



Dr. Goebbels:  
Thirty articles of war for the German People

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These are the articles of war for the German people in the greatest battle of fate in our history. In their spirit, even in this gigantic struggle, countless of the best Germans at the front and at home have given their lives for the freedom and future of our people. Millions of brave German soldiers are fighting for this in all theaters of war, millions of hard-working men and women are working in tireless readiness at home, in factories, workshops, offices and laboratories, and in the farmlands and fields.

These articles of war are intended to be a legacy of our people's fallen soldiers to the living, to those fighting and working, as a confirmation of their high sense of sacrifice, but to those who are slow and undecided, as a harsh warning and strict request.

#### Article 1.

Anything is possible in this war, except that we should ever capitulate and submit to the power of the enemy. Anyone who speaks of this or even thinks of it is committing a cowardly betrayal of his people's right to life and must be expelled with shame and disgrace from the fighting and working German community.

#### Article 2.

We are fighting this war for our right to life. If we win it, we can and will overcome the damage and suffering it has caused in a relatively short time by using all our national strength. Its loss would mean the end of our people and its history.

#### Article 3.

This war is a defensive war. It has been forced upon us by our enemies with the aim of cutting off any national possibility of life and development. If they succeed in achieving this goal, the present generation will have lost everything that countless German generations before them have acquired in a struggle for life spanning thousands of years and built up through laborious and sacrificial diligence. The final chapter of our nation would then only record our disgrace and shame.

#### Article 4.

Like every war, this one too brings with it countless dangers and risks. Everyone should remember that every danger and every risk can be overcome if a great nation like the Germans, with a strong and determined leadership like that of this war, resists it with all its might and leaves no stone unturned to deal with it.

#### Article 5.

If all Germans think and act with the deepest sense of community like the best sons of our people, then we will definitely win this war. If, on the other hand, everyone lacked the sense of community like the lazy, cowardly and fickle, then the war would have been lost long ago. The war therefore stands and falls with the sense of community of our people.

#### Article 6.

The German demonstrates a sense of community when, just as he claims the vital rights of his people, he also faithfully and conscientiously fulfills the vital duties of his people. Even in peacetime and under normal circumstances, everyone is dependent on the help and support of the community and must therefore share fully in its burdens and tasks. How much more will this be the case in war!

#### Article 7.

Every piece of advice that comes from the enemy is a temptation to our war morale. The enemy wants to win just like we do. Everything he says and does is intended to mislead us with cunning and to surprise us with malice. So whoever listens to the enemy, even if he uses the most hypocritical arguments, is betraying his people in the greatest danger. Even ignorance cannot protect him from the punishment he deserves.

#### Article 8.

Silence is a high commandment in warfare. Only a few know the secrets of war. These are weapons in the struggle for survival of our people and must therefore not be revealed to the enemy

under any circumstances. It is therefore extremely unfair and detrimental to the general welfare to try to force the government, by spreading rumors, to make public statements on a war-important or even decisive issue that benefit the enemy and thereby cause great harm to its own people.

#### Article 9.

The war leaders act to the best of their knowledge and conscience. Since in many cases they cannot publicly explain the reasons for their actions without giving the enemy valuable clues, it sometimes happens that even those with good intentions do not fully understand them. It is precisely then that the war leaders have a right to the people's trust, which they have earned through countless proofs of their courage, their boldness, their foresight, but also their successes. The know-it-all can only criticize them because they are condemned to silence; if they could speak, they would be immediately refuted.

#### Article 10.

There is only one thing in this war that we must never lose: that is our freedom, the root of our life and our future. Everything else can be replaced, even if sometimes only with the most difficult effort over many years. A loss of our freedom, on the other hand, would lead to the loss of every other material and cultural possession of our people as a whole and of its citizens individually. So, when the war situation requires it, we must use everything that we are and everything that we have to preserve and defend that without which we cannot live as a people and as individuals. That is our freedom.

#### Article 11.

It is an old trick of political warfare to separate a people from their government in order to make them leaderless and thus defenseless. If this trick were to work against us, it would be the only way the enemy could overcome us. Anyone who falls for this hostile ruse of war is either a fool or a traitor. He is endangering the pledges of our victory, for which our soldiers have risked their lives and for which our heroes have died. Through his disloyalty he is stabbing the fighting front in the back. No punishment is severe enough to hold him accountable for it.

#### Article 12.

Beware of those who seem clever and who try to gain your trust with hypocritical words and then undermine your steadfastness with a torrent of phrases and rumors. Examine carefully what they say and you will soon see that their advice is not wisdom but cowardice. They may be know-it-alls, but by no means they can do it better. If they were, then instead of criticizing they would fill an important military post at the front or at home and contribute to speeding up victory through their performance.

#### Article 13.

Anyone who speaks about the war and its prospects should always choose his words as if the enemy were listening. Because in many cases he is actually listening; every thoughtless phrase on our part gives him new courage and encouragement and therefore prolongs the war. Dissatisfaction and anger about this or that hardship of the war may sometimes have a certain justification, but in relation to the great national fate that we are living through and fighting through today, they are usually of only secondary importance.

#### Article 14.

Help all those in need as much as possible. If effective help is not feasible in the war, the person concerned must know that it can only be a later consequence of the victory. The victory is the

prerequisite for a national reconstruction that eliminates all war damage. So the more sacrifices you have brought and will bring for the war, the more fanatic you have to believe in the victory, work and fight for it. Because only the victory also makes sense to the heaviest sacrifices.

#### Article 15.

It is essential that everyone familiarizes himself with his military duties as laid down in laws and regulations. Anyone who violates such laws or regulations through negligence or forgetfulness causes just as much damage as if he did so out of malice. For this reason alone he cannot expect to be spared. War is a serious matter that everyone must take as seriously as it deserves.

#### Article 16.

Every habit dulls us, even that of war. We must therefore fight every day and every hour to ensure that the habit of war does not lead us to become dull in the fulfillment of our war duties. What is our habit today will be the object of great admiration for our children and grandchildren in a few decades. They will no longer feel the mental anguish caused by the long duration of the war, but will see and value the war in its entirety as the greatest heroic experience in our national history. We should not forget this in the monotony of war in everyday life.

#### Article 17.

Everything, including war, comes to an end. We just have to make sure that it ends happily for us. We can achieve this above all through equanimity and steadfastness of heart. The people who have the most of these virtues will win.

#### Article 18.

There is no more stupid phrase than that the leadership has it better than the people. What the individual has to bear may sometimes be heavier in material terms. But the heaviest burden is the burden of responsibility, because the worries that come with it never end. So one should not be unfair and should not judge carelessly out of a momentary mood of annoyance on a question that is usually beyond the judgment of the uninvolved.

#### Article 19.

Nothing is more despicable than taking the view that one part of the people is waging war and the other only has to watch. This is not a war of the regime or the Wehrmacht, but a war of the people. Anyone who remains uninvolved in it only proves that he does not understand its purpose. He is a war parasite who lives off the suffering and achievements that others take on and perform for him. If they thought and acted exactly as he does, we would lose the war. In the interests of the well-meaning, anyone who neglects his war duties must be called to order. This is required by the immediate benefit of the war, but also by public war morality.

#### Article 20.

Just as in war there are medals and awards for those who excel in fulfilling their wartime duties, so there must be reprimands and possibly harsh punishments for those who neglect their wartime duties. A neglected duty of war is much more serious than a neglected duty of peace. Every German today lives under the laws of war. They provide for harsh punishments, often for offenses that are not taken too seriously in peacetime. In war they become shameful crimes because they endanger victory; therefore they deserve the strictest punishment.

#### Article 21.

The soldier dies at the front in the fulfillment of his hard duty. He can demand that anyone at home who sabotages or endangers the war suffers death. The front has the right to be supported by the high war morale of the homeland. It must never lose the awareness that it is secure at its rear. Anyone who robs the front of this awareness through anti-community behavior at home deserves the harsh punishment that the soldier demands against him based on his front-line thinking.

#### Article 22.

Discipline is the most important of all virtues of war, both at the front and at home. Only through iron unity can we overcome the huge problems of war. A breach of discipline is a breach of war morale and violates all laws of war. Any loosening of the cohesion of our people in war is a crime against the community. Our great chances of final victory lie in the firm unity and hard determination of our people.

#### Article 23.

Nobody is allowed to complain about war-related restrictions on their personal freedom during war. What do these mean in view of the fact that countless men, even women and children, have to accept such restrictions to the point of losing their lives!

#### Article 24.

War demands from all of us a complete devotion to it and its duties. Everything that we still have of peace can only be regarded as a gift that can be revoked. We must always expect that sooner or later we will be faced with the necessity of giving it up. In this war we are not fighting to maintain peace, but to restore it. In war in particular, the law applies that you must use what you want to defend.

#### Article 25.

Nothing is too precious to be sacrificed for freedom. Everything we possess we have fought for, acquired and built up as a free people. Without freedom, it would lose its meaning, its purpose, and also its possibility of existence. It is better for a nation to be destitute but free than to emerge from a war with its possessions apparently intact but unfree. A free people can reacquire and rebuild everything that they lost in the defense of their freedom. An unfree people will lose everything they saved in the fight for their freedom, as well as the ability to ever regain it.

#### Article 26.

The duty to serve in war goes so far that the individual must give up his life to preserve and protect the life of his people. In view of this supreme and irrevocable sacrifice, how could one not also demand that everyone, when the situation requires it, renounce possessions and property in order to serve victory and to ensure the protection of the community of his people! Only through the willingness to make such sacrifices does a collection of people become a people and, in a higher sense, a people become a nation.

#### Article 27.

The German nation, free and capable of living and developing in all directions, that is the goal of our politics and warfare. Our generation must ensure this goal through struggle and hard work. As things stand, the achievement of this goal cannot be postponed. Either we achieve it, or it will never be achieved.

#### Article 28.

Our generation therefore bears not only special burdens, but also a special honor. If we win the battle, and we can and must win, then we will go down in German history as the most glorious generation; if we were defeated, then our name would be despised and cursed for centuries by subsequent generations, who would then have to bear the terrible burden of our failure.

#### Article 29.

There are people who are only slightly interested in this. These are the materialists who think only of their own comfort and the enjoyment of their lives and have no sense of historical duties. One can only treat them with the deepest contempt. Out of a craving for pleasure they would be prepared to sacrifice the whole future of our people. Whenever they speak up, one must immediately confront them with the utmost severity. They do not understand objective discussion, since they only judge from self-interest. They act according to the principle: Who cares what happens when we are gone! We oppose this characterless attitude with the principle: If we have to forego our happiness in life for many years, at least our children and grandchildren should have a better life!

#### Article 30.

In everything you do and don't do, in everything you say and withhold, remember that you are a German. Believe faithfully and unshakably in the Führer and in victory! Always keep in mind that you are a child of the bravest and most hard-working people on earth, who have to endure a lot of misfortune and suffering in order to achieve their goal, but who, despite everything, will achieve this goal if they follow the noble virtues that slumbers within him, remains loyal and is prepared to give up everything in this war if necessary in order to ensure his freedom and his future.