

GCSE History

Weimar and Nazi Germany Key Topic Three Nazi control and dictatorship 1933-1939



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Reichstag Fire 27th February 1933

Causes	Events	Consequences
<p>A massive fire destroyed Reichstag (German parliament) on 27th February 1933.</p> <p>The Nazis blamed a young Dutch man called Marinus van der Lubbe.</p> <p>The Nazis believed he was a communist.</p>	<p>The Nazis used the fire as an excuse to blame the communists.</p> <p>Van der Lubbe was executed.</p> <p>Hitler claimed the communists were trying to take over and destroy Germany.</p>	<p>Hitler persuaded Hindenburg to declare a state of Emergency and call an election for 5th March.</p> <p>The Emergency decree gave Hitler special powers to suspend civil rights, imprison opponents, and control the police force.</p> <p>The Nazis used this to violently intimidate their political opponents and as a result won 288 seats in the Reichstag elections. With the support of other Nationalists, this gave Hitler a majority in the Reichstag, which he could use to make new laws.</p>

The Enabling Act: March 1933

With a majority in the Reichstag Hitler was able to make new laws. The Nazis passed the 'Law for the removal of the distress of the people and the Reich' (Enabling Act) in March 1933. This suspended the constitution and gave Hitler the power to make laws without the Reichstag for 4 years.

The Nazis used the Enabling Act to:

- Ban all other political parties
- Ban all Trade Unions
- Make all Civil Servants loyal Nazis
- Remove regional and local parliaments

SIGNIFICANCE: Marks the end of the Weimar Republic and democratic rule in Germany

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The Night of the Long Knives 30th June 1934

Causes	Events	Consequences
<p>Hitler wanted to remove opposition and consolidate his power.</p> <p>Hitler concerned about the power of Rohm and the SA.</p> <p>Hitler was worried Rohm might challenge Hitler for the leadership.</p> <p>The SS was also jealous of the SA's size and power.</p> <p>Hitler wanted the support of the Army and big business who supported the Army</p>	<p>In June 1934, Hitler ordered the SA to go on leave for an entire month.</p> <p>Hitler ordered the SS to eliminate the threat posed by the SA.</p> <p>30th June 1934, Rohm and 6 senior leaders of the SA executed by the SS.</p> <p>SS also attacked other political opponents including Von Schleicher who was shot.</p> <p>Over 4 days, 400 people including 150 senior SA members were shot.</p>	<p>Hitler gains more power and consolidates his rule. Army and SA no longer rivals.</p> <p>SA becomes less important. SS increases in size and power. The Army supports Hitler to become President when Hindenburg dies in 1934.</p>

Death of President Hindenburg

When Hindenburg died of old age, Hitler took the powers of President as well as Chancellor. The Army now had to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler. Hitler becomes Führer. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Hitler becomes a dictator

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The Nazi Police State

What was the organisation or group?	SS	SD	Gestapo	Concentration Camps	Judges, Law Courts and the Police
Who was in charge?	Heinrich Himmler	Reinhard Heydrich	Hermann Göring	SS (Death heads Unit)	Police Chiefs and Judges
What did they do?	In charge of all state policing and oversaw the Police state. They could arrest and imprison anyone they wanted.	Security Force – Monitor and keep track of Nazi opponents	The Secret Police	Prisons for political prisoners and opponents of the Nazis. Later developed into Jewish concentration camps	Could arrest and send opponents to prison.

The police state allowed Hitler to remove any potential opposition and have total control over the German people. It allowed the Nazis to establish a totalitarian state.



Control of the legal system

Hitler wanted to ensure that all laws were interpreted in favour of the Nazis or biased towards Nazi views and beliefs. All judges now had to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler and had to become a member of the National Socialist League for the Maintenance of Law (NSRB).

By 1936, judges had to wear the swastika and Nazi eagle on their robes. In October 1933, the German Lawyers Front was established and there were more than 100,000 members by the end of the year. In 1934, a new People's Court was established to try cases of treason.

The judges were loyal Nazis and the trials were conducted in secret. Between 1934 and 1939, 534 people were sentenced to death for political offences.

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Repression of the Churches:

Most Germans were Christian, either Protestants in the North or Catholics in the South. Although some Christians were Nazis supporters, because of their allegiance to God or the Pope, they could have been a significance source of opposition to the Nazis. The Nazis initially tried to work with the churches and then sought to remove them.

The Catholic Church	The Protestant Church
Possible frictions: Catholics loyal to the Pope had their own schools and taught different values to the Nazis.	Possible frictions: Some leaders within the Protestant Church were not happy with the way the Nazis were running Germany. Pastor Martin Niemöller was the most outspoken. He set up the Confessional Church to oppose the Nazis.
Dealings: July 1939 Hitler signed the Concordat (agreement with the Pope. Hitler agreed not to interfere in Catholic worship and schools as long as Priests did not interfere in politics and German Bishops swore loyalty to the Nazis.	Dealings: Some Protestants worked with the Nazis and were grateful that Hitler had protected them from the anti-Christian Communists. Formed the Reich Church, a pro-Nazi Protestant Church. Ludwig Muller (pro-Nazi) was made Reich Bishop in September 1933.
Persecutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic Priests were harassed and arrested • Over 400 priests were imprisoned and sent to concentration camps • Catholic schools were brought in line with Nazi state schools or closed. • Catholic Youth clubs were banned In 1937 the Pope openly criticised the Nazis after realising that the Concordat was worthless	Persecutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nazis persecuted Niemöller and members of the Confessional Church • In 1937 Niemöller was sent to a concentration camp • Over 800 Protestants and followers of Niemöller were sent to a concentration camp

Censorship

Hitler wanted to establish a totalitarian state, whereby the state controlled every aspect of people's lives. He achieved this through the use of censorship and propaganda.

- Control of the Press: All newspapers were controlled by the Nazis. Only pro-Nazis stories could be written.
- Control of Universities: All professors had to conduct pro-Nazi research to support Nazi views. Any professors who disagreed would be sacked. 3000 were sacked by 1938.
- Control of the Arts & Culture: All art and culture was controlled by Joseph Goebbels. All books had to agree with Nazi views. 20,000 books were burnt for being anti-Nazi or written by Jews. Jazz was banned and modern art was disapproved off. Plays and theatres were allowed only if they showed Nazi views.
- Radio: All stations put under Nazi control and had to broadcast Pro-Nazi messages / broadcasts.

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By 1933, Goebbels had learned many ways to publicise the Nazi party. However, from 1933, Goebbels could use all the resources of the state/government to publicise Hitler and his message on every aspect of society. Some of the ways just continued methods used by the Nazis in the 1920s but there were also new methods being exploited such as radio, cinema and international / cultural event

- Posters: Used to advertise Nazi views and make Hitler look strong.
- Aeroplanes: Used to transport Hitler from one town and city to the next quickly. It meant he could give speeches to millions of Germans.
- Radio: All radio stations were put under Nazi control. Hitler made request broadcasts. Radios were sold cheaply so that all German families could own one.
- Cinema: Films shown with a 45min Nazi news update from 1934 all film makers had to submit their film for approval. Some films had pro-Nazi messages
- Rallies: Mass rallies were large meetings of people. There were military marches and speeches. These created a sense of unity and strength. A stadium at Nuremberg was built to host mass Nazi rallies.
- Sport: -In 1936, the Nazis held the Berlin Olympics- they showed off their strength and power by building a new Olympic Stadium, which could hold 110,000 people. - It showed off German organisation - Many German athletes won Gold medals, which promoted Nazi ideas about the Master race
- Architecture: Albert Speer designed major Nazi projects and buildings like the parade ground at Nuremberg and the new Chancellery in Berlin. Nazi architecture conveyed strength, power and permanence.

Resistance and Opposition to the Nazis:

Resistance: Refusing to support or speaking against the Nazis **Opposition:** Activity working against the Nazis or working to remove the Nazi regime

Opposition from the Churches	Youth Opposition
<p>Pastors Emergency League (PEL) Established by Martin Niemöller in 1933. Opposed the Nazis desire to join regional Churches together and Nazi attempts to stop Jews becoming Christians.</p> <p>The Confessing Church: The PEL set up the Confessing Church in 1934. It was an Anti-Nazi Protestant Church. 6,000 Protestant Pastors joined. 800 Pastors were arrested and sent to concentration camps.</p> <p>Catholic Opposition: Some Catholics priests spoke out against the Nazis. Around 400 were arrested and sent to concentration camps.</p>	<p>Edelweiss Pirates: Rebellious working-class teenagers from big German cities. Local groups were called the Travelling Dudes and Navajos. They used the symbol of the white edelweiss flower to show membership of the Edelweiss Pirates. Boys wore long hair and copied American clothing styles. Taunted and fought with the Hitler Youth.</p> <p>The Swing Youth: Rebellious teenagers from wealthy middle-class families. Located in the big towns and cities, especially Berlin, Hamburg and Kiel. Admired American culture, clothes, films and especially music. Played records illegally imported from the USA. Gathered together to drink alcohol, smoke, listen and dance to music. Organised illegal dances, which were attended by up to 6,000 young people.</p> <p>Jazz Youth: Many young Germans listened to banned Jazz music. They became known as the Jazz Youth.</p>