

SS Marriage Order (December 31, 1931)

Abstract

When Himmler took over the SS [*Schutzstaffel*] in January 1929, it was a relatively unimportant paramilitary party organization. But Himmler had great plans: he wanted to transform the SS into the organizational and ideological—but above all, the racial-biological—elite of the German *Volk*. To this end, he began to recruit new, “pure-blood” members, who had to prove their “racial superiority” in a stringent process of selection and training. On December 31, 1931, Himmler issued the following Engagement and Marriage Order. His goal was to protect the racial potential of the SS men by instructing them to marry and procreate with women of equal “racial worth” and thus advance the biological “up-breeding” of the SS.

Source

Reichsführer SS
SS Command—A—No. 65

1. The SS is a band of German men of strictly Nordic descent chosen according to certain principles.
2. In accordance with National Socialist ideology and in the realization that the future of our *Volk* [people] rests upon the preservation of the race through selection and the healthy inheritance of good blood, I hereby institute the “Marriage Certificate” for all unmarried members of the SS, effective January 1, 1932.
3. The desired aim is to create a hereditarily healthy clan of a strictly Nordic German sort.
4. The marriage certificate will be awarded or denied solely on the basis of racial health and heredity.
5. Every SS man who intends to get married must procure for this purpose the marriage certificate of the Reichsführer SS.
6. SS members who marry despite having been denied marriage certificates will be stricken from the SS; they will be given the choice of withdrawing.
7. Working out the details of marriage petitions is the task of the “Race Office” of the SS.
8. The Race Office of the SS is in charge of the “Clan Book of the SS,” in which the families of SS members will be entered after being awarded the marriage certificate or after the petition to enter into marriage is approved.
9. The Reichsführer SS, the leader of the Race Office, and the specialists of this office [*Referenten*] are duty-bound to secrecy on their word of honor.
10. The SS believes that, with this command, it has taken a step of great significance. Derision, scorn, and incomprehension do not move us; the future belongs to us!

Reichsführer SS
H. Himmler

Source of English translation: SS Marriage Order (December 31, 1931). In United States Chief Counsel for the Prosecution of Axis Criminality, *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, Volume IV. Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1946, Document 2284-PS [The History, Mission, and Organization of the Schutzstaffeln of the NSDAP, compiled on the Commission of the Reichsführer-SS by the SS-Standartenführer Gunter d'Alquen, 1939], pp. 976–77. English translation attributed to Nuremberg staff; edited by GHI staff. Available online at:
https://www.loc.gov/item/2011525363_NT_Nazi_Vol-IV/

Source of original German text: SS-Heiratsbefehl (31. Dezember 1931). In Internationaler Militärgerichtshof Nürnberg, *Der Nürnberger Prozess gegen die Hauptkriegsverbrecher vom 14. November 1945 bis 1. Oktober 1946: Urkunden und anderes Beweismaterial*. Published in Nuremberg 1948. Munich: Delphin Verlag, 1989. Volume XXX: Amtlicher Text – Deutsche Ausgabe, Nummer 2239-PS bis Nummer 2582-PS. Document 2284-PS [Überblick über Geschichte, Aufgaben und Organisation der SS nach dem Stand von 1939 (Beweisstück US-438)], p. 134.

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