

Adolf Hitler Visits the National Political Educational Institute [*Napola*] in Graz (April 1941)

Abstract

On April 20, 1933, Hitler's 44th birthday, Bernhard Rust (then Prussian Minister of Education) founded three "National Political Educational Institutes" [*Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalten*, also known as *Napolas*] for the education of the future Nazi elite. The schools primarily emphasized military and physical training. By 1939, sixteen had been opened. *Napolas* were supposed to provide the army, the SS, and the police with their next generation of officers. Admission to a *Napola* was based chiefly on the presentation of a medical certificate attesting to the applicant's outstanding "racial" and physical characteristics. Additionally, prospective students had to show exceptional courage and aggressiveness in athletic competitions. Their political education was guided by representatives of the SS and SA. As state institutions, the *Napolas* were actually supposed to follow the standard school curriculum, but they failed to do so because they lacked qualified teachers. The SS ultimately assumed complete control over the *Napolas*, whereupon their academic standards dropped even further. After the war began, the age at which students were inducted into military service steadily declined. Instead of educating the new Nazi elite, the *Napolas* primarily supplied the movement with younger and younger cannon fodder.

Source



Source: Adolf Hitler at the Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalt (*Napola*) Graz, April 1941. Unknown photographer.

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