

## Quisling, Vidkun

(1887--1945), Norwegian fascist leader and head of the Nazi-controlled puppet government in Norway from 1942--1945.

From 1922--1930 Quisling worked for the League of Nations providing aid to starving peasants in the Ukraine and on similar projects in Bulgaria, the Balkans, and Armenia. By the time he left the Soviet Union in 1929, he had decided that Communism and Bolshevism were threats to Norway.

In 1931 Quisling co-founded the Nordic Folk Awakening movement, which mirrored Nazi ideology. He believed that Norway needed strong leaders to protect individual rights, and that the Jews were impure and a threat to his ideal society. From 1931--1933 he served as Minister of Defense; in May 1933 he founded a fascist political party called National Unity with its own youth movement and bodyguard corps called the "Hird." However, Quisling was not elected to the parliament. Thus, he soon turned to Nazi Germany for support.

In December 1939 Quisling met with Adolf Hitler and Nazi ideologist Alfred Rosenberg. He was guaranteed German funds and moral support. In exchange, Quisling invited the Nazis to occupy Norway. The Germans invaded Norway in April 1940; Quisling openly met them and declared a new government with himself as prime minister. His traitorous behavior prompted the London Times to use his name as a synonym for all treason and collaboration.

However, the Germans rapidly became discontented with Quisling and kicked him out of office after just a week. The new government retained many of Quisling's people but was really run by the Germans. Quisling maintained leadership of the National Unity Party and for two years, he unofficially worked behind the scenes. In February 1942 a national government was established with Quisling as minister-president. However, his actual powers were limited. He aspired to make a treaty with Germany that would give his government true authority and independence. However, he never succeeded, and was always dependent on the Germans.

After the liberation of Norway, Quisling was arrested and put on trial. He was found guilty, sentenced to death, and executed on October 24, 1945.