

The Führer's Decree on Preserving the Purity of the SS and the Police (November 15, 1941)

Abstract

In Himmler's eyes, homosexuality was a plague that damaged the race and robbed the German *Volk* of valuable offspring. Starting in 1936, he pursued its eradication through his Reich Central Office for Combating Abortion and Homosexuality. For members of the SS, which Himmler regarded as an elite racial group, homosexuality was cause for expulsion and severe punishment. It was not until 1941, however, that Himmler was able to extract from the Führer a formal decree that made homosexuality in the SS and the police punishable by death.

Source

The Führer

Führer Headquarters
November 15, 1941

In order to keep the SS and the police free of verminous individuals with same-sex inclinations, I hereby order:

I. For members of the SS and the police, the following penal provision shall replace Paragraphs 175 and 175a of the Reich Penal Code: A member of the SS and the police who commits fornication with another man or allows himself to be abused by another man for purpose of fornication shall be punished by death.

In less serious cases, penal servitude or imprisonment for not less than 6 months may be imposed.

In the case of a member of the SS or the police who was under twenty-one years of age at the time of the offense, and who had been seduced into committing the offense, the court may refrain from imposing punishment in especially minor cases.

II. The implementation of the punishments threatened under [point] I shall be independent of the age of the perpetrator.

III. The offenses referred to in I shall be subject to jurisdiction of the special SS and police courts in accordance with the provisions applicable to them. The jurisdiction of the Wehrmacht courts remains unaffected.

IV. The regulations necessary to implement and supplement this decree shall be issued by the Reichsführer SS and Chief of the German Police in the Reich Ministry of the Interior.

The Fuehrer [signed Adolf Hitler].

Source: Todesstrafe gegen Angehörige von SS und Polizei (November 15, 1941), Bundesarchiv Film 2782/AN 2741216; reprinted in Günter Grau, ed., *Homosexualität in der NS-Zeit: Dokumente einer*

Diskriminierung und Verfolgung. 2nd edition. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2004, p. 244.

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