

Edexcel GCSE History (1-9) Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1919-39

Key Topic 3: Nazi Control and Dictatorship, 1933-39

1. The Reichstag Fire

3 reasons why the Reichstag Fire is significant for the Nazis consolidation of power.

Reason 1 - **Destroying opposition** because the Nazi's blamed the fire on the communists, following the fire leading communists were arrested.

Reason 2 - **Propaganda and censorship** because communist and socialist newspapers were banned.

Reason 3 - **Increased Nazi voters** because at the next election less people voted for the communists and more for the Nazi's, (Nazi's still did not get a majority).

2. Why was The Enabling Act important for Hitler?

Key Word - Enable = to make something possible.

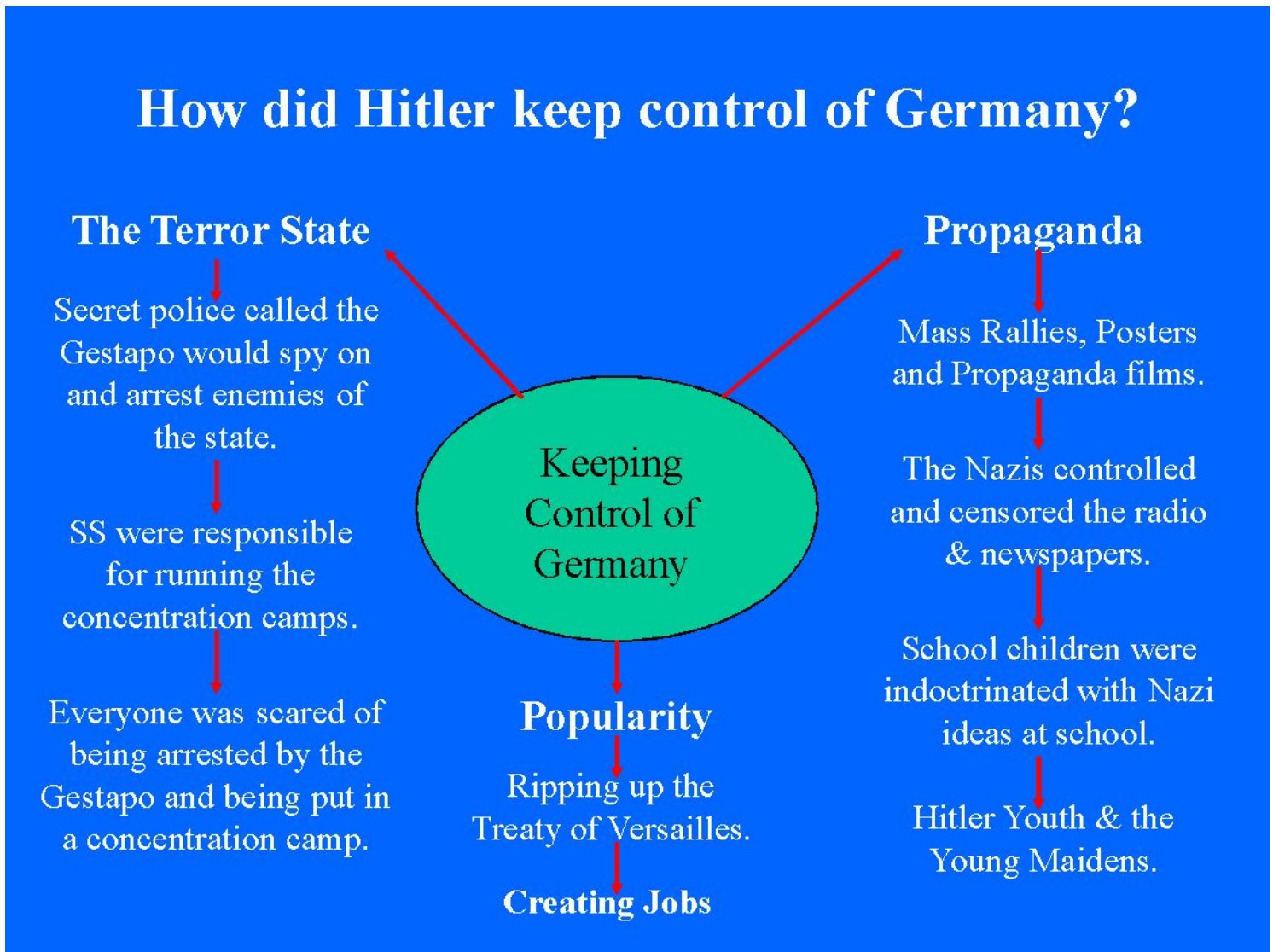
- Following the March 1933 election Hitler now had control of the Reichstag and then took advantage to bring in a new law that would give him complete control.
- The Enabling Act gave Hitler the power to make all laws without asking the Reichstag or the President
- The Enabling Act was passed on 23rd March 1933 and was the end of the Weimar Constitution and democracy.

It quickly resulted in: (1) People had less rights (2) censorship and the control of the press. (3) Trade unions were banned. (4) All political parties were disbanded (got rid of) except the Nazi's

- **It removed opposition from within the Nazi Party.** The biggest threat was Ernst Rohm, who controlled the SA (over 400,000 men)
- On the 30th June 1934, Hitler sent his own men (SS) to arrest Rohm. Up to 400 hundred people were killed, including leading SA officers.
- **He got support from the army.** Hitler needed the army to control Germany
- **It created fear.** The Nazis were prepared to kill

When Hindenburg died, Hitler combined the posts of **chancellor**, **president** and made himself **commander-in-chief of the army** and was called **Der Fuhrer** (the leader)

4. What was the police state?



Key Word - Indoctrination = To make people believe

5. How did the Nazi's control central and regional government?

What was the 'Peoples Court'?

The cabinet

This was kept on by Hitler but lost influence. By 1938 all non Nazis had been removed and it only met once.

The Reichstag

The Enabling Act transferred power of making laws from the Reichstag to the

	Chancellor. Only seven more laws were passed there.
The Civil Service Many civil servants were happy to transfer power to the Third Reich as they did not like the Weimar Republic. All civil servants had to be members of the Nazi party.	The Fuhrer In the Nazi state all power came from Hitler. He had supreme authority in the Nazi state. Many laws were made by him and he had the final say in all key decisions.

6. How did the Nazi's control the arts?

Music - Jazz was banned as it was 'black music' and seen as inferior (not as good). German folk music and classical German music was preferred.

Theatre - The theatre was to concentrate on German history and political drama. Cheap theatre tickets were made available to encourage people to see plays with a pro-Nazi theme.

Architecture - Hitler encouraged large buildings made from stone to show how powerful the Third Reich was.

Art - Hitler hated modern art which he believed was unpatriotic and Jewish. He encouraged art which highlighted Germany's past greatness and the strength and power of the Third Reich.

7. Opposition to the regime: Churches and Niemoller. Swing youth and Edelweiss Pirates

Young People

Not all young people accepted Nazi rule. Two groups that opposed the Nazis were:

The Edelweiss Pirates. So called because they used the edelweiss flower as their symbol. They wore check shirts and dark trousers and fought Hitler Youth members. They helped allied airmen shot down over Germany and spread anti-Nazi propaganda. In 1944 their leader Barthel Schink was hanged in Cologne.

The Swing Youth. These were mainly upper middle class youths who met in bars and night clubs and listened to American black and Jewish music. The Nazis arrested most of them for making anti-Nazi statements.

The Church:

- ✓ Some church groups and individual churchmen recognised the evil of the Nazis and opposed the
- ✓ **Martin Niemoller** established the **German Confessional Church** which opposed the Nazi Reich Church. Niemoller was sent to a concentration camp in 1937
- ✓ 6000 Protestant pastors joined Niemoller's Confessional Church as a protest against Nazi policy, only 2000 remained in the German Christian Church
- ✓ About 800 pastors were arrested and sent to concentration camps.
- ✓ 400 Catholic priests spoke out and were arrested and imprisoned in the Priests Block at Dachau concentration camp