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What propaganda meant to Joseph Goebbels and Nazi Germany

- Speech to the Press on the Establishment of a Reich Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda (March 15, 1933), in: Joseph Goebbels, *Revolution der Deutschen: 14 Jahre Nationalsozialismus*. Oldenburg, 1933, pp. 135-50.

http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/docpage.cfm?docpage_id=2430

Source of English translation: Jeremy Noakes and Geoffrey Pridham, eds., *Nazism, 1919-1945*, Vol. 2: *State, Economy and Society 1933-1939*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1983-88, p. 393, source 275.

Joseph Goebbels gave speeches to the Reich Ministry with how the propaganda was going to proceed. This particular speech was given in 1933 and its accompanying book was published also in 1933. Goebbels was the Reich Minister of Propaganda in Nazi Germany. He was born in 1897 and died in 1945. His main goal was to mobilize the people under the party. The Nazis controlled the press and entertainment and it was his job to disseminate all the party propaganda in order to have the people on the Nazis' side and unite the nation. These texts of his speeches can be found in *Revolution der Deutschen: 14 Jahre Nationalsozialismus* (pages 135-150), or on the GHDI webpage that published excerpts of his speech.

On March 15 and March 25 1933, Joseph Goebbels gave two incredibly important speeches about his new role in the Reich Ministry of propaganda, and the use of propaganda. Goebbels wanted a united Germany and his belief was that propaganda was how to achieve this. In his first speech, he calls the Nazi government the "people's government," implying a link between the party and the people, achieved through propaganda.

Goebbels kept extensive diaries and wrote about the two speeches in them. There are quite a few differences between his speech and what he wrote in his diaries. The speeches are grandiose and give a sense of incredible importance to his role and the role of the Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda. The diary entries show all the work to be done within the Ministry to make it as successful as he envisions it being, namely getting rid of old time leaders and putting in new Nazi ones. He gave these speeches as a way to move the Ministry

forward; his audience being the Officials and Directors of the Radio Corporation. He envisaged all of Germany being behind the Nazis, starting with the radio and the press.

During the Third Reich, propaganda was used as a method of inciting racial hatred and dispersing the idea that a racially inferior population existed and was leeching off of good Germans, as good Aryans. This constant rhetoric of hatred was spread with the use of the radio which Goebbels defines as “the most modern and the most crucial instrument that exists for influencing the masses” (GHDI, Goebbels, Joseph, Address to the Officials and Directors of the Radio Corporation, Berlin, House of Broadcasting (March 25, 1933). The constant barrage of antisemitism was very influential in how the German people viewed Jews. He expands upon the importance of disseminating the information the party wants within these two speeches. These two speeches appear to go hand in hand in a majority of the following academic books and searches, as they both treat the same ideas.

Annotated Bibliography in chronological order

Joseph Goebbels, *Die Tagebücher Von Joseph Goebbels, Teil I: Aufzeichnungen 1923-1941, Band II/III*, K.G Saur München, 2004. archive.org/details/JosephGoebbelsTagebucher. accessed February 13, 2019, pp 780-781, pp 786-787

- Joseph Goebbels kept extensive diaries during his life. In this specific entry made on March 15, 1933 he writes about a press conference about his new position. He writes that the way that those who form public opinion, through any means of dispersing information, are “unsatisfactory” and will all be replaced. The Nazi party was a new and fresh party that needed propaganda and dispersal of information that reflected its new way of holding power. This is relevant to his speech in that he writes about the aftermath of the speech. Goebbels had a very grandiose sense of self, which extended to Hitler and the party he operated under. He wanted nothing but the best for Hitler.
- In the March 26, 1933 entry, Goebbels wrote of his speech to the radio station heads. He reiterated the unsatisfactory work they had been doing and that a big change was necessary to make radio the way to propagate information. He had come up with new ideas and ways to implement change throughout the radio stations and by extension how information was spread; radio was to become the source of information for a vast

majority of Aryan people. Goebbels also wanted to get rid of the old heads to make way for the brighter future of Germany.

H. Heiber (ed.), *Goebbels Reden*, 2 vols (Düsseldorf, 1971) vol. 1, 1932-1945, -pp. 82–107

- The full speeches are contained within this book, however, it is all in German, is unavailable online and was not filled in the library request. Welch cites his source of the speeches from this book.

E. Fröhlich, 'Die Kulturpolitische Presskonferenz des Reichspropaganda Ministeriums', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 22 April 1974, pp. 358–9. https://www.ifz-muenchen.de/heftarchiv/1974_4_1_froehlich.pdf

- This essay is cited in J. Noakes and G. Pridham (eds), *Nazism 1919–1945*, Vol. 2: *State, Economy and Society* (Exeter, 1984), p. 409. Welch (below) also cites this document as a source of Goebbels talking about the art of propaganda and how important it was for the German society (p 38). The source is entirely in German. Goebbels wanted to replace all degenerate art with proper Aryan art, including propaganda. A German culture was really important for the Nazi party to take root in. The source takes sentences from Goebbels' speeches.

David Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda*, London: Routledge, 1993, pp38-39
<http://psi312.cankaya.edu.tr/uploads/files/Welch,%20Third%20Reich--Politics%20and%20Propaganda,%202nd%20ed.PDF>

- This is the book that Mukhopadhyay cites. It addresses both speeches as well. The March 15 speech excerpt is located on page 38 and speaks of once the Nazis gained power, gaining power over everything else was simple. They were able to coordinate the propaganda throughout different radio broadcasts and Goebbels revelled in his new position and power of controlling the entire press. He wanted each listener to be able to feel like they were part of the crowd Hitler was addressing, and at every public event the Nazis hosted. This really gave the sense of Volksgemeinschaft, one people under Hitler, a government and a people close together. What is interesting about this text is that it gives more context around the capture of the radio companies, where they had to go from

privately owned businesses to being owned and controlled by the state, showing the rise in power of the Nazi party.

- The March 25 speech is addressed on page 39 in which Goebbels is seen flattering the radio heads, calling them pianists of the radio and if they play well enough they will play the public in the way Goebbels wanted. Continuing the instrumental analogy, Goebbels called the radio an instrument, the most modern instrument in fact. It is evident to see that Goebbels put all of his stock in the radio working for propaganda instead of relying on the older method of spreading information by newspaper. What is interesting about this excerpt is that it only speaks of Goebbels' flattery of the radio heads, instead of saying he threatened to get rid of some of them as is mentioned in the speech on the GHDI document and in his diaries. This shows that even he could make a crowd believe something, that they were worth something to him and to the Nazi cause, that they were important. He speaks of a major responsibility that the radio heads had, they had the most important job within the Third Reich in their eyes as "masters of public opinion." Welch cites his quotes from H. Heiber.

Campbell, Kenneth J. "Joseph Goebbels: Propagandist." *American Intelligence Journal*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2012, pp. 125–134. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/26202024. Accessed February 15, 2019, pp 128, pp 130

- This reading specifies exactly what propaganda is to Goebbels, it is a way of controlling the public and making people succumb to the desires of the party and his own. However, the propaganda must be done in an intelligent fashion that caters to every class, every kind of person, ultimately bringing them all together, speaking the language of the people, the language of propaganda. This idea goes back to his speech on March 25, 1933. Goebbels wanted modern technology to be used in all dispersal of propaganda. Propaganda was a means to an end, and using modern technology was a way to push the Nazis into the future. Going further into the new modern technology, Goebbels wanted a radio put in every Aryan house to ensure that they would have to listen to constant barrages of hate against Jews, as well as constant barrages of how amazing the Aryan race and Germany is. He wanted those who listened to succumb to his will and his words. What is interesting about this piece is that Goebbels worked with the propaganda to make it accessible to every person, the GHDI document does not enlighten readers to this

concept. The context surrounding these speeches really showed how Goebbels wanted the radio heads to be master pianists, however, with public opinion.

Longerich, Peter. *Goebbels: a Biography*. Random House, 2015, pp 213 and pp 215

- This biography was originally published in 2010 in German, however, the 2015 version is widely distributed as it is the most updated version and it is also translated in English. This book is an analysis of Goebbels' life. It is relevant to the speeches given because quotes from his diaries are pulled as well as quotes from his speeches. In this particular passage, Goebbels speaks with the press on March 15, 1933, about the new Ministry which would make the government and the people closer. He emphasizes the importance of propaganda in the coordination of the people and the government. He also emphasizes the idea that propaganda is active and the new Ministry is an active one, rather than the passive newspapers of the past. The goal was to have the people constantly hearing Nazi rhetoric and ensure that that was the only information disseminated to them. This is also an addition to the GHDI documents that do not publish the specific ideas Goebbels had for the Ministry.
- From the same biography of Goebbels, the source of his quotations of Goebbels were from his speeches once again, as well as his personal diaries (Joseph Goebbels, *Die Tagebücher Von Joseph Goebbels, Teil I: Aufzeichnungen 1923-1941, Band II/III*, K.G Saur München, 2004) this one addressing his March 25, 1933 speech. In this speech, he was speaking to the radio workers and instructing them on how to be better for the new Ministry. Goebbels emphasized how important it was for the broadcasts to remain interesting to keep the public interested. The context given for this specific speech in this book was he wanted the Nazi party not to be thought of as a "stupid media dictatorship," showing his unease with doing things the old way. This sheds light on how he viewed other dictatorships and how he wanted the Nazis to be different.

Mukhopadhyay, Shalini. "The Nazi Propaganda and Joseph Goebbels: How the Use of Propaganda Can Change People's Mind.," no date listed, *Academia.edu - Share Research*, [www.academia.edu/29989950/The Nazi Propaganda and Joseph Goebbels How the use of Propaganda can change peoples mind](http://www.academia.edu/29989950/The_Nazi_Propaganda_and_Joseph_Goebbels_How_the_use_of_Propaganda_can_change_peoples_mind). Accessed February 15, 2019

- In this paper, the Goebbels' speeches are taken from David Welch's book *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda* addressed above. This particular passage on page 11 address both speeches Goebbels makes. He once again emphasizes the importance of the radio in a way that is reminiscent of Franklin D. Roosevelt's Fireside Chats. He wanted the Führer in every Aryan's house all the time. Goebbels saw the radio as the tool to achieve unity between the people (being Aryan people), and between the people and the government. The radio was also designed to be long distance so people from other countries could listen in to the propaganda and maybe they could be swayed as well. This reading explained Goebbels' attitude towards radio rather than formulating an opinion.
- The March 25, 1933 speech was also addressed on the same page. The term "Volksgemeinschaft" was used in the reading. The use of it was interesting as it was used in World War I as a rallying cry among the people. Within the Nazi and pre-World War II context, this term is incredibly important. The idea of building a people's community regardless of class is a good one, however, there is nothing that united the people other than being Aryan and being the championed people of the Third Reich. Nothing is said of the hatred spewed alongside this term in Nazi Germany or in the reading. What is said of the March 25 speech is that radio was important for the election of Hitler on March 5 1933. Goebbels made sure the fireside with the Führer chats were accessible to every Aryan. The accessibility was a crucial point in the Ministry of Propaganda, Aryans needed access to the party ideas at all times.