

Propaganda Poster for the Four-Year Plan (1938)

Abstract

In 1936, the government introduced a new economic initiative, the Four-Year Plan, under the administrative leadership of Hermann Goering. The Four-Year Plan was designed to prepare Germany for war by 1940 by converting the entire economy to the production of arms, military equipment, and munitions, and by achieving autarky—that is, making Germany economically self-sufficient, so as to sustain a war effort without relying on trade for crucial supplies like fuel or food. Yet achieving autarky meant more than a major shift in government initiatives; everyday Germans were also expected to contribute to this titanic effort, as this poster suggests. By calling on Germans to recycle their used goods and curb their use of consumable goods, the regime hoped to lessen the strain on the German economy and reduce the need to secure goods abroad. Beyond merely convincing Germans to help in such material ways, however, posters such as this also reminded Germans of their duty to the racial community—and to the Reich. Therefore, they also helped cultivate a greater sense of belonging and obligation to the state. The text reads: “Everyone must help. Your duties under the Four-Year-Plan.”

Source



Source: Poster, 1938. Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin, Inv. Nr. Do2 63/492.

Deutsches Historisches Museum

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