

Otto Meissner Exits the Polls (March 1932)

Abstract

This March 1932 photo by press photographer Georg Pahl shows the head of the Reich President's Office, Otto Meissner (1880-1953), exiting the polls after voting in that year's presidential election. Meissner was considered a liberal democrat, yet he declined to join any party over the course of his career, during which he served three very different presidents. He had served as head of Friedrich Ebert's office and was retained by President Hindenburg. An experienced and cosmopolitan civil servant, Meissner was in a position to exert considerable influence on Hindenburg. Historians disagree, however, on how to evaluate his role in Hitler's appointment as Reich Chancellor in December 1932. When Hitler united the office of Reich President with that of Reich Chancellor after Hindenburg's death, Meissner continued to serve in his "Presidential Chancellery" until the fall of the National Socialist regime. When Meissner was tried in the so-called "Wilhelmstraße Trial" in 1949, his position was considered marginal in the context of National Socialist policy and he was exonerated.

Source



Source: Otto Meissner leaving the polling station, March 1932, Photographer: Unknown. BA, Aktuelle-Bilder-Centrale, Georg Pahl, image 102-13240, available online on Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ABundesarchiv_Bild_102-13240%2C_Otto_Mei%C3%9Fner.jpg

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