

Night and Fog

(*Nacht und Nebel*), German term used in a secret order issued by Adolf HITLER on December 7, 1941. The order stated that any underground resistance activities against the Reich carried out in Western Europe would be punished in the most severe ways. The term "Night and Fog" referred to those underground activists from Western Europe who, as a result of this order, were to disappear into the "fog of the night" without leaving a trace.

The order was issued as a result of the situation in Nazi-occupied northern France, where resistance activities were on the rise after the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. Hitler and Wilhelm Keitel, the Wehrmacht chief of staff who signed the order, wanted to discourage resistance activities, so they made them severely punishable. The order applied to underground activists in France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Belgium, Denmark, and Norway.

According to the order, special military courts could impose the death sentence without a unanimous decision. If not sentenced to death, the defendants were to be deported to Germany, where they would disappear without a trace into concentration camps or prisons.

The few surviving "Night and Fog" prisoners were liberated in April and May 1945.