



Establishing Dictatorship | Destroying German Democracy (1933-1936)

1930

September Nazis make significant gains in elections. In May 1928, they polled 2.8% and now 18.3%.

1932

April Hitler loses run-off election for President to Hindenburg, but gets 36.8% of the vote. **Kurt von Schleicher** conspires with Hitler to oust Chancellor Brüning and replace him with **Franz von Papen** promising a lifting of the ban on the SA and SS.

July Nazis win 37.4% of the vote.

August Hitler demands that von Schleicher give him the Chancellorship. SA begin massing in Berlin anticipating Hitler's appointment. Hindenburg refuses to name Hitler Chancellor and gives Hitler a tongue-lashing. Eva Braun attempts suicide. Nazis back the Communists in a wildcat strike of transport workers in Berlin and alienate middle class voters.

September New elections are called for.

November Nazis lose 2 million votes and lose 34 seats in the Reichstag.

December Kurt von Schleicher is named Chancellor.

1933

January 30 President **Paul von Hindenburg** appoints **Hitler** Chancellor of Germany following November Reichstag election in which Hitler's Nazi Party receives approx. 33% of the vote.

February 12 Bloody Sunday, 1 communist dies, hundreds more wounded.

February 22 **Göring** enrolls **SA** as auxiliary police and eventually gives "shoot to kill" orders to quell communist demonstrations.

February 27 **Reichstag** set on fire.

February 28 "**Decree for the Protection of Volk and State**" Under Article 48 of the Constitution President Hindenburg suspends civil rights including freedom of press, speech, assembly, privacy, house search without warrant and approves "protective custody" for dissenters.

March 5 Reichstag elections; NSDAP wins 43.9% of vote.

March 9 Rioting against Jews by **SA** (Brownshirts).

Mar 20 -23 1st concentration camp (**SS**) opened by **Himmler** at **Dachau**, just outside of Munich.

March 24 The Reichstag, with support of the Catholic Centre Party, passes the **Enabling Act** giving Hitler emergency powers.

April 1 Nazis (though not officially sanctioned by the Chancellery) proclaim a boycott of all Jewish-owned businesses. Though widely publicized, not widely supported. German Jewish newspaper has article entitled: "Wear the Yellow Badge with Pride."

April 7 "**Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service**" is enacted, barring Jews and other non-Aryans from civil service, teaching, and state employment.

April 11 In the "*First Regulation for the Implementation of the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service*," Nazis define non-Aryans as "anyone descended from non-Aryan, especially Jewish, parents or grandparents. One parent or grandparent classifies the descendant as non-Aryan...especially if one parent or grandparent was of the Jewish faith."

April 21 Law forbidding kosher method of butchering meat.

April 25 Law against overcrowding in German schools and universities limits the number of Jewish children admitted.

April 26 Hitler orders Göring to establish the **Gestapo** (Secret State Police) in state of Prussia.

May 2 Dissolution of free trade unions.

May 10 Public burning of Jewish books and books by anti-Nazi writers is conducted in Berlin and throughout the Reich by **Joseph Goebbels**.

June Week of Blood; 91 communists are killed by the SA in Berlin alone.

July 14 Nazi Party proclaimed only legal party in Germany and political opposition declared punishable by law. Law passed depriving German citizenship to Jews not currently citizens (eastern European immigrants). "**Law for Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary (Genetic) Diseases**"; German doctors sterilize many disabled adults and children, and also Jewish, Gypsy and Afro-German children.

- July 20 Vatican and Germany sign **Concordat** supposedly guaranteeing the legal status of the Catholic Church in Germany.
- August 20 Boycott of Germany urged by American Jewish Congress.
- Sept 22 Reich Chamber of Culture excludes Jews from the fields of journalism, the arts, literature, music, broadcasting, and theater.
- October 14 Germany withdraws from the League of Nations.
- Nov 12 First Reichstag election in one-party state: 92% vote Nazi.

(1933-35): In schools it is taught that non-Aryans are racially inferior. Jewish children prohibited from sports clubs, school orchestras, and extra curricular activities. Jewish children banned from playgrounds, swimming pools and parks in many towns and cities. By the end of 1933, 27,000 politicals are interred in makeshift concentration camps.

1934

- January Forced sterilizations begin for hereditary diseases at first, but projected for "feeble-minded," alcoholics, manic depressives, schizophrenics, genetically blind and deaf, and Huntington's chorea. Later, the "work shy" would be targeted.
- January 26 Germany and Poland sign a ten-year non-aggression pact.
- April 20 **Himmler** is appointed head of the **Gestapo**; allocates power to **Reinhard Heydrich**.
- June 30 - The "**Night of the Long Knives**" as Hitler orders the **SS** to purge the leadership of the **SA**. Hundreds are murdered, including **Ernst Röhm**, chief of the SA.
- July 2 **SS** becomes an independent organization under **Heinrich Himmler**.
- July 20 **Hitler's** cabinet approves law combining offices of Chancellor and President and creates new title, *Reichsführer*.
- August 1 President Hindenburg dies; Hitler becomes Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of armed forces, whose members are now required to take a personal oath of loyalty to Hitler.
- August 2
- August 19 90% of German voters approve in a plebiscite the granting of Hitler's new powers.
- October First wave of arrests of homosexuals occurs throughout Germany - continues into November.

(1934-1935) As Hitler consolidates power and rebuilds the armed forces, 50,000 Jews flee Germany. In the absence of any new anti-Jewish laws, with the SA purged, and with Hitler's announcement that the "revolution is over", at least 10,000 refugees return to their homeland.

1935

- January 13 Saar region returned to Germany following a Treaty of Versailles-stipulated plebiscite.
- March 16 Conscription resumed throughout Germany in violation of Treaty of Versailles.
- March 21 Jews are barred from serving in the German armed forces ("Aryan descent" required).
- April Jehovah's Witnesses are banned from civil service and arrested all across Germany.
- Summer "*Juden Verboten*" (No Jews) signs increase in number outside towns, villages, restaurants, dance halls, hotels and stores, as SA push their antisemitic agenda.
- Sept 15 "**Nuremberg Laws**". Nazi racist ideology legalized. The *Reich Citizens Law* and the "*Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor*" forbids marriage or sexual intercourse between Aryans and Jews.
- October 3 Italy invades Ethiopia.
- October 15 Ministry of Science and Education prohibits teaching by non-Aryans in public schools and bans private instruction by Jewish teachers.
- Nov 14 First "Supplemental Decree to the Reichs Citizenship Law" redefines "Jew."

1936

- Feb. 6-16 Winter Olympics open in Garmiseh-Partenkirchen, Germany.
- March 3 Jewish doctors are barred from practicing medicine in German government hospitals.
- March 7 Germany remilitarizes the Rhineland in violation of the Treaty of Versailles.
- July **Sachsenhausen** concentration camp opens near Berlin; Spanish Civil War begins.
- July 12 1st German Gypsies arrested and sent to **Dachau** concentration camp.
- August Olympic Games in Berlin; temporary removal of all antisemitic signs. By now, one-fourth (150,000) of Germany's Jews have fled their homeland.
- October 25 **Hitler** and **Mussolini** form Rome-Berlin **Axis** alliance.