

Germany would not support an 'illegitimate' take-over of power; he had to do it 'legally' and he did. This also ensured the consent of Hindenburg in January 1933.

He offered hope and national redemption, and he got the message over with force and clarity. Hitler gave the impression that he was always working within the law with his huge range of skills which he used effectively.

Dealing with the communists, usage of the SA

There was a consistently anti-communist message put forward, which was of considerable importance to many of the elites and industrialists. His aggressive nationalism was popular, and the underlying authoritarianism struck a popular chord. Germany was tired of what democracy had offered and there was a yearning for the 'strong' government of the pre-1918 days. However, there was no great tradition of democracy in Germany for a start, authoritarianism had deeper roots.

His promises to provide Arbeit und Brot (work and bread), revise and reverse the Treaty of Versailles, return Germany to being a great power and restore German pride, regain former German territory, rid Germany of the communist threat and his anti-Semitism appealed to many Germans and were skilfully presented through effective propaganda campaigns. He was skilled at tailoring his message to specific audiences, attempting to appeal to both workers and bosses, men and women, old and young, as well as farmers.

Strong support in the regions and the valuable work of the SA under Roehm, in not only dealing with the communists but in creating an atmosphere of fear and violence which Hitler maintained could solve. The way in which the SA was developed and utilised was vital in both getting over the Nazi message and preventing those of others being heard, against all political opponents, was also vital.

Hitler was prepared to blame the Jews and communists; he was fiercely nationalist and opposed to democracy. His ideas were the antithesis of those of the Weimar Republic; his 25 points written in 1920 sum up the programme of his movement and this was of relevance to many. This programme was largely ignored during the 1920s but once the depression started to hit Germany he was able to attract popular support.

Those who financed and supported Hitler - the elites

Those who financed Hitler should also bear responsibility to his success. He was able to attract millions of marks to fund his many electoral campaigns and to fund the SA. Among his sources were Hjalmar Schacht (head of the Reichsbank), Alfred Krupp (owner of the Krupp steel firm), as well as the German car firm Opel. He also raised money from owners of foreign firms. There was press support as well as from men like Hugenburg and a willingness by key sectors such as the army, the judiciary, and the police to turn a blind eye to the blatant Nazi disregard for the law. These men gave little support to the Weimar regime, and in some instances actively tried to undermine it in favour of the Nazis.

Impact of Nazi racist ideas

While Nazi racist ideas played a role in the initial campaigns of 1929-30, they were downplayed by the Nazi hierarchy until after 1933, although they were clearly pushed hard at the lower levels by groups such as the SA in some regions.

Nazi racist ideas could be seen as important as they provided a scapegoat for many of the problems

Why did Hitler gain power in 1933?

CONSOLIDATION OF POWER, 1933-34

- Steps in the consolidation of power, and how it helped to cement the Nazis' hold on power.
 - The Reichstag fire
 - The Enabling Act
 - Destruction of the Trade Unions
 - Banning of other political parties
 - Law for the Reconstruction of the State
 - Night of the Long Knives
 - Death of Hindenburg

Key question: **What was the relative importance of each of the steps listed above in the consolidation of Nazi power?**

Factors in the Nazi consolidation of power in 1933-34:

Divisions of opponents/potential opponents, lack of support in opposing Hitler

The division of opponents and potential opponents, such as the Communists, the Centre parties, and the Socialists, to groups such as the churches and the Jewish community is a factor.

The liberal elites in education and the law might be expected to oppose Hitler as well. Many key elites, such as the Army, the Church, the major industrialists, or the academics could and perhaps should have opposed. Once Hitler was in power, there was again a failure to act together. The army elite, while possibly sympathising with some of Hitler's views, were unlikely to work with Communists and trade unionists.

There was also little evidence that the judiciary, the police, the churches and the academics were prepared to oppose or even obstruct, and there was reluctance to prosecute flagrant violations of the law. There was little opposition to the illegal way in which the communist leadership was quickly locked up or fled (Stalin helped by killing quite a few of them) as it protected their own interests. There was also the feeling amongst some Nationalist politicians that Hitler and the Nazis could be 'managed'.

Concessions made to the elites to ensure support

Making concessions with the elites was important. Major industrial groups, critical for their financial support of the Nazis, were allowed to retain their independence and not come under state control. These groups were also not heavily taxed and were allowed to retain their cartels. Trade Unions were banned, communists arrested, and all left-wing activity were outlawed. No support was given to even the Social Democrats and parties of the Centre.

The army was pleased with not only rearmament and a massive increase in military spending and was delighted with the Night of the Long Knives and the ending of the threat to its status by the SA. The nationalists were also delighted by the attack on the Versailles settlement, the departure from the League of Nations and the disarmament talks. The presence of many of the Nationalists in the Nazi government, at least for a while, reassured many.

Care was taken not to offend, at least until 1936, local police forces, any part of the judicial system or the Civil Service. However, there was support there in all three areas as well as widespread neutrality. Care was also taken not to offend either the Lutheran or the Roman Catholic churches,

How was Germany governed by Hitler?

MEANS OF CONTROL, e.g. USE OF PROPAGANDA AND USE OF TERROR

- Nature and extent of Nazi propaganda and repression.
- Propaganda methods and repressive methods used by the Nazis
 - Nazi propaganda - brilliant and vital for Hitler's survival in power?
 - Nazi repression - ruthless and essential for Hitler's survival in power?

Factors which allowed Hitler to retain power

Nazi propaganda and indoctrination

High quality and well targeted propaganda run by Goebbels, through their control of the media, which had been attained by comparatively 'legal' methods – gave the regime a powerful means by which to influence the public and retain power. Their use of all forms of the media, from radio to film and to every other means at his disposal, was brilliant. Perhaps the best of these means was the radio. Control of education and innovations like the Hitler Youth played their part.

It not only portrayed the regime and its achievements so well, but it also prepared opinion so that future policies could be accepted easily. It built on the obvious progress being made in many ways accentuated the positive rather than the threats, real as these were. Propaganda also ensured that scapegoats were presented to explain past problems such as the Treaty of Versailles, inflation in the early 1920s, depression after 1929 and the whole Weimar system of government.

There also had been limited economic recovery and the economic policies that the party had adopted were unsustainable. Civil liberties also disappeared, and trade unions were eliminated. This needed to be covered up and managed effectively to ensure public support, and propaganda was a useful tool to achieve this. The likelihood of war and the risks linked with rearmament and a more aggressive foreign policy also needed to be carefully expressed to the public through the use of propaganda.

Indoctrination, especially of the youth, was highly effective as well and played a key part in ensuring that there was a loyal and supportive population once the situation became difficult. The use of education to promote Nazi ideas was also a key factor.

Recent studies have revealed that Gestapo numbers were not huge, and instead there was a reliance on people actively informing the Gestapo and participating in the suppression of 'anti-social behaviour'.

Terror and repression

Terror, be it in the night of the Long Knives or the anti-Jewish pogroms, was always there and played a major part. The message sent out by the Night of the Long Knives, using methods employed against the SA, was clear to all as well. The army would not have tolerated Nazism otherwise, and intimidation also had to be used to get the Enabling Act through the Reichstag.

The system of terror was carefully managed to facilitate control with the use of organisations such as the secret police (Gestapo). Dissenting voices faced the efficient Gestapo, the threat of the concentration camps set up to deal with the Left, 'protective custody' which undermined court verdicts which went against the wishes of the regime as well as the lynching of trade unionists which also sent a clear message. Violence and repression accompanied the consolidation of power.

How effective were Hitler's economic policies

CHANGING PRIORITIES OF ECONOMIC POLICY

- Economic situation in Germany in 1933, emphasising the role that the economy had played in his acquisition to power.
 - Specific economic aims inherent in Nazism
 - Economic commitments made by Hitler in the years before 1933.
 - Hitler's economic objectives in the years 1933-39.
 - How economic policy changed between 1933 and 1939.

Key question: **To what extent did Hitler have coherent economic aims in the years 1929-1936?**

Hitler's economic aims

Rearmament for a future war

The mobilisation of the economy for a future war was more of a priority for Hitler who was explicit in his view that the economy is there to serve the state and not the other way round.

Schacht's New Plan aimed at a recovery through trade and how far that was seen as an essential prerequisite for funding rearmament. He was concerned less with deficit finance and public works than more orthodox plans for recovery through trade and private enterprise. The new Plan might have had unemployment reduction as an aim as part of a general economic recovery but did not target this.

Rearmament was a key policy with Mefo Bills to fund. In 1936, Göring put forward a Four-Year Plan to prepare for war and develop synthetics and by 1938, gained Austrian industry and later Czech industry too, including conscription, building up the army, air force and navy. Rearmament was a key policy, as it underpinned Hitler's foreign policy aims, but he also wanted to solve unemployment. He wanted both 'guns and butter'.

Reducing unemployment

The rise in unemployment was a major reason for the growth in support for Nazism and could not be ignored when Hitler gained office and power.

Thus reducing unemployment was a key aim and promise. This was achieved by the creation of a Reich Labour Service, compulsory military service from 1935, removing women from the workforce and offering families loans provided the wife stayed at home. Public Work Schemes such as civic reconstruction and autobahn construction in conjunction with a massive expansion in the car industry and a shortened working week so that more people needed to work also helped in reducing unemployment, which was virtually eliminated by 1938.

Measures such as the reduction of women workers and Jews in employment and policies towards department stores had ideological aims and while might have created some jobs did not play a major role in unemployment which was falling in any case as a result of a cyclical upturn.

Full employment would be a result of this projected expansion, so it was both an aim and a means to wider economic aims – autarky and military expansion. Also, in the period before war preparation became a much more central and overt aim, economic policy was directed towards more than

to the success of Nazi youth policy.

Policies towards education

As the Nazis wanted to control each aspect of a child's life, they realised that education played a very important role. They altered textbooks to include Nazi history and Nazi views of History. Students were taught about the injustice of the German government and how the Jews were slowly taking over. The Nazis also managed to glorify the military in each school subject. They also made sure that the students had to study race and ideology every day.

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European option

Hitler's Germany 1929-41

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