

The Völkischer Beobachter Justifies the Purge in Response to the “Röhm Putsch” (July 3, 1934)

Abstract

Even before “Operation Hummingbird,” Hitler saw to it that rumors were spread about a possible coup d’état being planned by the SA. The day after the purge, propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels declared that Ernst Röhm and Kurt von Schleicher had been plotting a “second revolution,” which the Nazis had managed to thwart, thus saving the country from chaos. The National Socialist press also stressed the homosexuality and alleged perversion of Röhm and his followers, who, as the party emphasized, no longer presented any moral danger to the German people. On July 3, 1934, the regime decreed the “Law on State Self-Defense Measures” [Gesetz über Maßnahmen der Staatsnotwehr, or *Staatsnotwehrgesetz*], which retroactively legalized the political murders committed on what became known as “the Night of the Long Knives.”

The main headline of the July 3, 1934, edition of the *Völkischer Beobachter* reads: “The ‘Second Revolution’: Pledges of Loyalty to the Führer from throughout the Reich. – The Impression the ‘Cleansing-Action’ Made Abroad – Reich Minister Dr. Frick to Civil Servants.” Other headlines read: “A Strong Fist and an Iron Will Rule in Germany,” “The Reich President to the Führer: The German People Saved from Serious Danger,” and “The People Greet the Führer.”

Source



Source: “The Second Revolution,” *Völkischer Beobachter*, front page, July 3, 1934, with a justification of the “purge” after the so-called Röhm Putsch.

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