

On 23 August 1933 Johannes Schräpel informs the Reich Minister of the Interior about the *Gleichschaltung* of the Association of Budgerigar Enthusiasts¹

Letter from Johannes Schräpel,² head of the Association of Budgerigar Enthusiasts in the Hanover district of Linden, 3 Höpfnerstraße, to the Reich Ministry of the Interior, dated 23 August 1933 (original), with an undated statute attached (carbon copy)

As head of the VSH, the Association of Budgerigar Enthusiasts, registered in Hanover, I hereby inform you that the association began the process of *Gleichschaltung* on 29 June of this year in accordance with the wishes of the national government. The board consists 100 per cent of National Socialists.³ The board members, who cannot obtain NSDAP membership because of the ban placed on admittance,⁴ have made a declaration that they stand behind the national government and will apply for membership as soon as this is possible again.

The leadership concept is firmly anchored in our statutes. The board members are no longer elected but rather appointed by the leader, as are the local branch heads and staff members. We will unrelentingly remove from our ranks anyone who should attempt to act against the leadership and against the National Socialist idea. I am appending a copy of our statutes. As an employee of National Socialist daily newspapers, I further venture to enclose for you the offprint of an article signed with my name, which also demonstrates my strictly National Socialist way of thinking.⁵

An identical letter has been sent to the Prussian Minister of Culture, the Reich commissioner for sport, and the district leadership and Gauleitung of the NSDAP.

Heil Hitler!

Jo. Schräpel,

head of the VSH.

[...]⁶

Statute

of the VSH: Association of Budgerigar Enthusiasts, registered in Hanover

1 BArch, R 1501/125708, fols. 543 and 546. This document has been translated from German.

2 Johannes Schräpel (1899–1982), bookseller and writer; joined the NSDAP in 1937; member of the SA; author of works including *Ewigkeitssucher* (1919) and *Kommt die volkstümliche Biologie?* (1937).

3 According to an official club bulletin, the previous chairman, Gustav Hallgarten, had announced at the meeting his resignation for health reasons. In addition, the name ‘Budgerigar Breeders’ Association’ (Verein der Wellensittichzüchter) was changed to ‘Association of Budgerigar Enthusiasts’ (Verband der Sittichliebhaber): see account in the newspaper clipping dated 8 July 1933, p. 129, BArch, R 1501/125708, fol. 545.

4 On 1 May 1933, the leadership of the NSDAP instituted a temporary ban on admittance to the Nazi Party in order to manage the influx of membership applications following the Reichstag elections in March 1933. See also Doc. 209, 1 Nov. 1935.

5 The article is not reproduced here.

6 Here the file contains two undated newspaper articles by Johannes Schräpel: in one, he welcomes the new National Socialist media landscape, while in the other he reports on changes within the Association of Budgerigar Enthusiasts; see fn. 3.

§ 1. Name, registered office, purpose.

The association is known as the VSH: Association of Budgerigar Enthusiasts, and its office is registered in Hanover. The purpose of the association is to purchase articles needed for breeding, to purchase birds, to provide information internally and to the public, to establish mutual contacts, and to promote the parakeet as the most lovable caged bird.

§ 2. Joining and resigning from the association.

Individuals and clubs can become members. A member can resign from the association only at the end of a six-month period, after giving six weeks' notice. Foreigners can also join the VSH.

Non-Aryans cannot obtain membership in the VSH and also may not attend the gatherings of the members.

§ 3. Acquisition of membership.

Application for admittance must be made in writing and addressed to the vice chairman and executive secretary. Membership is acquired when a majority of the board has voted in favour of admittance. The board is not required to state the reasons for any rejection. The new member must be notified in writing and provided with a copy of the statute.

§ 4. Termination of membership.

Membership is terminated by voluntary resignation with notice, in accordance with § 2, or by expulsion. The latter must ensue if a member acts contrary to the interests of the association, fails to obey the decisions of the board, does not conform to the provisions of the statute, or is guilty of dishonourable conduct. It can ensue if a member fails to pay his dues for more than three months, brings lasting strife into the life of the association, or disregards the association's interests in any way. The decision on expulsion is made by the board.

No defamation is associated with expulsion; rather, it may take place solely for reasons of expediency.

§ 5. Business year.

The business year of the association begins on 1 January and ends on 31 December. [...]⁷

⁷ The carbon copy of the undated statute ends with § 5. In the file it is included as a supplement to a second copy of the statute dated 29 June 1933, which contains fourteen paragraphs, though the Aryan Paragraph is not among them: BArch, R 1501/125708, fols. 547–549.