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For Immediate Release

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Traveling Exhibition ‘State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda’ To Open at Los Angeles Central Library On March 10

“Propaganda is a truly terrible weapon in the hands of an expert.”
—Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 1924

LOS ANGELES (February 12, 2016) --- The Nazi Party developed a sophisticated and sinister propaganda machine that deftly spread lies about its political opponents, Jews, and the need to justify war. But Nazi propaganda was much more complex than that. For the Nazis to achieve power and pursue their racial policies and expansionist war efforts, a much more nuanced picture had to be painted—one that would appeal to broad swaths of the population, not just a fanatical extreme.

“*State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda*” draws visitors into a rich multimedia environment vividly illustrating the insidious allure of much of Nazi propaganda and challenges visitors to think critically about the messages they receive today. The exhibition opens at the downtown **Los Angeles Central Library** on March 10 and will be on display through August 31.

“Adolf Hitler was an avid student of propaganda and fully utilized contemporary technology. Radio was the internet of its day—crossing national borders and able to reach millions,” says exhibition curator **Steven Luckert**. “Today many extremist political parties and terrorist organizations such as ISIS deftly leverage propaganda to recruit followers and incite violence using many of the same techniques honed by the Nazi Party.”

The exhibition reveals how shortly after World War I, the Nazi Party began to transform itself from an obscure, extremist group into the largest political party in democratic Germany. Hitler early on recognized how propaganda, combined with the use of terror, could help his radical party gain mass support and votes. He personally adapted the ancient symbol of the swastika and the emotive colors of red, black, and white to create the movement’s flag. In doing so, Hitler established a potent visual identity that has branded the Nazi Party ever since.

After seizing power, the Nazi Party took over all communications in Germany. It marshaled the state’s resources to consolidate power and relentlessly promote its vision of a “racially pure,” utopian Germany that needed to defend itself from those who would destroy it. Jews were cast as the primary enemies, but others,

including Roma, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, and persons with mental or physical disabilities, were also portrayed as threats to the "national community."

As Germany pushed the world into war, Nazi propaganda rationalized Germany's territorial expansion as self-defense. Jews were depicted as agents of disease and corruption. The Nazis' actions against them, in Germany and occupied countries, were promoted as necessary measures to protect the population at large.

"We are excited to bring this powerful exhibit to the Central Library, where it can be experienced by all Angelenos," said City Librarian **John F. Szabo**. "We will explore the exhibit's themes through special programs that will enhance the experience for all visitors, including students and educators."

The Museum, working with the Library, will offer special training opportunities for area educators, and a range of public programming. A schedule of events will be posted at www.ushmm.org/events.

In preparation for the opening of "*State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda*," outreach to the educational community in the Los Angeles area has been ongoing, which includes teacher workshops and the development of curricular material to accompany the exhibit. Administrators, teachers and school groups at the middle and high school, and university levels are encouraged to attend the exhibition.

As a lead-up to the opening of the "*State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda*" exhibition, the Museum, together with USC Casden Institute and USC Dornsife, will present "*Casden Conversation: The Powers and Perils of Nazi Propaganda*" on Sunday, March 6 at 4 p.m. at University of Southern California, Doheny Memorial Library, Room 240. Dr. Luckert will discuss the power and perils of propaganda and explore how the Nazis promoted their platform to millions of people via posters, photographs, film, and radio. The program moderator will be Dr. Stephen Smith, Executive Director of USC Shoah Foundation–The Institute for Visual History. The program is free and open to the public, but advance registration is required at ushmm.org/events/casdenconversations4. For more information, contact the Museum's Western Regional office at 310.556.3222 or email at western@ushmm.org.

In the 23 years since it opened, the Museum has educated and inspired more than 38 million visitors, including more than 10 million children and nearly 100 heads of state. A permanent reminder on the National Mall in Washington of what can occur when the world fails to take action, the Museum inspires citizens and leaders alike to confront hate and indifference, end genocide and promote human dignity.

The Museum's work is having a significant impact – here in Southern California and around the world. Hundreds of Los Angeles area schoolteachers – and thousands more from all 50 states – are trained each year in how to make the Holocaust relevant and meaningful to young people. The Museum's leadership programs are inspiring California judges, police and military officers to heed the lessons of the Holocaust and understand their roles as safeguards of democracy. The Museum brings together policymakers, diplomats and heads of state to focus on ending the continuing scourge of genocide.

The Central Library is located at 630 W. Fifth St., Los Angeles, CA 90071.

The “*State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda*” is free and open to the public from March 10 through August 31. For more information, contact the Museum’s Western Regional Office at 310.556.3222 or western@ushmm.org.

Media interested in covering the special exhibition “*State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda*” or speaking with the organizers or participants should contact Cameron Andrews at 562.432.5300 or cameron@piercomm.com or Raymund Flandez at 202.314.1772 or rflandez@ushmm.org or Brenda J. Breaux at 213-228-7558 or bbreaux@lapl.org.

Support for the exhibition presentation in Los Angeles has been provided by the Angell Foundation, the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation, and the Samuel Goldwyn Foundation. The exhibition was underwritten in part by grants from Katharine M. and Leo S. Ullman and the Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation, with additional support from the Lester Robbins and Sheila Johnson Robbins Traveling and Special Exhibitions Fund established in 1990 and Dr. and Mrs. Sol Center.

About the Los Angeles Public Library

A 2015 recipient of the nation’s highest honor for library service—the National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Los Angeles Public Library serves the largest and most diverse urban population of any library in the nation. Its Central Library, 72 branch libraries, collection of more than 6 million books, state-of-the-art technology accessible at www.lapl.org, and more than 18,000 public programs a year provide everyone with free and easy access to information and the opportunity for life-long learning.

About the Campaign

Through its national campaign *Never Again: What You Do Matters*, led by honorary chair Elie Wiesel, the Museum seeks to make critical investments to keep Holocaust memory alive as a relevant, transformative force in the 21st century. The \$540 million comprehensive goal includes building a stronger endowment, increased annual fund, and new Collections and Conservation Center. Visit www.ushmm.org/campaign to learn more about how you can join us in this urgent effort.

About the Museum

A living memorial to the Holocaust, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum inspires citizens and leaders worldwide to confront hatred, prevent genocide, and promote human dignity. Its far-reaching educational programs and global impact are made possible by generous donors.

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