

## Paper 3: Germany, 1918-39: Core Knowledge 2/4 Rise of the Nazis

### Formation of the Nazi party and 25-point programme

The **German Workers' Party (DAP)** formed in 1919 after the Spartacist uprising to oppose communism. They were led by **Anton Drexler**. **Hitler** was initially sent to observe them but became an important speaker for them.

**June 1920** - 1,100 members; November 1923 - 55,000.

The National Socialist German Workers' Party had a mix of nationalist and socialist beliefs in its 25-point programme.

#### Nationalist:

Unite all Germans to form a Greater Germany.

Destroy the Treaty of Versailles

All non-Germans who entered after 1914 forced to leave.

**Fuhrerprinzip** (leadership principle) - the support for a strong and powerful leader.

#### Socialist:

All key businesses to be nationalised (controlled by the government) that had been formed into corporations.

Seize land needed for communal purposes (take land from owners that was needed for schools, hospitals etc.)

Volksgemeinschaft: a classless society (people not divided by wealth)

### The SA/Sturmabteilung/Stormtroopers/Brownshirts

Led by Ernst Rohm, they were a squad of Freikorps (ex-soldiers) They shared similar views and the SA agreed to support the Nazi party. They wore brown shirts with a swastika arm band. Activities included:

- Protecting Nazi meetings from disruption
- Removing unwanted people from meetings, especially communists
- Beating up opponents of the Nazis, especially communists
- Putting up propaganda posters and destroying those of their opponents

### Importance of the Munich Putsch

#### Successes:

- The Nazis had the support of an important army general - Ludendorff which helped to persuade others to support them.
- They raised 3000 supporters to attempt the revolt.
- The trial was a great success for the Nazis as they gained national attention. Newspapers covered the trial in detail.
- The Nazis later used this to show that they had long opposed the Weimar government when it failed after 1929.
- When Hitler left prison, he reformed the party and limited the violence of the SA to give them more appeal.
- Hitler published his views in 1925 in a book called *Mein Kampf*.

### Lean years and reorganisation of the party.

Once Hitler left prison in 1925, he decided to try and win power democratically rather than take it by force. He needed to reorganise the party to achieve this.

- Hitler appointed *Gauleiter* to run separate parts of the party, he chose people that were loyal to him.
- A conference was held in 1926 at Bamberg where Hitler won over possible leadership rivals.
- Hitler created his own bodyguard, the *Schutzstaffel (SS)* and replaced the leader of the SA (Ernst Rohm) with Franz Pfeffer von Salomon. (Rohm was reinstated as leader of the SA in 1930).
- The Nazis focussed on gaining support from rural areas (farmers) rather than urban voters.

Despite all of this, the Nazis remained widely unpopular and only had 12 seats in the Reichstag after the 1928 elections.

### Rise in support for the Nazis (after 1929) - GULP

**The Wall Street Crash in October 1929 caused massive economic problems and led to the Great Depression.**

Reason 1 - Great Depression: 6.1 million people were unemployed by 1933. People blamed the Weimar government for relying too much on US loans and believed the Treaty of Versailles was still harming Germany. The Nazis offered jobs in construction and promised to destroy the Treaty of Versailles.

Reason 2 - Unity/organisation: The Nazis appeared to be unified behind a strong leader with traditional values whilst the Weimar government argued over what to do about the economic depression. The Communists were gaining supporters but were involved in a lot of street battles, the Nazis seemed disciplined by comparison. 500,000 in SA.

Reason 3 - Leadership: Hitler ran for President in 1932, he lost to Hindenburg but got 13 million votes as people were impressed by his modern campaign which used radio broadcasts and Hitler travelled by plane to attend rallies.

Reason 4 - Policies: the Weimar government cut government spending on welfare under Chancellor Brüning in 1930 even though the average income had fallen by 40% following the Wall Street Crash.

**Extra Reason: Fear of Communism:** Just as the Nazis benefitted from a rise in votes after the Wall Street Crash, so did the Communists. However, they were hated by businessmen and industrialists who provided money to the Nazis to use the SA to attack the Communists. The Nazis could also fund their election campaigns using this money.

**Top tip: link each reason to who it helped the Nazis to get support from: workers, middle-classes, wealthy, nationalist.**

### Hitler's appointed Chancellor - January 1933: Political intrigue (the 3 vons)

**By July 1932, the Nazis were the biggest party in the Reichstag with 37% of the vote and 230 seats; support dipped by the November 1932 elections to 33% and 196 seats. But they were still the biggest party. President Hindenburg did not want to appoint Hitler as Chancellor though.**

Franz von Papen was appointed but failed to get support from the Nazis in the Reichstag.

General Kurt von Schleicher was then appointed but also failed to get support from the Nazis in the Reichstag.

Franz von Papen then convinced President Paul von Hindenburg to make Hitler Chancellor with himself as Vice Chancellor. They believed this would allow them to control Hitler.

Hitler became Chancellor in January 1933 but only 3 of the 12 cabinet ministers were Nazis.