

Referendum on the Annexation [*Anschluss*] of Austria to the German Reich: Advertisement for “Yes” Votes in Hamburg (April 1, 1938)

Abstract

Like many of his most spectacular domestic and foreign policy actions, Hitler also had the Austrian annexation [*Anschluss*] retroactively approved by a referendum. On April 10, 1938, the Nazis held a referendum that in no way accorded with free and democratic ideals. The text of the referendum ballot read, “Do you agree with the March 13, 1938, reunification of Austria with the German Reich, and do you vote for the party of our leader Adolf Hitler?” Voters had two options to choose from: a large circle labeled “Yes” and a smaller one labeled “No.” According to official figures, over 99% of Germans and Austrians approved the measure.

As the following photograph makes clear, the Nazi propaganda machine was operating in high gear in the lead up to the referendum. The façade of this Hamburg building conveys a straightforward message to the public: vote “yes.” The banner underneath it reads, “With Hitler for an Honorable Peace and Equal Standing!”

Source



Source: Referendum on the “Anschluss” of Austria to the German Reich – nightly advertising for “Vote Yes”. Hamburg, April 1938. Photo: Joseph Schorer.

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