

S E C R E T

Ref No SAIC/27
27 May 45

SEVENTH ARMY INTERROGATION CENTER
APO 758 US ARMY

.....
: S E C R E T :
:Auth: CG, 7th Army :
:Init: PK :
:Date: 27 May 1945 :
:.....:

REICHSKULTURKAMMER (NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE)

1. SOURCES

a) FRAUENFELD, Alfred Eduard, MAJ, GAF, GAULEITER of VIENNA until 1933; GESCHAEFTSFUEHRER (Business Manager) THEATERKAMMER (Theatre Dept) of the REICHSKULTURKAMMER (National Dept of Culture). (Cf Report Ref No SAIC/25)

b) HINKEL, Hans, REICHSFILMINTENDANT (National Film Director) under Film Department, Propaganda Ministry. Source for Appendix only (Cf Report Ref No SAIC/28)

Rating: B-2 Date of Information: See Text Interrogator: E.E.

2. ORIGIN AND FUNCTIONS OF THE REICHSKULTURKAMMER

The REICHSKULTURKAMMER (National Dept of Culture) was an attempt to combine the entire cultural life of the nation under one organization. Its existence was provided for in law, and the orders of its seven department heads (KAMMERPRAESIDENTEN) in turn had the powers of law. During the lifetime of the RKK (REICHSKULTURKAMMER), other agencies were constantly demanding its manpower for their own uses, but it managed to maintain its existence nevertheless.

The functions which the RKK was supposed to fulfill include the following: Creation and supervision of art and music schools, representation of the interests of its members, social security, examination and classification of talent, pensions, relief, and legal aid for members.

3. ORGANIZATION (See Appendix)

Heading the RKK were the following personalities:

President: REICHSMINISTER FUER VOLKS-
AUFKLAERUNG u. PROPAGANDA (Minister of
Public Enlightenment and Propaganda)

Dr Paul Joseph GOEBBELS.

Vice President: State Secretary of
Propaganda Ministry

Dr FUNK, GAULEITER HAHNKE,
State Secretary NAUMANN,
chronologically in the
order named.

GESCHAEFTSFUEHRER (Business
Manager) - the actual head

Hans HINKEL, Dr SCHADE.

Legal Expert

Dr SCHMIDT-LEONHARD

Source is of the opinion that greater power was vested in the office of the GESCHAEFTSFUEHRER not for reasons of necessity or efficiency, but simply as the result of the personal ambitions of HINKEL who, in addition to his post as GESCHAEFTSFUEHRER, held the title of General Secretary of the organization.

The RKK was further divided into departments (KAMMER), each being devoted to some field such as the theater, music, radio, etc. The Propaganda Ministry itself, however, had similar departments (music, film, literature, etc). There was no clear boundary between the province of these departments and those of the RKK. The result was an unnecessary duplication of functions, and, frequently, confusion and friction.

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

Ref No SAIC/27
27 May 45

During HINKEL's regime the power in the RKK was shifted at times to the departments, then to departments in the Propaganda Ministry itself; yet HINKEL would always manage to regain his place at the helm. The centralization of authority in the RKK was accomplished through frequent changes of the presidents and business managers of the different departments, thus undermining their influence and importance.

Source says that HINKEL lacked technical background, and considers his work to have been of small value. He says further that under HINKEL there was a ruthless turnover of personnel, with reasons for dismissals seldom given.

In addition to the titular head of the RKK, there was a REICHSKULTURSENAT (Culture Senate) of 130 members, at first divided equally between "culture administrators" (KULTURVERWALTUNGSFUEHRER) and creative artists. After a few years the administrative personnel were removed from this body. The Senate convened once a year to hear a speech by the President of the RKK.

4. DEPARTMENTS OF THE RKK

Seven departments (KAMMER) functioned under the RKK: theater, music, film, press, literature, creative arts, and radio. The last named department was dissolved in 1939 or 1940. Each department had a president, vice-president, and business manager, who as in the case of the RKK itself, was the actual head.

There was, however, a certain amount of fluctuation in the division of power among these various offices within the departments. For example, Richard STRAUSS, as president, was the leading figure in the music department, followed by Prof Peter RAABE. Similarly, Richard BLUNK, as president, led the literature department, followed later by Hans JOHST, while Prof Richard SUCHENWIRTH was business manager.

The presidents of the theater department were Otto LAUBINGER until 1935, and Dr Rainer SCHLOESSER until 1937 (both also in charge of the theater department of the Propaganda Ministry); later the actor Ludwig KOERNER until 1942 and finally Paul HARTMANN, with Eugen KLOEPPER as vice-president.

The departments had from 100-400 employees each. The departments of the Propaganda Ministry maintained branch offices in the districts (GAUE), but the departments of the RKK maintained only their central offices.

Each department of the RKK was divided into sections (FACHSCHAFTEN), which were further divided into special groups (FACHGRUPPEN). The theater department, for example, was divided into the following sections: Stage (BUEHNE), light entertainment (ARTISTIK) (circus, vaudeville, etc), dance (TANZ), actors (SCHAUSPIELER), publishers for the stage (BUEHNENVERLEGER). Membership in the sections varied widely. The stage section, for instance, had about 40,000 members, the dance section about 6,000, light entertainment about 13,000.

The stage section of the theater department was divided into the following special groups:

- a) Producers: State, district, city, KRAFT DURCH FREUDE (Strength Through Joy); private enterprises.
- b) Directors: GENINTENDANTEN (General managers), INTENDANTEN (Managers), DIREKTOREN (directors).
- c) Stage managers: play and opera managers; artistic, technical, commercial managers; conductors, ballet masters, etc.
- d) Actors.
- e) Singers.
- f) Dancers.
- g) Choir singers.

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

Ref No SAIC/27
27 May 45

h) Technical personnel, secretaries, etc.

5. FUNCTION OF THE DEPARTMENTS

The primary function of the departments was the representation of their members in the securing of positions. Political directives were supposed to emanate from the corresponding departments in the Propaganda Ministry.

The primary function was carried out individually by the various sections. Membership in the sections was subject to racial restrictions under the NUREMBERG laws. Thus, membership was possible only for "pure" Aryans, for "mixed Aryans Second Class" (MISCHLINGE 2. KL), and Aryans married to "mixed Aryans First Class" (MISCHLINGE 1. KL). Special permits were necessary for mixed Aryans First Class and Aryans married to non-Aryans. As far as source knows, nobody who was eligible under the above rules was denied membership in the theatre department, though it became necessary at times to negotiate for members with local authorities who, through caution or prejudice, were opposed to their employment. In 1937 the granting of special permits was taken over from the departments by the central office of the RKK since, in the opinion of that body, the departments had been too liberal in their interpretation of the law.

Source states that in the cases of certain well-known artists the question of their eligibility for membership was sometimes referred to higher authority, and eventually decided upon by GOEBBELS himself. The result of this system was that prominent artists had the opportunity to receive "favorable consideration", while those of lesser reknown were certain to suffer.

6. FINANCING OF CULTURAL LIFE

Cultural life under the Propaganda Ministry was subsidized by the State. Funds were allocated to the theatre ("T") department of the Propaganda Ministry, and distributed to districts and cities through their local finance facilities (the DEUTSCHER LANDTAG in the case of the cities). Thus the RKK had no direct connection with the State subsidization.

Public funds in the amount of RM 90-100,000,000 were allotted yearly to the theatre. In addition, HITLER and GOEBBELS made contributions running into the millions.

7. THEATRE FACILITIES UNDER THE NAZIS

Germany had about 220 permanent theatres. Two-thirds of these divided their efforts among opera, light opera, plays and the dance, while the remainder devoted themselves to one or another of these fields. In addition to the permanent theaters, there were about 100 traveling theaters, mostly presenting performances of plays. Many of these performed in small towns during the summer months, their tours being arranged under the supervision of the RKK.

27 May 1945

SEVENTH ARMY INTERROGATION CENTER

Paul Kubala
PAUL KUBALA,
Maj, MI,
Commanding.

S E C R E T