

Circular on the Fight against the Gypsy Nuisance issued by Himmler on 8 December 1938

From M. Burleigh, W. Wippermann, "The Racial State: Germany 1933-1945", Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991, pp. 120-121.

Experience gained in the fight the Gypsy nuisance, and knowledge derived from race-biological research, have shown that the proper method of attacking the Gypsy problems seems to be treat it as a matter of race. Experience shows that part-Gypsies play the greatest role in Gypsy criminality. On the other hand, it has been shown the efforts to make the Gypsies settle have been unsuccessful, especially in the case of pure Gypsies, on account of their strong compulsion to wander. It has therefore become necessary to distinguish between pure and part-Gypsies in the final solution of the Gypsy question.

To this end, it is necessary to establish the racial affinity of every Gypsy living in Germany and of every vagrant living a Gypsy-like existence.

I therefore decree that all settle and non-settle Gypsies, and also all vagrants living living a Gypsy-like existence, are to be registered with the Reich Criminal Police Office-Reich Central Office for the Fight against the Gypsy Nuisance.

The police authorities will report (via the responsible Criminal Police offices and local offices) to the Reich Criminal Police Office-Reich Central Office for the Fight against the Gypsy Nuisance all persons who by the virtue of their looks and appearance, customs or habits, are to be regarded as Gypsies or part-Gypsies.

Because a person considered to be a Gypsy or part-Gypsy, or a person living like a Gypsy, as a rule confirms the suspicion that marriage (in accordance with clause 6 of the first decree on the implementation of the Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honour. . . or on basis of stipulations in the law on Fitness to Marry) must not be contracted, in all cases the public registry officials must demand a testimony of fitness to marry from those who make such an application [to be married].

Instructions on how to execute this decree, issued by the Criminal Police on 1 March 1939, ²³ said that the 'requisite legal basis' for the prevention of 'racial miscegenation' and for the general regulation of the Gypsies' way to life could only be established through a comprehensive 'Gypsy Law'. The imminence of such a law was announced on several occasions, but none was ever promulgated

Treatment of the Gypsy question is part of the National Socialist task of national regeneration. A solution can only be achieved if the philosophical perspectives of National Socialism are observed. Although the principle that the German nation respects the national identity of alien peoples is also assumed in the fight against Gypsy Nuisance, nonetheless the aim of measures taken by the State to defend the homogeneity of the German nation must be the physical separation of Gypsydom from the German nation, the prevention of miscegenation, and finally the regulation of the way of life of pure and part-Gypsies. The necessary legal foundation can only be created through a Gypsy Law, which prevents further intermingling of blood, and which regulates all the most pressing questions which go together with the existence of Gypsies in the living space of the German nation.