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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GERMAN REICH
August 11, 1919

DIE VERFASSUNG DES DEUTSCHEN REICHS
VOM 11 AUGUST 1919

The German people, united in their racial elements and impelled by the will to renew and strengthen their Reich in freedom and justice, to serve the ends of peace at home and abroad and further social progress, have established this Constitution.

FIRST PART

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF THE REICH

First Chapter

Reich and Lands.

Article 1.

The German Reich is a Republic. The state power is derived from the people.

Article 2.

The territory of the Reich consists of the territories of the German Member States (Lands). Other territories may be incorporated in the Reich by Reich statute if the inhabitants of such territory, in exercise of the right of self-determination so desire.

Article 3.

The Reich colors are black, red and gold. The merchant flag is black white and red, with the Reich colors in the upper inside corner.

Article 4.

The generally accepted rules of international law are to be considered as binding integral parts of the law of the German Reich.

Article 5.

The state power in respect to matters within the competence of the Reich shall be exercised by the authorities of the Reich on the basis of the Constitution of the Reich; in respect to matters within the competence of the Member States by the authorities of the Lands, on the basis of their respective constitutions.

Article 6.

The Reich shall have exclusive legislative competence for:

- 1) Foreign affairs (Beziehungen zum Ausland)
- 2) colonial matters.
- 3) questions relating to nationality, freedom of travel and residence (Freizügigkeit), immigration, emigration and extradition.

- 4) the organization of defense forces.
- 5) coinage
- 6) customs, as well as the unity of customs and trading areas and freedom of commerce.
- 7) post and telegraph, including the telephone.

Article 7.

- 1) civil law
- 2) penal law
- 3) judicial procedure, including the execution of penalties and legal aid between authorities (Amtshilfe)
- 4) matters relating to passports and police supervision of aliens (Fremdenpolizei)
- 5) poor relief and the care of vagrants.
- 6) matters relating to the press, associations and assemblies.
- 7) policies relating to population (Bevölkerungspolitik), maternity relief, welfare of infants, children and youth.
- 8) public health, veterinary matters and the protection of plants against disease and pests.
- 9) labor laws, insurance, and the protection of laborers and employees, and employment bureaus.
- 10) the establishment of Reich organs of vocational representation (Berufliche Vertretung)
- 11) provision for war veterans and the surviving dependents of deceased soldiers.
- 12) laws relating to expropriation.
- 13) the socialization of natural resources and economic undertakings, and also the production, manufacture, distribution and price regulation of economic wares for the benefit of the general economy. (Gemeinwirtschaft)
- 14) trade and commerce, weights and measures, the issue of paper money, banks and banking and the stock exchanges (Börsenwesen)
- 15) traffic in foodstuffs, articles for consumption and luxury, and necessities of daily life.
- 16) industries and mining.
- 17) matters relating to insurance.
- 18) ocean navigation, deep-sea fishing and coastal fishing.
- 19) railways, inland navigation, automatic traffic on land, water, and in the air; the construction of highways, insofar as general communication and national defense are concerned.

20) theaters and cinemas.

Article 8.

The Reich shall further legislate in regard to taxation and other revenues, insofar as they are partially or wholly utilized for its own purposes. If the Reich claims such taxes or other revenues for its own purposes as have hitherto been available for the Member States (Lands), the Reich shall take into consideration the preservation of the life of the Member States.

Article 9.

Insofar as it is necessary to issue uniform rules, the Reich shall legislate for:

- 1) public welfare
- 2) the protection of public order and safety.

Article 10.

The Reich may by legislation, establish fundamental principles (Grundsätze) for:

- 1) the rights and duties of religious associations
- 2) educational matters including high schools and scientific libraries.
- 3) laws relating to officers of all public corporations
- 4) matters relating to the real-estate laws, distribution of the soil, settlements and homesteads, restrictions attached to landed property, housing and the distribution of the population.
- 5) matters relating to burial

Article 11.

The Reich may by means of legislation establish fundamental principles concerning the admissibility and mode of:

- 1) injury to the revenues or commercial relations of the Reich
- 2) double taxation
- 3) excessive or obstructive fees for the use of public means of communication, highways, and other facilities.
- 4) tax discrimination against imported goods in favor of domestic products in inter-state or inter-district commerce, or
- 5) export premiums,
or in order to preserve important social interests.

Article 12.

So long as and insofar as the Reich refrains from exercising the right of legislation, the Lands shall retain the right of legislation. This does not apply to matters for which the Reich has exclusive competence of legislation.

The government of the Reich has the right of veto in regard to Lands laws relating to matters within the scope of Article 7, Number 13, insofar as the general welfare of the Reich is thereby affected.

Article 13.

Reich law takes precedence over Lands law.

Where there are doubts or differences of opinion as to whether a legal provision of a Land is compatible with Reich law, the competent Reich or central authorities of a Land may, in accordance with particulars prescribed by the Reich law, appeal for decision to a Supreme Court of the Reich.

Article 14.

The laws enacted by the Lands shall be executed by the authorities of the States, unless the laws of the Reich determine otherwise.

Article 15.

The government of the Reich exercises supervision in such matters as are within the legislative competence of the Reich.

Insofar as the laws of the Reich are to be executed by the authorities of the Lands, the government of the Reich may issue general instructions. The government is empowered to send commissioners to the central authorities of the Lands, and with their permission, to the lower state authorities, to supervise the execution of the laws of the Reich.

It is the duty of the government of the Lands, at the request of the government of the Reich, to rectify defects which have become manifest in the execution of Reich laws. Where differences of opinion arise both the government of the Reich and the government of the Land may appeal for decision to the Constitutional Court (Staatsgerichtshof), unless a different court is prescribed by Reich law.

Article 16.

The officers entrusted with direct Reich administration in any Land shall, as a rule, be citizens of that Land. The officers, employees and laborers of the Reich administration shall be employed in their home districts if they so desire, whenever this is possible and not inconsistent with the requirements of their training or the service.

Article 17.

Each Land must have a republican constitution. The people's representatives must be elected by universal, equal, direct and secret ballot by all German men and women in conformity with the principles of proportional representation. The government of the Land must enjoy the confidence of the people's representatives.

The principles for the elections of the people's representatives apply equally to communal elections. A Land law, however,

may make the right to vote dependent on residence in the communal district for a period not exceeding one year.

Article 18.

The division of the Reich into Lands shall be such as to serve the people to the highest possible economic and cultural attainment, whereby the will of the population affected shall be taken into consideration as far as possible. /The alteration of territory of the Lands and the creation of new Lands within the Reich may be effected by means of a Reich law amending the Constitution.

If the Lands directly affected give their consent, an ordinary Reich law is sufficient.

An ordinary Reich law is also sufficient, if one of the Lands affected refuses consent, but the territorial alteration or the creation of a new Land is demanded by the will of the population and the paramount interests of the Reich.

The will of the population shall be ascertained by plebiscite. The Government of the Reich orders the plebiscite if, in the territory to be separated, one-third of the inhabitants qualified to vote for the Reichstag so demand.

Three-fifths of the votes taken, but at least a majority of the enfranchised voters, are necessary for a resolution to alter a boundary or create a new Land. Even if it is only a question of the disconnection of a part of a Prussian administrative district (Regierungsbezirk), a Bavarian "county" (Kreis) or a corresponding administrative division in other Lands, the will of the population in the whole district affected must be ascertained. If the territory to be disconnected nowhere adjoins the rest of the district, a specific Reich law may declare that the will of the population in the said district is sufficient.

The consent of the population having been ascertained, the government of the Reich shall introduce an appropriate bill for enactment in the Reichstag.

If the unification or disconnection should give rise to a dispute concerning the distribution of property, the Constitutional Court of the German Reich shall decide the same on the application of one party.

Article 19.

Constitutional disputes arising within any Land in which there is no court competent to settle the same, or disputes not governed by private law, arising between different Lands or between the Reich and any Land shall be decided by the Constitutional Court of the German Reich on the application of one party, unless some other court of the Reich is competent to decide such dispute.

The President of the Reich executes the judgment of the Constitutional Court of the Reich.

Second Chapter

The Reichstag

Article 20.

The Reichstag is composed of the delegates of the German people.

Article 21.

The delegates represent the whole people. They are subject only to their own conscience and are not bound by instructions.

Article 22.

The delegates are elected by universal, equal, direct and secret ballot by men and women over twenty years of age, according to the principles of proportional representation. The election day must be a Sunday, or a public holiday.

The Reich Election Law will regulate details.

Article 23.

The Reichstag is elected for four years. New elections must take place at the latest on the sixtieth day after this term has run its course.

The Reichstag assembles for the first time at the latest on the thirtieth day following the election.

Article 24.

The Reichstag meets every year on the first Wednesday in November at the seat of the government of the Reich. The President of the Reichstag must summon it earlier if the President of the Reich or at least one-third of the members of the Reichstag so demand.

The Reichstag determines the close of its session (Tagung) and the date of reassembly.

Article 25.

The President of the Reich may dissolve the Reichstag, but not more than once for the same cause.

The new election takes place not later than the sixtieth day after dissolution.

Article 26

The Reichstag chooses its president, his substitutes and its Secretaries. It sets up its own rules of procedure.

Article 27.

Between two sessions or terms (Wahlperioden) the President and his substitutes of the preceding session continue in their duties.

Article 28.

The President has domiciliary (Hausrecht) and police authority within the Reichstag building. He controls the house administration; he manages the revenues and expenditure of the house in accordance with the budget of the Reich, and represents the Reich in all legal transactions and disputes arising within his administration.

Article 29.

The Reichstag proceedings are public. They may be held in camera, if, on the motion of fifty members, a two-thirds majority so decides.

Article 30.

Accurate reports of the proceedings are of the public meetings of the Reichstag, the State Diets, and of their committees remain free from all responsibility.

Article 31.

An Election Investigation Court (Wahlprüfungsgericht) shall be established in connection with the Reichstag. It shall also be competent to decide whether a delegate has forfeited his seat.

The Election Investigation Court consists of members of the Reichstag, elected by the latter for the election period and of members of the Reich Court of Administration (Reichsverwaltungsgericht), appointed by the President of the Reich on the proposal of the presidency of the said court.

The decisions of the Election Investigation Court shall be taken after a public oral hearing by three members of the Reichstag and two judicial members.

Outside of the oral proceedings before the Election Investigation Court such affairs shall be managed by a commission of the Reich, nominated by the President of the Reich. In other respects the procedure is regulated by the Election Investigation Court.

Article 32. A simple majority vote is necessary for decisions of the Reichstag, unless the Constitution prescribes a different proportion of votes. The rules of procedure may make exceptions in the case of elections by the Reichstag.

The rules of procedure regulate the question of a quorum.

Article 33. The Reichstag and its committees may demand the presence of the Chancellor of the Reich and of any Minister of the Reich.

The Chancellor and Ministers of the Reich and the commissioners appointed by them have access to the sittings of the Reichstag and its committees. The Lands are entitled to send delegates to these meetings to state the views of their governments on the subject under discussion.

At their request the governmental delegates (Regierungsvertreter) must be heard during the deliberations, in the case of the representatives of the government of the Reich (Vertreter der Reichsregierung), even irrespective of the agenda.

They are subject to the authority of the chairman as regards questions of orders.

Article 34. The Reichstag has the right and--on the application of one-fifth of its members--the duty, of appointing investigation committees (Untersuchungsausschüsse). These committees hear such evidence in public sittings as they or the applicants consider necessary. The public may be excluded from the proceedings by a

two-thirds majority of the investigation committee. The rules of procedure determine the proceedings of the committee and determine the number of its members.

It is the duty of the judicial and administrative authorities to accede to the requests of the said committees in regard to the taking of evidence; the files of the authorities must be submitted to the committees on request.

The provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Strafprozessordnung) are applicable as far as is appropriate to the investigations of the committees and the authorities approached by them; nevertheless, the secrecy of letters, post, telegraph and telephone remains inviolate.

Article 35.

The Reichstag appoints a standing committee for foreign affairs, which may also act when the Reichstag is in recess, and after the parliamentary term has expired, or after the dissolution of the Reichstag, until the new Reichstag meets. The meetings of this committee are not public, unless the committee decides otherwise by a two-thirds vote.

The Reichstag also appoints a standing committee for the maintenance of the rights of the people's representation towards the government of the Reich during the periods of recess, and after the term has expired or the Reichstag is dissolved, until the new Reichstag meets.

These committees have the rights of investigation committees.

Article 36.

No member of the Reichstag or of a Land's Diet may at any time be subjected to criminal or disciplinary prosecution or otherwise held responsible outside the house on account of his vote or of remarks made by him in the execution of his functions.

Article 37.

During a session (Sitzungsperiode) no member of the Reichstag or of a Land's Diet may be subjected to investigation or arrested on account of any punishable offense, without the consent of the house to which such a delegate belongs, unless he is arrested in the act of committal or at the latest in the course of the following day.

Similar consent must be obtained for every other curtailment of personal freedom which hinders a delegate in the execution of his functions as representative.

Any criminal proceeding against a member of the Reichstag or a Land's Diet, any detention (Haft) or other curtailment of his personal liberty must be suspended for the duration of the session at the request of the house to which the delegate belongs.

Article 38.

Members of the Reichstag and the Land's Diets are entitled to refuse to give evidence in respect to persons who have confided matters to them in their capacity as delegates or to whom they have given such confidences in the execution of their functions as delegates, as well as in respect to such facts. In respect also to the seizure of documents they have the same status as persons who are entitled by law to refuse to give evidence.

Any search or seizure may only be carried out within the precincts of the Reichstag or a Land's Diet with the consent of their President.

Article 39.

Public officials (Beamte) and members of the defense forces need no leave for the performance of their functions as members of the Reichstag or a Land's Diet.

If they are candidates for a seat in one of these bodies, the necessary leave must be extended to them to enable them to prepare for their election.

Article 40.

Members of the Reichstag shall have free passes for all German railways and receive a compensation for expenses to be fixed by Reich law.

Third Chapter

The Reich President and the Reich Government

Article 41.

The Reich President is elected by the whole German people.

Every German who has completed his thirty-fifth year is eligible for election.

Details will be regulated by a Reich law.

Article 42.

The Reich President shall, on assuming office, take the following oath before the Reichstag.

I swear to devote my energies to the well-being of the German people, to further their interests, to protect them from injury, to keep the Constitution and the laws of the Reich, to fulfill my duties conscientiously and to administer justice to all.

It is permissible to add a religious asservation.

Article 43.

The Reich President's term of office shall last seven years. Reelection is permissible.

At the request of the Reichstag the President may be deposed from office by plebiscite before his term has expired. A two-thirds majority vote is necessary for such a resolution by the Reichstag.

The resolution has the effect of suspending the Reich President from the further exercise of his office. If the deposition is rejected by the plebiscite, this is regarded as a new election and entails the dissolution of the Reichstag.

The Reich President cannot be prosecuted criminally without the consent of the Reichstag.

Article 44.

The Reich President may not at the same time be a member of the Reichstag.

Article 45.

The Reich President represents the Reich in the sphere of international law. He concludes alliances and other treaties with foreign powers in the name of the Reich. He accredits and receives Ministers (Gesandte).

War is declared and peace concluded by Reich law.

Alliances and treaties with foreign States which relate to matters within the legislative competence of the Reich, require the consent of the Reichstag.

Article 46.

The Reich President appoints and dismisses the public officials of the Reich and officers of the defense forces, unless otherwise provided by law. He may allow the right of appointment and dismissal to be exercised by other authorities.

Article 47.

The Reich President has supreme command (Oberbefehl) over all the defense forces of the Reich.

Article 48.

If a Land fails to fulfill the duties incumbent upon it according to the Constitution or the laws of the Reich, the Reich President can force it to do so with the help of the armed forces.

The Reich President may, if the public safety and order in the German Reich are considerably disturbed or endangered, take such measures as are necessary to restore public safety and order. If necessary he may intervene with the help of the armed forces. For this purpose he may temporarily suspend, either partially or wholly, the Fundamental Rights established in Articles 114, 115, 117, 118, 123, 124 and 153.

The Reich President shall inform the Reichstag without delay of all measures taken under Paragraph 1 or Paragraph 2 of this Article. On demand by the Reichstag the measures shall be repealed.

In case of imminent danger the government of any Land may take preliminary measures of the nature described in Paragraph 2 for its own territory. The measures are to be revoked upon the demand of the Reich President or the Reichstag.

Details will be regulated by a Reich law.

Article 49.

The Reich President exercises the right of pardon for the Reich.

Reich amnesties require a Reich law.

Article 50.

All orders and decrees (Anordnungen und Verfügungen) of the Reich President, including those concerning the defense forces, require for their validity the countersignature of the Chancellor of the Reich or the competent Minister of the Reich. By countersignature responsibility is assumed.

Article 51.

The Reich President shall, when prevented from functioning, be represented (vertreten) in the first place by the Reich Chancellor. When such disability is likely to be of long duration, a Reich law shall regulate the question of representation.

The same applies in the case of a premature termination of the Presidency until the new election takes place.

Article 52.

The government of the Reich shall consist of the Chancellor and the Reich Ministers.

Article 53.

The Reich Chancellor and at his proposal the Reich Ministers shall be appointed and dismissed by the Reich President.

Article 54.

The Chancellor and the Reich Ministers require for the exercise of their office the confidence of the Reichstag. Any of them must retire if the Reichstag by express resolution withdraws its confidence.

Article 55.

The Reich Chancellor presides over the government of the Reich and conducts its affairs according to rules of procedure laid down by the government of the Reich and approved by Reich President.

Article 56.

The Reich Chancellor determines the outlines (Richtlinien) of the policy of the State and is responsible to the Reichstag for the same. Within these outlines each Reich Minister conducts the office entrusted to him independently and on his own responsibility towards the Reichstag.

Article 57.

The Reich Ministers shall lay before the Reichstag for deliberation and enactment all bills and all matters for which such a course is prescribed in the Constitution or by law, as well as all differences of opinion in regard to questions within the competence of more than one Minister.

Article 58.

The government of the Reich passes its resolutions by majority vote. In the case of tie votes the chairman has a casting vote.

Article 59.

The Reichstag is entitled to impeach the Reich President, the Chancellor and Reich Ministers for having culpably violated the Constitution or a statute of the Reich before the Constitutional Court (Staatsgerichtshof). The motion for impeachment must be signed by at least one hundred members of the Reichstag and be approved by the majority prescribed for amending the Constitution.

Details will be regulated by the Reich statute concerning the Constitutional Court.

Fourth Chapter

The Reich Council

Article 60.

A Reich Council shall be constituted to represent the German Lands in the legislature and administration of the Reich.

Article 61.

Each Land has at least one vote in the Reich Council. In the case of larger Lands there shall be one vote for every 1,000,000 inhabitants. A surplus, which is equal to at least the population of the smallest land, will be reckoned equal to 1,000,000. No Land may be represented by more than two-fifths of the total number of votes.

German-Austria, after its union with the German Reich, shall be entitled to participate in the Reich Council with the number of votes proportionate to its population. Until then the representatives of German-Austria may take part in the deliberations.

The number of votes shall be fixed anew by the Reich Council after every general census.

Article 62.

No Land shall have more than one vote on the committees formed by the Reich Council from its own members.

Article 63.

The Lands shall be represented on the Reich Council by members of their governments. But half the Prussian votes shall belong to the Prussian provincial administrations in accordance with a Land law.

The Lands are entitled to send as many representatives to the Reich Council as they have votes.

Article 64.

The government of the Reich must convene the Reich Council on the demand of one-third of its members.

Article 65.

A member of the government of the Reich shall preside over the Reich Council and its committees. The members of the government of the Reich have the right and--if so demanded--the duty of attending the deliberations of the Reich Council and its committees. On their own request they must during the proceedings at any time be heard.

Article 66.

The government of the Reich and each member of the Reich Council are entitled to lay proposals before the Reich Council.

The Reich Council regulates its procedure by rules of procedure (Geschäftsordnung).

The plenary sittings of the Reich Council are public. In compliance with the rules of procedure the public may be excluded for specific subjects of deliberation.

Decisions are taken by a simple majority of those voting.

Article 67.

The Reich Council shall be kept informed by the Reich ministries of the conduct of affairs of the Reich. The competent committees of the Reich Council shall be consulted by the ministries of the Reich with regard to important affairs.

Fifth Chapter

Reich Legislation

Article 68.

Bills are introduced by the government of the Reich or by members of the Reichstag.

Reich laws shall be enacted by the Reichstag.

Article 69.

The introduction of bills by the government of the Reich requires the consent of the Reich Council. If no agreement is reached between the Reich government and the Reich Council, the Reich government may introduce the bill notwithstanding, but must state the contrary opinion of the Reich Council.

If the Reich Council resolves on a bill not assented to by the government of the Reich, the latter must introduce the bill to the Reichstag, stating its own point of view.

Article 70.

The Reich President shall promulgate (ausfertigen) all constitutionally enacted laws and proclaim them in the Reich's Legal Gazette (Reichsgesetzblatt) within one month.

Article 71.

Reich laws, unless they provide otherwise, come into force on the fourteenth day after the date on which the Reich's Legal Gazette is published in the capital of the Reich.

Article 72.

The proclamation of a Reich law shall be postponed for two months on the demand of one-third of the Reichstag. Laws stated to be urgent by the Reichstag and the Reich Council may be proclaimed by the Reich President notwithstanding such demand.

Article 73.

A law enacted by the Reichstag shall be made the subject of a referendum, if the Reich President so determines within a month.

A law, the proclamation of which has been postponed on the application of at least one-third of the members of the Reichstag, shall be subjected to a referendum, if one-twentieth of the persons qualified to vote so submit.

A referendum shall further be instituted if one-tenth of the persons qualified to vote initiate by petition the introduction of a bill. An elaborated bill must underlie such people's initiative. The bill shall be submitted to the Reichstag by the government together with a statement of its own point of view. No referendum shall take place if the petitional bill is passed unaltered by the Reichstag.

In regard to the budget, taxation laws and laws relating to pay and salaries, only the Reich President may inaugurate a referendum.

A Reich law shall regulate the procedure for referendum and initiative.

Article 74.

The Reich Council is entitled to raise an objection to laws passed by the Reichstag.

The objection must be submitted to the Reich government within two weeks following the final vote in the Reichstag and sustained by reasons at the latest within two further weeks.

When such objection has been raised, the law is again submitted to the Reichstag for redecision. If by this means no agreement is reached between the Reichstag and the Reich Council, the President may, within three months, order that a referendum be taken on the matter in dispute. If the President does not exercise this right, the law is considered not to have been passed.

If the Reichstag has passed the law in spite of the objection by the Reich Council by a two-thirds majority, then the President must either proclaim the same within three months in the form approved by the Reichstag or order a referendum to be taken.

Article 75.

A referendum can nullify an enactment of the Reichstag only if a majority of those qualified to vote take part in the vote.

Article 76.

The Constitution may be amended by law. But acts of the Reichstag amending the Constitution can only take effect if two-thirds of the legal number of members are present and at least two-thirds of those present consent. Resolutions of the Reich Council also require a two-thirds majority of the votes taken, when an amendment to the Constitution is in question. If on a popular initiative an amendment to the Constitution is to be decided by referendum, the consent of a majority of those qualified to vote is required.

If the Reichstag has passed an amendment to the Constitution in spite of an objection on the part of the Reich Council, the President may not proclaim such law, if within two weeks the Reich Council demands a referendum.

Article 77.

Unless otherwise provided by law the Reich government shall issue the general administrative provisions (Verwaltungsvorschriften) necessary for putting into execution the laws of the Reich. The approval of the Reich Council is required when the execution of the Reich laws is within the competence of the authorities of the Lands.

Sixth Chapter

Reich Administration

Article 78.

The cultivation of the relations with foreign States is exclusively a function of the Reich.

With regard to matters the regulation of which is within the competence of the Lands' legislature, the Lands may conclude treaties with foreign States; such treaties require the approval of the Reich.

Agreements with foreign States relating to any alteration of the boundaries of the Reich are concluded by the Reich, after the consent of the Lands concerned has been obtained. Such boundary alterations may only be undertaken on the basis of a Reich law, unless it is simply a case of adjusting the boundaries of uninhabited districts.

All arrangements and measures necessary for safeguarding the interests of individual Lands arising out of their particular economic relations with or their proximity to foreign States shall be undertaken by the Reich in agreement with the Lands concerned.

Article 79.

The defense of the Reich is a function of the Reich. The defense organization of the German people shall be uniformly regulated by Reich law with due regard to special peculiarities of the inhabitants of the different Lands.

Article 80.

Colonial matters belong exclusively to the competence of the Reich.

Article 81.

All German commercial vessels constitute one single merchant marine.

Article 82.

Germany constitutes one single customs and trading area surrounded by a customs frontier.

The customs frontier coincides with Germany's foreign frontier line. At the sea the shore of the mainland and of the islands belonging to the territory of the Reich form the customs boundary. Deviations may be ordered for the course of the boundary line along the sea and other waters.

Foreign territories or parts of territories may be joined to the customs area by means of international treaties or agreements.

Portions may be excluded from the customs area to meet particular necessities. In the case of free ports (Freihäfen) such exclusion can only be repealed by a law amending the Constitution.

Districts excluded from the customs area may be joined to a foreign customs area by means of international treaties or agreements.

All products of nature and industry and art which are freely traded within the Reich may be transported over the boundaries of the Lands and Communes into, out of, and through them. Exceptions may be allowed by Reich law.

Article 83.

Customs duties and consumption taxes are administered by the authorities of the Reich.

The authorities of the Reich, when administering taxes of the Reich (Reichsabgaben), shall take steps to enable the individual Lands to safeguard their own particular interests in regard to agriculture, trade, commerce and industry.

Article 84.

The Reich shall provide by law for:

1. the institution of a tax administration of the Lands, insofar as is necessary for the uniform and equal execution of the Reich taxation laws
2. the institution and powers of the authorities entrusted with the supervision of the execution of the Reich taxation laws
3. the accounting with the Lands
4. the reimbursement of the costs of administration in executing the Reich taxation laws.

Article 85.

All revenues and expenditure of the Reich must be estimated for every fiscal year and entered in the budget (Haushaltsplan).

The budget shall be passed by law before the beginning of the fiscal year.

Appropriations are as a rule made for one year; in special cases they may be granted for a longer period. Other provisions in the budget law which legislate for a period beyond the fiscal year, or which have no reference to the revenues or expenditure of the Reich, may not be incorporated in the budget law.

The Reichstag may not increase existing or incorporate new appropriations in the budget bill without the consent of the Reich Council.

The consent of the Reich Council may be replaced as provided in Article 74.

Article 86.

The Reich Minister of Finance shall, in the course of the year, account to the Reich Council and the Reichstag for the expenditure of all the revenues of the Reich for the preceding year in order to release the government of the Reich from its responsibility. The auditing of this account shall be regulated by Reich law.

Article 87.

Funds may only be obtained by loans in the case of extraordinary requirements and, as a rule, only for the purpose of productive outlay. A Reich law is required for this method of procuring funds as well as for the creation of a charge on the Reich by way of security.

Article 88.

The post and telegraph as well as the whole telephone system are exclusive functions of the Reich.

Postage stamps are uniform for the whole Reich.

Treaties relating to communications with foreign countries may only be concluded by the Reich.

Article 89.

It is a function of the Reich to take over the ownership of railways serving as means of general traffic and to operate them as a uniform system of communications.

The rights of the Lands to acquire private railways shall be transferred to the Reich on demand.

Article 90.

With the transfer of the railways the Reich acquires the right of expropriation and the sovereign state rights (die Staatlichen Hohheitsrechte) of the Lands over the railway systems. The extent of these rights shall be decided in the case of conflict by the Constitutional Court.

Article 91.

With the approval of the Reich Council the government of the Reich shall issue all decrees relating to the construction of railways, their operation and traffic. With the consent of the Reich Council the government may transfer this right to the competent Reich Minister.

Article 92.

The railways of the Reich, although their budget and accounts are incorporated in the general budget and accounts of the Reich, shall be operated as an independent economic enterprise, with the duty of defraying its own expenditure including interest on and amortization of the railway reserve fund. The amount of the amortization and the reserve fund, and the purposes for which the latter is to be utilized shall be regulated by an especial law.

Article 93.

The government of the Reich with the consent of the Reich Council shall establish advisory councils for the railways of the Reich to assist in an advisory capacity in matters relating to railway traffic and rates.

Article 94.

Once the Reich has taken over the administration of the railroads serving the general traffic of a particular district, new railroads serving general traffic may not be constructed within such district except by or with the consent of the Reich. When new railroad systems or alterations in those already existing are so projected as to fall within the police competence of any Land, the Reich railroad administration shall consult the Land authorities before the decision is taken.

Whenever the Reich has not yet taken over the administration of the railroads, it may construct such railroads on its own account as are deemed necessary for general traffic or for national defense by virtue of a Reich law, even against the protest of the Lands whose territory is to be traversed, but without prejudice to the sovereign rights (Landeshoheitsrechte) of the Lands; or the Reich may entrust another with the execution of such construction, together with the right of expropriation, if necessary.

All railroad administrations must permit the junction of other lines at the latter's expense.

Article 95.

Railways of general traffic not administered by the Reich shall be supervised by the Reich.

Railways under the supervision of the Reich shall be constructed and equipped according to uniform principles determined by the Reich. They must be kept in safe working order and developed as traffic requirements dictate. Service and equipment for passenger and freight traffic shall be maintained in accordance with their requirements.

The supervision of railway rates shall be directed to securing non-discriminatory and moderate charges.

Article 96.

All railways, including those not serving as means of general traffic, must comply with any demands of the Reich for their utilization for the purpose of national defense.

Article 97.

It is the duty of the Reich to take over the ownership and administration of waterways serving the general traffic.

After they have been taken over, waterways serving the general traffic may only be constructed or developed by the Reich or with its consent.

In the administration, development or construction of waterways, the requirements of land and water economy must be safeguarded in agreement with the Lands. Their improvement shall also be taken into consideration.

Every administration of waterways must permit the connection of their own with other inland waterways at the expense of the promoter. The same obligation holds for the construction of a connection between inland waterways and railways.

With the transfer of waterways the Reich acquires the right of expropriation, the control of rates and the police survey over the waterways and navigation.

The duties of the river conservancies in respect to the development of the natural waterways in the Rhine, Weser, and Elbe districts shall be taken over by the Reich.

Article 98.

Advisory councils to cooperate in matters concerning Reich waterways shall be formed in compliance with detailed provisions to be issued by the Reich government with the approval of the Reich Council.

Article 99.

On natural waterways charges (Abgaben) may only be collected for such works, plants and other institutions as are designed to facilitate traffic. In the case of Lands and communal institutions they may not exceed the necessary costs, for construction and upkeep. The construction and maintenance costs of institutions not exclusively devoted to the facilitation of traffic but also destined for the furtherance of other purposes, may only be raised in a proportionate degree by shipping charges. Interest and sinking funds on the invested capital are included as costs of construction.

The provisions of the foregoing paragraph apply also to charges collected for artificial waterways and to works erected thereon and in harbors.

Within the sphere of inland navigation the entire cost of a waterway, a river basin or a system of waterways may be utilized for calculating the shipping charges.

These provisions apply equally to the floating of timber (Flösserei) on navigable waterways.

It is within the exclusive competence of the Reich to exact from foreign ships and their cargoes other or higher charges than from German ships and their cargoes.

Article 100.

In order to cover the cost of the maintenance and construction of inland navigation routes, contributions may also be levied by virtue of a Reich law from persons enjoying benefits from the construction of dams in other ways than by navigation, if more than one Land is involved, or the Reich bears the costs of construction.

Article 101.

It is the duty of the Reich to take over the ownership and administration of all marine signal stations, particularly lighthouses, lightships, buoys, floats, and beacons. After the Reich has taken them over marine signal stations may only be constructed or developed by the Reich or with its consent.

Seventh Chapter

The Judiciary (Rechtspflege)

Article 102.

Judges are independent and subject only to the law.

Article 103.

The ordinary judiciary (Ordentliche Gerichtsbarkeit) consists of the Reich Supreme Court (Reichsgericht) and the courts of the Lands.

Article 104.

The judges of the ordinary judiciary are appointed for life. Against their will they may only be permanently or temporarily suspended from office or transferred to another position or retired by virtue of a judicial decision and only for the reasons and in the form prescribed by law. The legislature may fix an age limit, on reaching which judges shall retire.

A temporary suspension from office as provided by law is not affected hereby.

If a change is effected in the organization of the courts or their districts the judicial administrative authorities of the Lands may order involuntary transfers to another court of removal from office, but only on full pay.

These provisions do not apply to commercial judges (Handelsrichter), lay judges (Schöffen), and jurors (Geschworenen).

Article 105.

Exceptional courts are prohibited. No one may be deprived of the right to be heard by his legally prescribed judge (Gesetzlicher Richter). The legal provisions concerning military courts and courts martial (Standgerichte) are not affected hereby. Military courts of honor are abolished.

Article 106.

Military jurisdiction shall be abolished except in time of war and on men-of-war. Details shall be regulated by a Reich law.

Article 107.

Both in the Reich and in the Lands administrative courts shall be established under the laws for the protection of individuals against decrees and order of the administrative authorities.

Article 108.

A Constitutional Court shall be established for the German Reich in accordance with a Reich law.

SECOND PART

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE GERMANS

First Chapter

The Individual Person

Article 109.

All Germans are equal before the law.

In principle men and women have the same civil rights and duties.

Public-legal privileges or disadvantages of birth or of rank are to be abolished.

Titles of nobility shall be regarded merely as part of the name, and may no longer be bestowed.

Titles may only be bestowed when they indicate an office or profession; academic degrees are not affected hereby.

Orders and decorations may not be conferred by the State.

No German may accept titles or orders from a foreign government.

Article 110.

Citizenship of the Reich and the Lands is acquired and lost in accordance with the provisions of a Reich law. Every citizen of a Land is at the same time a citizen of the Reich.

Every German has in every Land of the Reich the same rights and duties as the citizens of that Land.

Article 111.

All Germans enjoy liberty of travel and residence throughout the whole Reich. Everyone has the right (Freizügigkeit) to sojourn and settle in any place within the Reich, to acquire real estate and to pursue any means of livelihood. Restrictions require a Reich law.

Article 112.

Every German is permitted to emigrate to a foreign country. Emigration may only be restricted by a Reich law.

All citizens of the Reich within and without the territory of the Reich are entitled to the protection of the Reich in relation to foreign countries.

No German may be surrendered to a foreign government for prosecution or punishment.

Article 113.

No laws or administrative orders may prejudice in their free and characteristic development the elements of the population of the Reich whose mother tongue is other than German, especially in regard to the use of their mother tongue in schools, in matters of internal administration, and the administration of justice.

Article 114.

The freedom of the person is inviolable. Curtailment or deprivation of personal freedom by a public authority is only permissible on a legal basis.

Persons who have been deprived of their freedom must be informed at the latest on the following day by whose authority and for what reasons the deprivation of freedom was ordered; opportunity shall be afforded them without delay of submitting objections to their deprivation of freedom.

Article 115.

Every German's home is his sanctuary and is inviolable. Exceptions may only be made as provided by law.

Article 116.

An act can only be punishable if its penalty was fixed by law before the act was committed.

Article 117.

The secrecy of letters and all postal, telegraphic and telephone communications is inviolable. Exceptions are inadmissible except by Reich law.

Article 118.

Every German has the right, within the limits of the general laws, to express his opinions freely in speech, in writing, in print, in picture form or in any other way. No conditions of work or employment may detract from this right and no disadvantage may accrue to him from any person for making use of this right.

Censorship is forbidden, but in the case of moving pictures deviations from this rule may be established by law. Legal provisions are also admissible for combating pornography and obscene publications (Schund und Schmutz Literatur) and for the protection of young persons at public plays and entertainment.

Second Chapter

The General Welfare (Gemeinschaftsleben)

Article 119.

Marriage as the cornerstone of family life and the preservation and increase of the nation is placed under the special protection of the Constitution. It is based on the equal rights of both sexes.

It is the duty of the State and the Communes to foster the purity, health, and social advancement of the family. Families with numerous children have a claim to proportionate assistance.

Motherhood has a claim to the protection and care of the State.

Article 120.

To provide their children with a thorough physical, spiritual, and social education is the supreme duty and natural right of parents, whose activities shall be supervised by the State.

Article 121.

The same conditions shall be created by law for the physical, spiritual and social development of illegitimate as for legitimate children.

Article 122.

Youth shall be protected against exploitation and also against neglect of their moral, mental or physical well-being. The States and Communes shall make the necessary arrangements.

Compulsory measures for their welfare may only be ordered on the basis of law.

Article 123.

All Germans have the right to assemble peacefully and unarmed without giving notice and without special permission.

A Reich law may make previous notification obligatory for assemblies in the open air, and may prohibit them in the case of immediate danger to the public safety.

Article 124.

All the Germans have the right to form associations or societies for purposes not contrary to criminal law. This right may not be curtailed by preventive measures. The same provisions apply to religious associations and societies.

Every association may become incorporated (Erwerb der Rechtsfähigkeit) according to the provisions of the civil law. The right may not be refused to any association on the grounds that its aims are political, social-political or religious.

Article 125.

The liberty and secrecy of the vote is guaranteed. Details shall be regulated by election laws.

Article 126.

Every German has the right to address requests or complaints in writing to the competent authorities or to the people's representatives. This right may be exercised individually or by several persons collectively.

Article 127.

Communes and communal unions have the right of self-administration (Selbstverwaltung) within the limits of the law.

Article 128.

All citizens without distinction shall be eligible for public office in accordance with the laws and according to their capabilities and achievements.

All provisions discriminating against women are abolished.

The principles governing the legal status of the public officials shall be regulated by Reich law.

Article 129.

Public officials shall be appointed for life, unless otherwise provided by law. Pensions for retired officials or the surviving dependents of deceased officials shall be regulated by law. The vested rights (Wohlerworbene Rechte) of public officials are inviolable. Legal steps may be taken by public officials for pecuniary claims.

Public officials may be only temporarily suspended from office, temporarily or permanently relieved or transferred to a different office with a lower salary on the conditions and in the form provided by law.

In every case where a disciplinary sentence is pronounced the way must be open for appeal and a new trial. Entries unfavorable to a public official may not be made in his official record until opportunity has been afforded him of expressing his own view of the facts. Public officials shall be permitted to inspect their official records.

The inviolability of vested rights and the competence of the civil courts to adjudicate pecuniary claims are also assured particularly to the regular soldiers (Berufssoldaten). In other respects their position shall be regulated by Reich law.

Article 130.

Public officials are servants of the whole community, and not of a party.

Liberty of political opinion and freedom to form associations is guaranteed to all public officials.

A Reich law shall provide in detail for the special representation of public officials.

Article 131.

If a public official in the execution of the official authority vested in him transgresses his official duty towards a third person, the State or the public body in whose service the officer is, is in principle held responsible. The right of recovery from the officer is reserved. Recourse to the ordinary civil courts may not be excluded.

Details shall be regulated by the competent legislature.

Article 132.

It is the duty of every German to accept honorary offices in accordance with the laws.

Article 133.

It is the duty of all citizens to render personal services to the State and the Commune in accordance with the laws.

The duty of military service (Wehrpflicht) is determined by the provisions of the Reich Defense Law. This shall also stipulate how far single Fundamental Rights of the Constitution shall be restricted in respect to members of the defense forces, in the interest of the fulfilment of their tasks and the maintenance of discipline.

Article 134.

All citizens without distinction contribute to all public burdens in proportion to their means and in accordance with the laws.

Third Chapter

Religion and Religious Associations

Article 135.

All inhabitants of the Reich enjoy full religious and conscientious freedom. The undisturbed exercise of religion is guaranteed by the Constitution and is under state protection. The general state laws are unaffected hereby.

Article 136.

Civil and civic rights and duties are neither contingent upon nor limited by the exercise of religious freedom.

The enjoyment of civil and civic rights and the eligibility for public office are independent of religious belief.

Nobody is obliged to reveal his religious conviction. The authorities are only entitled to ask questions concerning adherence to a religious body insofar as rights and duties are dependent thereon or in pursuance of statistical inquiries prescribed by law.

No one may be compelled to attend any church service or ceremony or to participate in religious exercises, or to take oath in religious form.

Article 137.

There is no State Church.

Freedom to form religious societies is guaranteed. The combination of religious societies within the territory of the Reich is subject to no restrictions.

Every religious society regulates and administers its affairs independently within the limits of the law, applicable to all. It appoints its officers without the cooperation of the State or the civil community.

Religious societies become incorporated (Erwerben die Rechtsfähigkeit), in accordance with the general provisions of civil law.

Religious societies remain bodies of public law (Körperschaften des Öffentlichen Rechts) of this has been their status hitherto. Similar rights shall be granted to other religious societies on their application, if their constitution and the number of their members offer a guarantee of permanency. If several such religious societies as are public bodies unite, this union is also a public body.

Such religious societies as are public bodies are entitled to levy taxes on the basis of the civil tax-roll in accordance with the laws of the respective Lands.

Associations devoted to the common cultivation of a philosophy of life (Waltanschauung) are placed on the same footing as religious societies.

Insofar as the execution of these provisions requires more detailed regulation, this is within the competence of the Lands' legislatures.

Article 138.

State contributions to religious societies based on laws, contract or special legal titles shall be commuted by Lands legislation. The Reich shall establish the principles therefor.

Property and other rights of religious societies and associations in their institutions, foundations, and other properties for cultural, educational, and charitable purposes are guaranteed.

Article 139.

Sundays and public holidays recognized by the State remain under legal protection as days of rest and spiritual edification.

Article 140.

Members of the defense forces shall be allowed the necessary free time for performing their religious duties.

Article 141.

Insofar as there is need for divine service and spiritual consolation in the army, in hospitals, prisons or other public institutions, the religious societies shall be permitted to perform the religious offices, but all compulsion shall be avoided.

Fourth Chapter

Education and the Schools

Article 142.

Art and science and the teaching thereof are free. The State guarantees them protection and takes part in their cultivation.

Article 143.

The education of young persons shall be provided for by means of public institutions. The Reich, Lands and Communes shall cooperate in their establishment.

The training of teachers shall be regulated uniformly for the whole Reich according to the generally recognized principles of higher education.

Teachers in public schools have the rights and duties of state officials.

Article 144.

The whole school system is under the supervision of the State, which may cause the Communes to participate therein. The supervision of schools is exercised by trained expert officials as their occupation-in-chief.

Article 145.

Attendance at school is universally obligatory.

In principle this duty is fulfilled by attending an elementary school for at least eight school years and a connected continuation school (Fortbildungsschule) until the completion of the eighteenth year. Instruction and school supplies are supplied free of charge in the elementary and continuation schools.

Article 146.

The system of public schools shall be organically developed. The intermediate and secondary school system shall be built upon the basis of common elementary schools. This system shall be determined by the needs of all kinds of vocations, and for the reception of a child into a particular school, his abilities and inclination shall be the deciding factor, not the economic and social status or the religious confession of his parents.

Within the Communes, however, on the petition of parents and guardians, popular schools professing their own faith or philosophy of life shall be established, insofar as this does not interfere with an organized school system in the sense, also, of Paragraph 1, supra. As far as possible the will of parents and guardians shall be taken into consideration. Details shall be regulated by Lands legislation based on principles prescribed by a Reich law.

Public funds shall be provided by the Reich, Lands and Communes to make the intermediate and secondary schools available for those possessed of restricted means; in particular shall there be educational grants for the parents for the parents of children looked upon as suitable subjects for instruction in intermediate and secondary schools until their schooling is completed.

Article 147.

Private schools as substitutes for public schools require the approval of the State and are subject to the laws of the Lands. Approval shall be granted when the private schools are not inferior to the public schools as regards their instructional aims and equipment and the scientific training of the teachers, and a separation of the pupils according to the wealth of their parents is not encouraged. The approval shall be refused if the economic and legal position of the teachers is not sufficiently assured.

Private elementary schools shall only be admitted when for those parents or guardians whose wishes are to be regarded under Article 146, Paragraph 2, no public elementary school of their faith or philosophical persuasion exists in their Commune, or if the educational administrative authorities recognize the existence of a particular educational need.

Private preparatory schools shall be abolished.

The existing law shall continue to apply to private schools not serving as substitutes for public schools.

Article 148.

In all schools moral training, a sense of civic responsibility, personal and vocational efficiency in a spirit of national German feeling and international conciliation shall be aimed at.

Care shall be taken that instruction in public schools shall not hurt the feelings of those who differ in opinion.

Civics and manual training form part of the school curriculum. On completing his obligatory schooling every pupil shall receive a copy of the Constitution.

Popular education including popular universities shall be developed by the Reich, Lands and Communes.

Article 149.

Religious instruction forms part of the ordinary school curriculum except in the non-confessional (secular) schools; its form will be regulated by the laws relating to schools. Religious instruction shall be given in conformity with the principles of the religious society concerned, without prejudice to the State's right of supervision.

The imparting of religious instruction and the performance of religious acts is left to the decision of the teacher, while the participation in religious lessons, acts, and ceremonies is a matter for the decision of those who have the right to determine the religious education of the child.

The theological faculties in the universities shall be maintained.

Article 150.

Artistic, historical, and natural monuments and scenery enjoy the protection and care of the State.

It is a function of the Reich to prevent German art treasures from passing to foreign countries.

Fifth Chapter

The Economic Life

Article 151.

The regulation of economic life must be compatible with the principles of justice, aiming at the attainment of humane conditions of existence for all. Within these limits the economic liberty of the individual shall be assured.

Legal compulsion is only admissible for the realization of threatened rights or in the service of preponderant requirements of the common welfare.

Freedom of trade and commerce is guaranteed on the basis of the Reich laws.

Article 152.

As far as the laws allow, there shall be freedom of contract in business intercourse. Usury (Wucher) is prohibited. Legal transactions contra bonos mores are invalid.

Article 153.

Property is guaranteed by the Constitution. Its content and limits are defined by the laws.

Expropriation can only take place for the public benefit and on a legal basis. Adequate compensation shall be granted, unless a Reich law orders otherwise. In the case of dispute concerning the amount of compensation, it shall be possible to submit the matter to the ordinary civil courts, unless Reich laws determine otherwise. Compensation must be paid if the Reich expropriates property belonging to the Lands, Communes, or public utility associations.

Property carries obligations. Its use shall also serve the common good.

Article 154.

The right of inheritance is guaranteed according to the civil code.

The share of the State in inherited property is determined by the laws.

Article 155.

The distribution and utilization of the land shall be supervised by state authorities in a manner to prevent abuse and with the object of ensuring a healthy dwelling to every German and to all German families, especially those with numerous children, living and working quarters in accordance with their needs. War veterans shall be particularly considered in the enactment of homestead laws.

Real estate, the acquisition of which is necessary for housing purposes, for the promotion of settlements and land cultivation or to improve agriculture, may be expropriated. All entails (Fideikomnisse) shall be dissolved.

The cultivation and utilization of the soil is a duty owed by the landowner to the community. An increase in the value of land, which arises without the expenditure of work or capital on the property, shall be utilized for the common benefit.

All treasures of the soil and all natural forces of economic utility are under the supervision of the State. Private mining rights (Regale) shall be transferred to the State by legislation.

Article 156.

The Reich may, without prejudice to the right of compensation, by law transfer to public ownership private economic enterprises suitable for socialization, applying thereby analogously the regulations relating to expropriation. The Reich may allot to itself, the Lands or the Communes a share in the administration of economic enterprises and associations or secure to itself a controlling influence therein in some other way.

The Reich may also in case of urgent necessity for socioeconomic interests, by law effect a combination of economic enterprises and associations on the basis of self-administration with the object of securing the cooperation of all working elements of the population, of allowing employers and employees a share in the management and regulating the production, fabrication, distribution, utilization, price fixing, and the importation and exportation of economic goods according to the principles of national economy.

The cooperative industrial and economic associations and their unions (Erwerbs- und Wirtschaftsgenossenschaften) shall at their request be incorporated in the socialized economic system, their constitution and peculiarities being thereby taken into consideration.

Article 157.

The ability to work is under the special protection of the Reich.

The Reich shall create a uniform labor law.

Article 158.

Intellectual labor, the rights of the author, the inventor, and the artist enjoy the protection and care of the Reich.

Recognition and protection in foreign countries also shall be secured to German science, art and technic by means of international agreements.

Article 159.

Freedom of association for the preservation and promotion of labor and economic conditions is assured to everyone and to all vocations. All agreements and measures attempting to restrict or restrain such freedom, are unlawful.

Article 160.

Persons working as employees or laborers are entitled to the leave necessary for the exercise of their civic rights and, insofar as the enterprise is not materially damaged thereby, for performing the duties attached to public honorary offices entrusted to them. The law shall determine to what extent they retain their right to remuneration.

Article 161.

For the maintenance of health and capacity to work, for the protection of maternity, and for provision against the economic consequences of age, infirmity, and the vicissitudes of life, the Reich shall organize a comprehensive system of insurance, in which the insured persons shall cooperate to a considerable extent.

Article 162.

The Reich shall endeavor to obtain an interstate regulation of the legal status of laborers which shall have as its object the establishment of a general minimum standard of social rights for all working classes of mankind.

Article 163.

Every German has, without prejudice to his personal liberty, the moral duty to utilize his intellectual and physical powers in the interest of the general welfare.

The opportunity of earning his living by economic work shall be afforded to every German. Insofar as suitable work cannot be found for him, he shall be provided with the necessary support. Details shall be regulated by special Reich laws.

Article 164.

The interests of the independent middle classes in agriculture, industry and commerce shall be promoted by legislation and administration and protected from oppression and absorption.

Article 165.

Laborers and employees are called upon to take part on equal terms and together with the employers in regulating conditions of work and wages and also in the general economic development of productive forces. The organizations on both sides and agreements between them shall be recognized.

Laborers and employees shall be legally represented on the Workmen's Councils of the Enterprise, as well as in the District Workmen's Councils (Bezirksarbeiterräten) organized for each economic area and on a Reich Workmen's Council (Reichsarbeiter Rat).

The District Workmen's Councils and the Reich Workmen's Council shall combine with the representatives of the employees and other interested elements of the population to form District Economic Councils (Bezirkswirtschaftsräte) and a Reich Economic Council (Reichswirtschaftsrat) for the purpose of performing all economic tasks and of cooperating in carrying out the socialization laws. The District Economic Councils and the Reich Economic Council shall be so constituted that all important vocational groups are represented thereon in accordance with their economic and social importance.

Social-political and political-economic bills of basic importance shall be submitted to the opinion of the Reich Economic Council by the government of the Reich before being introduced. The Reich Economic Council has itself the right to propose the introduction of such bills. If the government of the Reich does not approve them, it must nevertheless introduce such bills to the Reichstag, stating its own point of view. The Reich Economic Council may have the bill supported in the Reichstag by one of its own members.

Supervision and administrative powers may be conferred on the Workmen's and the Economic Councils within their own spheres of work.

The regulation of the organization and tasks of the Workmen's and the Economic Councils as well as their relation to other social self-governing bodies is exclusively a function of the Reich.