pampering, but love and the possibility to make something useful of their lives.

In our concern over the front, we must unite what is necessary with the greatest clarity and simplicity; we are putting an end to the to-and-fro of bombastic, impossible commands, which today demand that the economy produce impossible numbers of tanks, tomorrow planes, and the day after that other weapons and devices. Only what is necessary and appropriate will be ordered. In contrast to the previous despotic tyranny, we expect every individual called upon to implement orders to point out errors and discrepancies in good time and of his own accord.

12. We warned against this war, which has caused all of mankind so much suffering, and we can therefore speak candidly.

We were and are of the opinion that there were other possibilities for securing our vital interests. While national dignity currently demands that we refrain from bitter accusations, we nevertheless will ensure that here, too, the responsibilities are absolutely clarified and those responsible are called to account, provided they are Germans. As necessary

as this is, it is more important that we strive for peace. We know that we are not the sole masters of war and peace; we are dependent on others. We are aware of this, but it would be undignified to be self-pitying for this reason alone. We must endure and not be surprised if we reap what has been sown. Now, however, we want to raise the voice of the true Germany at last. The Reich Chancellor will announce our thoughts concerning peace via radio.

We are deeply aware that the world is facing one of the most serious decisions that the nations and their leaders have ever consciously faced. God himself is posing to us the question of whether we are willing to comply with the order of justice he set and follow his commandments to respect freedom and human dignity and to help one another. We know that this order and these commandments have been terribly violated since the nations left the path of blessed peace in 1914. Now we are facing the question of whether we have made use of the bitter experiences we have been through and are willing to turn to reconciliation, to fair settlement of interests, and to the healing of the terrible damage done, through cooperation.

At this hour, we must announce to you that it is our most noble task to bravely and patiently wash clean the repeatedly defiled name of Germany. Only we Germans can and must fulfill this task. Our future depends primarily on us doing so in relentless earnest and sincerity, no matter what material form that future takes. For God is not there to be called upon as providence at every opportunity; he makes demands too, and keeps watch that his order and his commandments are not violated. It would be a terrible mistake, the roots of which go back to the disastrous diktat of Versailles, a mistake that has meanwhile been nourished by others than the Germans, to assume that our future could be built upon the misfortune of other nations, on oppression and disregard for human dignity. We have fought and complained against the fact that we can only now tackle this mistake openly.

None of us wants to offend the honor of other nations. What we demand for ourselves, we must and intend to concede to all others. We believe it is in the interest of all nations for the peace to be lasting. This is only possible if it is a just peace and carves a broad path for cooperation of hands, minds, and hearts.

Trust cannot be forced or talked into existence. But whatever the future may bring, we despise cowardly insulting of the enemy and are convinced that all heads of state want not only the best for their nations, but also a fruitful end to this fighting, and will be prepared along with us to lessen the inhumane severities of the recklessly unleashed total war at once, severities that have affected all nations.

(A further statement on the current situation is to be inserted here.)

In this knowledge and in trust in the inner strength of our nation, we will unerringly take the steps we can take toward peace without damaging our nation. We know that the German nation wants this peace.

Let us walk once again the path of justice, of decency, and of mutual respect! Let us all fulfill our duty in such a spirit. Let us earnestly and in all respects follow God's commandments inscribed upon our conscience, even if they affect us severely; let us do all we can to heal wounded souls and lessen suffering. Only then can we create the foundation for a secure future of our nation, too, in a family of nations once again fulfilled with trust, healthy labor, and peaceful feelings. We owe it to our fallen soldiers to do so with all our strength and sacred earnest, those soldiers whose love for the fatherland and courage for sacrifice have been wickedly abused. For how many of them who had realized this did fulfillment of duty become a bitter moral dilemma! How much wonderful human happiness has been destroyed all over the world!

May God grant us insight and strength to lend this terrible sacrifice a purpose for the benefit of future generations!

