

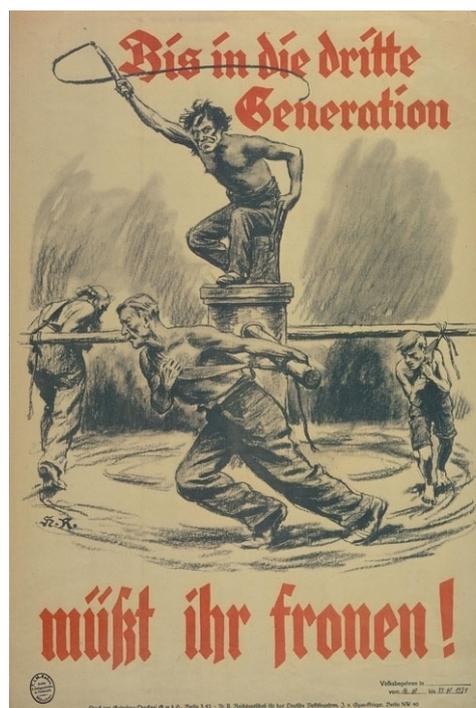
Anti Young Plan Poster by the Reich Committee for a German Referendum (October 1929)

Abstract

The right-wing parties vehemently rejected the Young Plan because they considered the reparations payments too high and the duration too long. Since the Weimar Constitution provided the electorate with the opportunity to directly influence legislation by means of a plebiscite, the political right decided to initiate a referendum in order to effect the rejection of the Young Plan. In July 1929, they formed the “Reich Committee on the Referendum against the Young Plan.” In order to repeal it, they drafted the so-called “Freedom Law,” which declared all provisions of the Versailles Treaty invalid and charged the German signatories of the Young Plan with treason. They hoped the German electorate would vote for this law in the referendum and thus override the Young Plan.

This poster published by the “Reich Commission” represents an example of the propaganda spread by the political right on posters and flyers in the run-up to the referendum. It shows three generations of German men toiling in compulsory labor while being driven on by a whip-cracking (presumably foreign) slave driver. Thus, the poster offers searing criticism of the duration of the plan and on the terms of the reparations, which were considered a form of “enslavement” by the plan’s opponents. The referendum was eventually held on December 22, 1929. Less than 14% of those eligible to vote in it supported a repeal of the Young Plan; thus, the political right’s attempt to change the course of the Republic’s foreign policy had failed. Nevertheless, initiating the referendum brought political success for the NSDAP, since its cooperation with the more established DNVP and other nationalist organizations helped raised the party’s profile and popularity. This, in turn, translated into a significant increase in votes during the next elections in 1930.

Source



Bundesarchiv, Bild 102-015227
Danziger, Rüdiger/Ag. Reichst. 1. Oktober 1929

Source: Poster, October 1929, BA, Plak 002-015-022.

Bundesarchiv

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