Propaganda, culture and mass media in Nazi Germany
One reason why opposition to Hitler was so limited was the work of Dr Joseph Gobbels, Minister for Enlightenment and Propaganda. Throughout the 12 years of Nazi rule Goebbels’s constantly kept his finger on the pulse of public opinion and decided what the German public should and should not hear. He aimed to use every resource available to him to make people loyal to Hitler.

The Nuremberg rallies.
Gobbels organised huge rallies, marches, torchlight processions and meeting. Probably the best example was the Nuremberg rally which took place in the summer each year. There were bands, marches, flying displays and Hitler’s brilliant speeches. They gave people a sense of belonging to a great movement. The rallies also showed people the power of the state and convinced them that ‘every other German’ fully supported the Nazis. Goebbel’s also recognised that one of the Nazi’s main attractions was that they created order out of chaos and so the whole rally was organised to emphasise order.

The 1936 Olympics
Goebbel’s convinced Hitler to hold the Olympic games he insisted this was a great propaganda opportunity both within Germany and internationally. Goebbel’s and Hitler also thought that the Olympics could be a showcase for their doctrine that the Aryan race was superior to all other races. Gobbels built a brand new stadium to hold 100,000 people. He bought in colour television cameras for the first time. The stadium had the largest stop clock ever built, no expense was spared. The visitors were struck by the amazed scale of the stadium and the wonderful facilities however they were also struck and in some cases appalled by the almost fanatical devotion of the people to Hitler and the overt presence of the army and the SS soldiers who were patrolling or standing guard everywhere.

The media
The Nazis controlled the media strictly, in contrast with the free expression of Weimar Germany. No books could be published without Gobbels permission. In 1933 he organised a high profile ‘book burring’. Nazi students came together publicly to burn any books that included ideas unacceptable to the Nazis. Artist suffered the same restrictions as writers, only Nazi approved painters could show their work. There were usually paintings or sculptures of heroic looking Aryans, military figures or images of the ideal Aryan family. Gobbels also controlled the newspapers. Gobbels censored all foreign films coming into Germany. Goebbel’s plastered Germany with posters proclaiming the success of Hitler and the Nazis and attacking their opponents. He banned Jazz music.
Goebbel’s loved new technology. He controlled all the radio stations and made radios very cheap so everyone could buy one. Listening to broadcast from the BBC was punishable by death. In case people didn’t have radios Goebbel’s placed loudspeakers in the streets and public bars. Hitler’s speeches and those of other Nazis were repeated on the radio over and over again. The messages were German expansion into Eastern Europe, the inferiority of the Jews. Throughout this period Gobbels’ was supported in his work by the SS and the Gestapo. When he wanted to close down an anti-Nazi newspaper, silence an anti-Nazi writer they were there to do it for him.