

NSDAP

Basics, Timeline,
Significant Members

NSDAP

NSDAP

1919 Anton Drexler, Gottfried Feder and Dietrich Eckart formed the German Worker's Party (GPW) in Munich. The German Army was worried that it was a left-wing revolutionary group and sent Adolf Hitler, one of its education officers, to spy on the organization. Hitler discovered that the party's political ideas were similar to his own. He approved of Drexler's German nationalism and anti-Semitism but was unimpressed with the way the party was organized. Although there as a spy, Hitler could not restrain himself when a member made a point he disagreed with, and he stood up and made a passionate speech on the subject.

Anton Drexler was impressed with Hitler's abilities as an orator and invited him to join the party. At first Hitler was reluctant, but urged on by his commanding officer, Captain Karl Mayr, he eventually agreed. He was only the fifty-fourth person to join the German Worker's Party. Hitler was immediately asked to join the executive committee and was later appointed the party's propaganda manager.

In the next few weeks Hitler brought several members of his army into the party, including one of his commanding officers, Captain Ernst Roehm. The arrival of Roehm was an important development as he had access to the army political fund and was able to transfer some of the money into the GWP.

The German Worker's Party used some of this money to advertise their meetings. Adolf Hitler was often the main speaker and it was during this period that he developed the techniques that made him into such a persuasive orator.

Hitler's reputation as an orator grew and it soon became clear that he was the main reason why people were joining the party. This gave Hitler tremendous power within the organization as they knew they could not afford to lose him.

In April, 1920, Hitler advocated that the party should change its name to the National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP). Hitler had always been hostile to socialist ideas, especially those that involved racial or sexual equality. However, socialism was a popular political philosophy in Germany after the First World War. This was reflected in the growth in the German Social Democrat Party (SDP), the largest political party in Germany.

Hitler, therefore redefined socialism by placing the word 'National' before it. He claimed he was only in favour of equality for those who had "German blood". Jews and other "aliens" would lose their rights of citizenship, and immigration of non-Germans should be brought to an end.

In February 1920, the NSDAP published its first programme which became known as the "Twenty-Five Points". In the programme the party refused to accept the terms of the Versailles Treaty and called for the reunification of all German people. To reinforce their ideas on nationalism, equal rights were only to be given to German citizens. "Foreigners" and "aliens" would be

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denied these rights.

To appeal to the working class and socialists, the programme included several measures that would redistribute income and war profits, profit-sharing in large industries, nationalization of trusts, increases in old-age pensions and free education.

On 24th February, 1920, the NSDAP (later nicknamed the Nazi Party) held a mass rally where it announced its new programme. The rally was attended by over 2,000 people, a great improvement on the 25 people who were at Hitler's first party meeting.

Adolf Hitler knew that the growth in the party was mainly due to his skills as an orator and in the autumn of 1921 he challenged Anton Drexler for the leadership of the party. After brief resistance Drexler accepted the inevitable, and Hitler became the new leader of the organization.

Hitler's ability to arouse in his supporters emotions of anger and hate often resulted in their committing acts of violence. In September 1921, Hitler was sent to prison for three months for being part of a mob who beat up a rival politician.

When Hitler was released, he formed his own private army called Sturm Abteilung (Storm Section). The SA (also known as stormtroopers or brownshirts) were instructed to disrupt the meetings of political opponents and to protect Hitler from revenge attacks. Captain Ernst Roehm of the Bavarian Army played an important role in recruiting these men, and Hermann Goering, a former air-force pilot, became their leader.

Hitler's stormtroopers were often former members of the Freikorps (right-wing private armies who flourished during the period that followed the First World War) and had considerable experience in using violence against their rivals.

The SA wore grey jackets, brown shirts (khaki shirts originally intended for soldiers in Africa but purchased in bulk from the German Army by the Nazi Party), swastika armbands, ski-caps, knee-breeches, thick woolen socks and combat boots. Accompanied by bands of musicians and carrying swastika flags, they would parade through the streets of Munich. At the end of the march Hitler would make one of his passionate speeches that encouraged his supporters to carry out acts of violence against Jews and his left-wing political opponents.

As this violence was often directed against Socialists and Communists, the local right-wing Bavarian government did not take action against the Nazi Party. However, the national government in Berlin were concerned and passed a "Law for the Protection of the Republic". Hitler's response was to organize a rally attended by 40,000 people. At the meeting Hitler called for the overthrow of the German government and even suggested that its leaders should be executed.

On 8th November, 1923, the Bavarian government held a meeting of about 3,000 officials. While Gustav von Kahr, the leader of the Bavarian government was making a speech, Adolf Hitler and armed stormtroopers entering the building. Hitler jumped onto a table, fired two shots in the air and told the audience that the Beer Hall Putsch was taking place and the National Revolution had began.

Leaving Hermann Goering and the SA to guard the 3,000 officials, Hitler took Gustav von Kahr, Otto von Lossow, the commander of the Bavarian Army and Hans von Lossow, the commandant of the Bavarian State Police into an adjoining room. Hitler told the men that he was to be the new leader of Germany and offered them posts in his new government. Aware that this would be an act of high treason, the three men were initially reluctant to agree to this offer. Hitler was furious and threatened to shoot them and then commit suicide: "I have three bullets for you, gentlemen, and one for me!" After this the three men agreed.

Soon afterwards Eric Ludendorff arrived. Ludendorff had been leader of the German Army at the end of the First World War. He had therefore found Hitler's claim that the war had not been lost by the army but by Jews, Socialists, Communists and the German government, attractive, and was a strong supporter of the Nazi Party. Ludendorff agreed to become head of the the German Army in Hitler's government.

While Hitler had been appointing government ministers, Ernst Roehm, leading a group of stormtroopers, had seized the War Ministry and Rudolf Hess was arranging the arrest of Jews and left-wing political leaders in Bavaria.

Hitler now planned to march on Berlin and remove the national government. Surprisingly, Hitler had not arranged for the stormtroopers to take control of the radio stations and the telegraph offices. This meant that the national government in Berlin soon heard about Hitler's putsch and gave orders for it to be crushed.

The next day Adolf Hitler, Eric Ludendorff, Hermann Goering and 3,000 armed supporters of the Nazi Party marched through Munich in an attempt to join up with Roehm's forces at the War Ministry. At Odensplatz they found the road blocked by the Munich police. As they refused to stop, the police fired into the ground in front of the marchers. The stormtroopers returned the fire and during the next few minutes 21 people were killed and another hundred were wounded, included Goering.

When the firing started Adolf Hitler threw himself to the ground dislocating his shoulder. Hitler lost his nerve and ran to a nearby car. Although the police were outnumbered, the Nazis followed their leader's example and ran away. Only Eric Ludendorff and his adjutant continued walking towards the police. Later Nazi historians were to claim that the reason Hitler left the scene so quickly was because he had to rush an injured young boy to the local hospital.

After hiding in a friend's house for several days, Hitler was arrested and put on trial for high treason. If found guilty, Hitler faced the death penalty. While in prison Hitler suffered from depression and talked of committing suicide. However, it soon became clear that the Nazi sympathizers in the Bavarian government were going to make sure that Hitler would not be punished severely.

At his trial Hitler was allowed to turn the proceedings into a political rally, and although he was found guilty he only received the minimum sentence of five years. Other members of the Nazi Party also received light sentences and Eric Ludendorff was acquitted.

Hitler was sent to Landsberg Castle in Munich to serve his prison sentence. While there he wrote *Four Years of Struggle against Lies, Stupidity, and Cowardice*. Hitler's publisher reduced it to *My Struggle* (*Mein Kampf*). The book is a mixture of autobiography, political ideas and an explanation of the techniques of propaganda. The autobiographical details in *Mein Kampf* are often inaccurate, and the main purpose of this part of the book appears to be to provide a positive image of Hitler. For example, when Hitler was living a life of leisure in Vienna he claims he was working hard as a labourer.

In *Mein Kampf* Hitler outlined his political philosophy. He argued that the German (he wrongly described them as the Aryan race) was superior to all others. "Every manifestation of human culture, every product of art, science and technical skill, which we see before our eyes today, is almost exclusively the product of Aryan creative power."

Adolf Hitler warned that the Aryan's superiority was being threatened by intermarriage. If this happened world civilization would decline: "On this planet of ours human culture and civilization are indissolubly bound up with the presence of the Aryan. If he should be exterminated or subjugated, then the dark shroud of a new barbarian era would enfold the earth."

Although other races would resist this process, the Aryan race had a duty to control the world. This would be difficult and force would have to be used, but it could be done. To support this view he gave the example of how the British Empire had controlled a quarter of the world by being well-organised and having well-timed soldiers and sailors.

Hitler believed that Aryan superiority was being threatened particularly by the Jewish race who, he argued, were lazy and had contributed little to world civilization. (Hitler ignored the fact that some of his favourite composers and musicians were Jewish). He claimed that the "Jewish youth lies in wait for hours on end satanically glaring at and spying on the unconscious girl whom he plans to seduce, adulterating her blood with the ultimate idea of bastardizing the white race which they hate and thus lowering its cultural and political level so that the Jew might dominate."

According to Hitler, Jews were responsible for everything he did not like, including modern art, pornography and prostitution. Hitler also alleged that

the Jews had been responsible for losing the First World War. Hitler also claimed that Jews, who were only about 1% of the population, were slowly taking over the country. They were doing this by controlling the largest political party in Germany, the German Social Democrat Party, many of the leading companies and several of the country's newspapers. The fact that Jews had achieved prominent positions in a democratic society was, according to Hitler, an argument against democracy: "a hundred blockheads do not equal one man in wisdom."

Hitler believed that the Jews were involved with Communists in a joint conspiracy to take over the world. Like Henry Ford, Hitler claimed that 75% of all Communists were Jews. Hitler argued that the combination of Jews and Marxists had already been successful in Russia and now threatened the rest of Europe. He argued that the communist revolution was an act of revenge that attempted to disguise the inferiority of the Jews.

In Mein Kampf Hitler declared that: "The external security of a people is largely determined by the size of its territory. If he won power Hitler promised to occupy Russian land that would provide protection and Lebensraum (living space) for the German people. This action would help to destroy the Jewish/Marxist attempt to control the world: "The Russian Empire in the East is ripe for collapse; and the end of the Jewish domination of Russia will also be the end of Russia as a state."

To achieve this expansion in the East and to win back land lost during the First World War, Hitler claimed that it might be necessary to form an alliance with Britain and Italy. An alliance with Britain was vitally important because it would prevent Germany fighting a war in the East and West at the same time.

Hitler was released from prison on 20th December, 1924, after serving just over a year of his sentence. The Germany of 1924 was dramatically different from the Germany of 1923. The economic policies of the German government had proved successful. Inflation had been brought under control and the economy began to improve. The German people gradually gained a new faith in their democratic system and began to find the extremist solutions proposed by people such as Hitler unattractive.

Hitler attempted to play down his extremist image, and claimed that he was no longer in favour of revolution but was willing to compete with other parties in democratic elections. This policy was unsuccessful and in the elections of December 1924 the NSDAP could only win 14 seats compared with the 131 obtained by the Socialists (German Social Democrat Party) and the 45 of the German Communist Party (KPD).

In the 1928 German elections, less than 3% of the people voted for the Nazi Party. This gave them only twelve seats, twenty fewer than they achieved in the May, 1924 election. However, the party was well organized and membership had grown from 27,000 in 1925 to 108,000 in 1928.

One of the new members was Joseph Goebbels. Hitler first met him in 1925. Both men were impressed with each other. Goebbels described one of their first meetings in his diary: "Shakes my hand. Like an old friend. And those big blue eyes. Like stars. He is glad to see me. I am in heaven. That man has everything to be king."

Hitler admired Goebbels' abilities as a writer and speaker. They shared an interest in propaganda and together they planned how the NSDAP would win the support of the German people.

Propaganda cost money and this was something that the Nazi Party was very short of. Whereas the German Social Democrat Party was funded by the trade unions and the pro-capitalist parties by industrialists, the NSDAP had to rely on contributions from party members. When Hitler approached rich industrialists for help he was told that his economic policies (profit-sharing, nationalization of trusts) were too left-wing.

In an attempt to obtain financial contributions from industrialists, Hitler wrote a pamphlet in 1927 entitled *The Road to Resurgence*. Only a small number of these pamphlets were printed and they were only meant for the eyes of the top industrialists in Germany. The reason that the pamphlet was kept secret was that it contained information that would have upset Hitler's working-class supporters. In the pamphlet Hitler implied that the anti-capitalist measures included in the original twenty-five points of the NSDAP programme would not be implemented if he gained power.

Hitler began to argue that "capitalists had worked their way to the top through their capacity, and on the basis of this selection they have the right to lead." Hitler claimed that national socialism meant all people doing their best for society and posed no threat to the wealth of the rich. Some prosperous industrialists were convinced by these arguments and gave donations to the Nazi Party, however, the vast majority continued to support other parties, especially the right-wing German Nationalist Peoples Party (DNVP).

Another new member of the NSDAP was Heinrich Himmler. Hitler was impressed by Himmler's fanatical nationalism and his deep hatred of the Jews. Himmler believed Hitler was the Messiah that was destined to lead Germany to greatness. Hitler, who was always vulnerable to flattery, decided that Himmler should become the new leader of his personal bodyguard, the Schutz Staffeinel (SS).

The German economy continued to improve and as unemployment fell, so did the support for extremist political parties such as the NSDAP. In the General Election held in May, 1928, the Nazi Party won only 14 seats, while the left-wing parties, the German Social Democrat Party (153) and the German Communist Party (54) still continued to grow in popularity.

The fortunes of the NSDAP changed with the Wall Street Crash in October 1929. Desperate for capital, the United States began to recall loans from Europe. One of the consequences of this was a rapid increase in

unemployment. Germany, whose economy relied heavily on investment from the United States, suffered more than any other country in Europe.

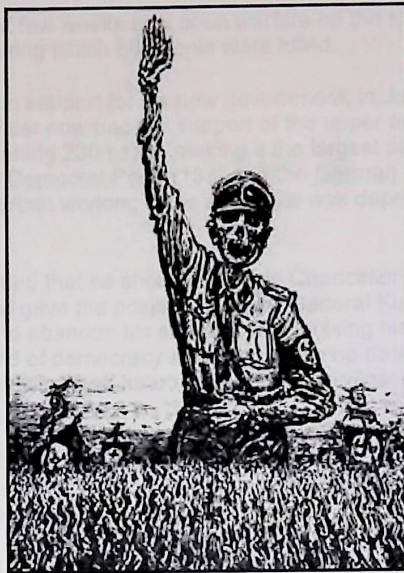
Before the crash, 1.25 million people were unemployed in Germany. By the end of 1930 the figure had reached nearly 4 million. Even those in work suffered as many were only working part-time. With the drop in demand for labour, wages also fell and those with full-time work had to survive on lower incomes. Hitler, who was considered a fool in 1928 when he predicted economic disaster, was now seen in a different light. People began to say that if he was clever enough to predict the depression maybe he also knew how to solve it.

In the General Election that took place in September 1930, the Nazi Party increased its number of representatives in parliament from 14 to 107. Hitler was now the leader of the second largest party in Germany.

The German Social Democrat Party was the largest party in the Reichstag, it did not have a majority over all the other parties, and the SPD leader, Hermann Mueller, had to rely on the support of others to rule Germany. After the SPD refused to reduce unemployment benefits, Mueller was replaced as Chancellor by Heinrich Bruening of the Catholic Centre Party (BVP). However, with his party only having 87 representatives out of 577 in the Reichstag, he also found it extremely difficult to gain agreement for his policies.

Adolf Hitler used this situation to his advantage, claiming that parliamentary democracy did not work. The NSDAP argued that only Hitler could provide the strong government that Germany needed. Hitler and other Nazi leaders travelled round the country giving speeches putting over this point of view.

What said depended very much on the audience. In rural areas he promised tax cuts for farmers and government action to protect food prices. In working class areas he spoke of redistribution of wealth and attacked the high profits made by the large chain stores. When he spoke to industrialists, Hitler concentrated on his plans to destroy communism and to reduce the power of the trade union movement. Hitler's main message was that Germany's economic recession was due to the Treaty of Versailles. Other than refusing to pay reparations, Hitler avoided explaining how he would improve the German economy.



Paul Weber, *Hitler - A German Fate* (1932)

With a divided Reichstag, the power of the German President became more important. In 1931 Hitler challenged Paul von Hindenburg for the presidency. Hindenburg was now 84 years old and showing signs of senility. However, a large percentage of the German population still feared Hitler and in the election Hindenburg had a comfortable majority.

In August 1931 the Nazi Party decided to have its own intelligence and security body. Heinrich Himmler therefore created the SD (Sicherheitsdienst). Richard Heydrich was appointed head of the organization and it was kept distinct from the uniformed SS (Schutzstaffel).

Heinrich Bruening and other senior politicians were worried that Hitler would use his stormtroopers to take power by force. Led by Ernst Roehm, it now contained over 400,000 men. Under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles the official German Army was restricted to 100,000 men and was therefore outnumbered by the SA. In the past, those who feared communism were willing to put up with the SA as they provided a useful barrier against the possibility of revolution. However, with the growth in SA violence and fearing a Nazi coup, Bruening banned the organization.

In May 1932, Paul von Hindenburg sacked Bruening and replaced him with Franz von Papen. The new chancellor was also a member of the Catholic Centre Party and, being more sympathetic to the Nazis, he removed the ban

on the SA. The next few weeks saw open warfare on the streets between the Nazis the Communists during which 86 people were killed.

In an attempt to gain support for his new government, in July Franz von Papen called another election. Hitler now had the support of the upper and middle classes and the NSDAP did well winning 230 seats, making it the largest party in the Reichstag. However the German Social Democrat Party (133) and the German Communist Party (89) still had the support of the urban working class and Hitler was deprived of an overall majority in parliament.

Adolf Hitler demanded that he should be made Chancellor but Paul von Hindenburg refused and instead gave the position to Major-General Kurt von Schleicher. Hitler was furious and began to abandon his strategy of disguising his extremist views. In one speech he called for the end of democracy a system which he described as being the "rule of stupidity, of mediocrity, of half-heartedness, of cowardice, of weakness, and of inadequacy."

The behaviour of the NSDAP became more violent. On one occasion 167 Nazis beat members of the German Communist Party in the Reichstag. They were then physically thrown out of the building.

The stormtroopers also carried out terrible acts of violence against socialists and communists. In one incident in Silesia, a young member of the KPD had his eyes poked out with a billiard cue and was then stabbed to death in front of his mother. Four members of the SA were convicted of the crime. Many people were shocked when Hitler sent a message of support for the four men and promised to do what he could to get them released.

Incidents such as these worried many Germans, and in the elections that took place in November 1932 the support for the Nazi Party fell. The German Communist Party made substantial gains in the election winning 100 seats. Hitler used this to create a sense of panic by claiming that Germany was on the verge of a Bolshevik Revolution and only the NSDAP could prevent this happening.

A group of prominent industrialists who feared such a revolution sent a petition to Paul von Hindenburg asking for Hitler to become Chancellor. Hindenburg reluctantly agreed to the request and at the age of forty-three, Hitler became the new Chancellor of Germany.

Political Parties in the Reichstag	June 1920	May 1924	Dec. 1924	May 1928	Sep. 1930	July 1932	Nov. 1932	March 1933
Communist Party (KPD)	4	62	45	54	77	89	100	81
Social Democratic Party (SDP)	102	100	131	153	143	133	121	120
Catholic Centre Party (BVP)	65	81	88	78	87	97	90	93
Nationalist Party (DNVP)	71	95	103	73	41	37	52	52
Nazi Party (NSDAP)	-	-	-	12	107	230	196	288
Other Parties	98	92	73	121	122	22	35	23

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(1) Leaflet published by the National Socialist German Workers Party (1920)

There is a secret world conspiracy, which while speaking much about humanity and tolerance, in reality wants only to harness the people to a new yoke. A number of workers' leaders belong to this group. The leaders are big capitalists.

300 big bankers, financiers and press barons, who are interconnected across the world, are the real dictators. They belong almost exclusively to the "chosen people". They are all members of the same conspiracy.

The Jewish big capitalist always plays our friend and dogooder; but he only does it to make us into his slaves. The trusting worker is going to help him set up the world dictatorship of Jewry. Because that is their goal, as it states in the Bible. "All the peoples will serve you, all the wealth of the world will belong to you".

Shake off your Jewish leaders, and those in the pay of Judas! And one final point. Don't expect anything from Bolshevism. It doesn't bring the worker freedom. In Russia the eight-hour day has been abolished. There are no more workers' councils. All cower under the dictatorship of a hundred government commissars, who are nine-tenths Jewish.

(2) Morgan Philips Price, *Daily Herald* (August, 1923)

The reactionary movements which flourish in Bavaria are at present not quite so formidable as appears on the surface. They are divided into various sections and they do not appear to agree well together. Nevertheless, here is a movement which may make trouble in the future. It is based on the old officers of the Prussian Army migrated to Bavaria and using the weakness of the peasant government in Munich to rally the impoverished middle classes and rentiers, ruined by the inflation, round the Pan-German Nationalist and anti-French flag. Their cry is "Down with the Socialist and Jewish towns of Northern Germany; Down with France." This philosophy is also the basis of

the other forces of the Right in Bavaria, namely German Fascism. Herr Hitler has built up a force estimated at about 30,000 armed men, but he is keeping them in the background and is for the moment concentrating on trying to convert some of the less stable elements of the working classes in the Bavarian towns to his National Socialist programmes.

The Majority Social-Democrats in Munich with whom I have spoken tell me that they have to fight for their ordinary liberties and rights of propaganda just as under the Hohenzollem regime. Their newspapers are continually being suppressed by so-called police simply for publishing information about the illegal activities of Herr Hitler and his armed bands.

The Social-Democrats are, however, not without their means of defence. Not long before I was in Munich, there had been a parade of the Social-Democratic fighting organizations on the great Theresa meadow outside the town. Several thousand workers marched past with Red Flags. They were unarmed, but could defend themselves if need be. I had the impression that the industrial centres of Bavaria could, with the aid of the railwaymen, suppress a Hitler rising if they acted promptly.

(3) Election leaflet published by the National Socialist German Workers Party (October, 1925)

The November revolution, the revolution of the Jews and the Marxist party-rabble have delivered you into the hands of the international loan capitalism. For years you have sweated so that the State can pay the interest on the loan capital. You are damned for all eternity to be wage slaves, if you don't demand: (1) The Nationalization of the banks and the money economy. (2) The abolition of interest-exploiters and Stock Exchange speculators. (3) The abolition of share capital.

(4) Election leaflet published by the National Socialist German Workers Party (October, 1926)

Our call goes out to you who earn your bread through honest work. If you don't want your children, and your children's children to be damned for all eternity as slaves of world capitalism, if you don't want to be made the protectors of Stock Exchange bandits and other blood suckers by your treacherous leaders, if you are on the contrary filled with a fanatical will for freedom, then join the ranks of the National Socialist German Workers Party.

(5) Frederick T. Birchall, New York Times (19th August, 1934)

Eighty-nine and nine-tenths per cent of the German voters endorsed in

yesterday's plebiscite Chancellor Hitler's assumption of greater power than has ever been possessed by any other ruler in modern times. Nearly 10 per cent indicated their disapproval. The result was expected.

The German people were asked to vote whether they approved the consolidation of the offices of President and Chancellor in a single Leader-Chancellor personified by Adolf Hitler. By every appeal known to skillful politicians and with every argument to the contrary suppressed, they were asked to make their approval unanimous.

Nevertheless 10 per cent of the voters have admittedly braved possible consequences by answering "No" or made their answers, ineffective by spoiling the simplest of ballots. There was a plain short question and two circles, one labeled "Yes" and the other "No," in one of which the voter had to make a cross. Yet there were nearly 1,000,000 spoiled ballots.

The results given out by the Propaganda Ministry early this morning show that out of a total vote of 43,438,378, cast by a possible voting population of more than 45,000,000, there were 38,279,514 who answered "Yes," 4,287,808 who answered "No" and there were 871,056 defective ballots. Thus there is an affirmative vote of almost 90 per cent of the valid votes and a negative vote of nearly 10 per cent exclusive of the spoiled ballots which may or may not have been deliberately rendered defective.

The endorsement gives Chancellor Hitler, who four years ago was not even a German citizen, dictatorial powers unequalled in any other country, and probably unequalled in history since the days of Genghis Khan. He has more power than Joseph Stalin in Russia, who has a party machine to reckon with; more power than Premier Mussolini of Italy who shares his prerogative with the titular ruler; more than any American President ever dreamed of.

No other ruler has so widespread power nor so obedient and compliant subordinates. The question that interests the outside world now is what Chancellor Hitler will do with such unprecedented authority.

In the Communist districts protest votes with Communist inscriptions were rare. In Western Berlin they were more frequent. In one district five ballots had the name "Thaelmann" written in. (Ernst Thaelmann is an imprisoned Communist leader.) One ballot contained this inscription, "Since nothing has happened to me so far I vote 'Yes.'" It was signed "Non-Aryan."

Interesting also are the following results: the hospital of the Jewish community in one district cast 168 "Yes" votes, 92 "Noes," and 46 ballots were invalid. The Jewish Home for Aged People in another district cast 94 "Yes" votes, four "Noes" and three invalid ballots. This vote is explainable, of course, by the fear of reprisals if the results from these Jewish institutions had been otherwise. It is paralleled by other results outside Berlin.

In all Bavaria Chancellor Hitler received the largest vote in his favor in the concentration camp at Dachau where 1,554 persons voted "Yes" and only

eight "No" and there were only ten spoiled ballots.

Hamburg, which only two days ago gave Herr Hitler the most enthusiastic reception he had ever received anywhere, led the country in the opposition vote. The official figures were: Total vote cast, 840,000; "Yes," 651,000; "No," 168,000; invalidated ballots, 21,000.

The "No" vote, in other words was 20 per cent of the total vote. Counting the invalid ballots as negative in intent, the total opposition votes exceeded 22 per cent. The percentage of the electorate voting was 92.4.

Hamburg is the home city of Ernst Thaelmann and on his triumphant entry into the city on Friday, Herr Hitler made it a point to drive past Thaelmann's former home.

As far as observers could ascertain, the election everywhere was conducted with perfect propriety, and secrecy of the ballot was safe-guarded. The ballots were marked in regular election booths and placed in envelopes and these were put in the ballot boxes. After the voting had ended the ballot box was emptied on a large table and the vote was counted publicly in the regular manner. Appraising of individual votes seemed impossible.

One check on possible non-voters, however, was exercised by instructions that the voting authorizations issued to those who for one reason or another planned to be outside their regular voting district on election day must be returned unless used. The number of such authorizations issued for this election exceeded anything known before.

Throughout the day Storm Troopers stood before each polling place with banners calling on the voters to vote "Yes." Otherwise voters remained unmolested. Inside the polling places uniforms and even party emblems had been forbidden, but the execution of this order was lax. In some apparently doubtful districts brown uniforms dominated the scene as a warning to would-be opponents.

(6) Clement Attlee, speech in the House of Commons (May 1940)

Successful violence bred more violence. Ruthless cruelty became rampant. We are now faced with the danger of the world relapsing into barbarism. Nazism is the outstanding menace to civilisation, not only because of the character and actions of the men who are in absolute control of a great nation, but because of their ideas which are openly in conflict with all the conceptions upon which civilised life is based. They do not accept as valuable the virtues which are in this country accepted as desirable by all, even by those who honour them with very little in their actions.

Our Western civilisation has been built up in the main on the acceptance of the moral standards of Christianity. Even those who find themselves unable

to accept Christian dogma accept in the main its ethical standards. In our everyday intercourse we assume that most men are honest, truthful and kindly, and in general we are not disappointed. We do not expect that we shall be violently attacked or maltreated by our neighbours. This mutual confidence is the foundation of a civilised peaceful life.

At no time in history have these standards been fully maintained in the relations between States. There have always been those who have been prepared to put apparent national interests before moral principles, but they have done it shamefacedly. Bad faith, lying and injustice have often marked international relations, but it has been left to the German Government to make them its regular practice and to glory in them.

Similarly, there was formerly a definite world conscience which revolted against cruelty and atrocities. The wholesale murder of innocent men, women and children was regarded as the mark of a barbarous people. Where such things happened under professedly civilised government there was an outcry in all countries, including the one whose government was responsible for the outrage. One can recall instances in our own history, such as the Amritsar massacre. Today in Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland the German Government is indulging in wholesale massacre and torture of unoffending people. It not only admits it, it glories in it. At home and abroad, brutal cruelty is the mark of the Nazi regime.

It is essential to remember that civilisation takes long to build and is easily destroyed. Brutality is infectious. But there is something more than these outward expressions of the return to barbarism in the Nazi regime. There is a denial of the value of the individual. Christianity affirms the value of each individual soul. Nazism denies it. The individual is sacrificed to the idol of the German Leader, German State or the German race. The ordinary citizen is allowed to hear and think only as the rulers decree.

(7) E. Amy Buller, *Darkness Over Germany* (1943)

At one of the early congresses I was sitting surrounded by thousands of S.A. men and as Hitler spoke I was most interested at the shouts and more often the muttered exclamations of the men around me, who were mainly workmen or lower middle class types. "He speaks for me, he speaks for me." "Ach Gott, he knows how I feel." Many of them seemed lost to the world around them and were probably unaware of what they were saying. One man in particular stuck me as he lent forward with his head in his hands, and with a sort of convulsive sob said: "Gott sei Dank, he understands."

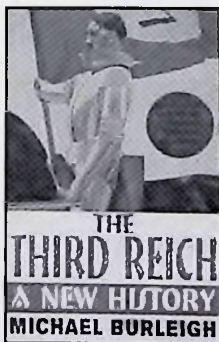
My attention was attracted by the face of a young man who was leading the cries. His arms were outstretched, and his face white, as he worked himself into a frenzy. And when the Fuhrer came there was ecstasy in his face such as I have never seen and should never expect to see outside an asylum. As I

hurried away to go back to the hotel, I heard uncontrolled sobbing beside me and saw it was a middle-aged woman in a bath chair: "Now you can take me away, I will die happily - I have seen the face of the Fuhrer - Germany will live."

(8) Hans Massaquoi was living in Hamburg during the Second World War. Studs Terkel interviewed Hans Massaquoi about his experiences during Nazi Germany for his book, *The Good War* (1985)

My biggest disappointment, for those who've really suffered under the Nazis, is the benign treatment of those Nazis by the Allies. We had assumed a housecleaning would follow the occupation. That the British and Americans would come in - as the Russians did - and, first of all, round up the Nazi suspects. And make sure that those who had been in power would not get back in power. Quite to the contrary, within a very short time we saw these same people who terrorized the neighborhoods in charge again. The wardens, the block leaders, all these *Gruppenfuhrer*, all the ex-functionaries, were back in the saddle. A lot of my friends were so disillusioned they left Germany. One particularly brutal Nazi I worked for at a rubber plant during the war was put back in charge of that same plant. This went on everywhere.

Another phenomenon occurred: the disappearance of Nazis. You saw pictures of thousands of them screaming and hollering "Heil Hitler." If you asked anyone. Were you ever a Nazi? Oh no, not me. Just about all these former functionaries appeared in their old positions.



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