

## “The Savior” (1925)

### Abstract

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This hagiographic film, unabashedly titled *Der Retter* [The Savior], commemorated Paul von Hindenburg’s inauguration as the Weimar Republic’s second president on May 12, 1925. The title’s use of “savior” suggested that the country needed “saving” from a republic and its center-left politicians whom German conservatives blamed for everything from military defeat and the Versailles Treaty to the Franco-Belgian occupation of the Ruhr and hyperinflation. In this narrative, Hindenburg, framing himself as a selfless war hero and servant of the people, came out of retirement and back into public life for the sake of his country. Footage of military parades and student fraternities appealed to those who had supported Hindenburg’s candidacy and further burnished his image as a strong leader who had emerged from the foundational institutions of German authority. His election had actually resulted, though, from a series of unexpected events, beginning with the sudden death of the republic’s first president, the SPD politician Friedrich Ebert, on February 28, 1925. Hindenburg did not even stand for election in the first round of voting to determine Ebert’s successor. Only when none of those first-round candidates managed to win a majority did anti-republican conservatives decide to approach the 81-year-old Hindenburg about entering the race in the second round. Running as an independent, he narrowly beat his main opponent, the Center Party’s Wilhelm Marx, on April 26. Hindenburg went on to hold the office of president until his own demise in August 1934, a death that paved the way for Hitler to consolidate presidential powers under his newly created title of *Führer*.

### Source

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"The Savior"

A commemorative document on the new Reich President's inauguration on May 11, 1925.

Intertitles:

All these years, Hindenburg lived in modest peace and quiet in his home in Hannover.

April 26, 1925. [presidential elections]

The people remembered their great past and their hero, who now stepped into the breach for the third time.

The people had called. Thus Hindenburg left his hometown of Hannover on May 11, 1925.

His journey to Berlin resembled a triumphal procession.

The capital gave him an enthusiastic welcome.

His new home.

On May 12, Hindenburg swore an oath on the constitution before parliament.

The Great Naval Parade at Swinemünde.

Our military's autumn maneuvers held in the presence of the president

The foreign powers' military attachés as guests

At the liberation celebrations in Bonn.

Reich President von Hindenburg at the dedication of the monument for the fallen members of the Queen Augusta Guard Grenadier Regiment.

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Source: *Der Retter*, prod. Erich Stoecker, 1925. Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv Filmwerk ID: 37765.  
<https://digitaler-lesesaal.bundesarchiv.de/video/37765/630407>

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