

GCSE HISTORY 100% SHEET: LIVING UNDER NAZI RULE 1933-1945

Nazi Ideology and Demands

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| Scrap the Treaty of Versailles | The Treaty of Versailles was a treaty that Germany had to sign at the end of World War 1. The Nazis wanted to scrap the treaty by building up the army and taking back land lost. |
| Bread and Work (Brot und Arbeit) | Bread and work was promised to the millions of unemployed in 1933. |
| Hatred towards Jews (Antisemitism) | The Nazis believed that Jews were controlled governments, particularly in Britain and the USA. This enemy had to be destroyed of the Aryan race was to survive. |
| Aryan Supremacy | The Nazis believed that the Aryan race was superior (better) to any other. Eastern Europeans and Jews were untersmenschen (sub-human) and a threat to the Germanic race. |
| Living Space (Lebensraum) | The Nazis believed that Germany should invade Poland and Russia in order to gain more living space for Germans. |
| Winterhilfswerk | Winter Relief of the German People A Nazi charity to help the poor, providing them with food, warmth and clothing. |

29-30 June 1934 – Night of the Long Knives

- By 1934, Hitler had become concerned by the increasing power of the SA which had over 3 million members and wanted to take control of the army. **Ernst Röhm**, the leader of the SA, was a personal rival of Hitler's.
- During the Night of the Long Knives, SA leaders were dragged from their beds and shot. Röhm too was arrested and shot.

2 August – Death of Hindenburg and Army Oath

- When Hindenburg died, Hitler combined the offices of President and Chancellor. He was now the undisputed head of government and took the title **Führer (Supreme Leader)**.
- The army now took an **oath of personal loyalty** to Hitler as he was now Supreme Commander of the armed forces. All German soldiers swore to obey Hitler and to risk their life for him at any time.
- Hitler now had almost **absolute power** meaning the any important decision in Germany could not happen without his permission.

Consolidation of Power

27 February 1933– Reichstag Fire

- The Reichstag (German Parliament) was destroyed by a fire created by a Dutch Communist **Marinus van der Lubbe**,
- The Nazis claimed that this was the start of a Communist plot to take over Germany. The next day Hitler persuaded Hindenburg to grant him **emergency powers** – people could be arrested people **without trial**.
- 4,000** people were arrested, mainly Communists and Socialists



5 March 1933– New Elections

- The Nazis used the police and the SA (brownshirts) to march through the streets and **intimidate** other parties, breaking up meetings of the Socialists.
- The Nazis used the radio to broadcast their anti-Communist message.
- This helped the Nazis achieve their best ever election result, with **44 per cent** of the vote, but it was not the 2/3rds majority Hitler needed.



24 March 1933– The Enabling Act

- Hitler wanted an Enabling Act.
- This would give Hitler the power to pass laws without going through the Reichstag or the President. In order to achieve it, he needed to get **two-thirds (66%)** of the Reichstag to support it.
- The Communists were banned from voting.
- The Centre Party was persuaded to vote in favour of the law and only the Social Democrats voted against it.
- The Enabling Act was passed by **444 votes to 94**. Germany was now a dictatorship because all important decisions would now only be made by Hitler and his closest advisors.



May-July 1933 – the Enabling Act in Action

- The Civil Service Act.** Political opponents or anyone who was non-Aryan were fired from government positions. This meant that Jews could no longer be teachers, judges or university lecturers.
- 1 April 1933:** Boycott of Jewish shops and businesses. SA guards were posted outside shops to prevent people from entering.
- Trade Unions taken over:** Trade Unions are an organisation set up to protect workers rights. On 2 May 1933 Trade union offices were taken over and union leaders were arrested.
- All political parties banned (July):** A law was introduced that banned people from forming new political parties. There was now only one party in Germany.
- Controlling local government:** In January 1934 the power of the Länder (Local Governments) was removed completely. The states (counties) were now split into 42 *Gaue*, each run by a *Gauleiter* (Governor) chosen by the Nazi Party.

Why was it so hard to oppose Nazi rule?

Terror and Propaganda

Heinrich Himmler and the SS

- The SS was made up of men of **pure German blood** and had the ideal Aryan features.
- In 1934 the SS truly rose to power after removing the leadership of the SA. Hitler now looked to the **obedience and ruthlessness** of the SS to carry out purges and remove political enemies.
- The SS was made an independent organisation led by **Heinrich Himmler** – see right.



Reinhard Heydrich and the SD

- The SD (Secret Service) was the main **official intelligence gathering agency**.
- The role of the SD was to identify enemies of the Nazi leadership.
- The SD focused on any opposition to the party itself. It **spied on all aspects of education, the arts, government and administration**, as well as churches and the Jewish community.
- From their findings, agents wrote extensive reports on the morale and attitude of the German people.
- These enabled the Nazi leadership to monitor the impact of the changes they made and to tailor propaganda as and when it was necessary.
- The SD did not take action against individuals but passed information on to those who did – the Gestapo.
- The SD was led by **Reinhard Heydrich** – see right



The Gestapo

- The Gestapo (Secret Police) spied on the public to remove any opposition.
- At its height, the Gestapo had **15,000** active officers to police a population of 66 million. This works out as **only one officer per 4,400 people**. Yet even with such low numbers, the Gestapo was deeply feared.
- It had the power to arrest and imprison any person suspected of opposing the Nazi state.
- They could **tap telephones and open mail**, but mostly they relied on **informers** who might pass on remarks they had overheard or just general suspicions.



Joseph Goebbels

- Joseph Goebbels was the **Minister for Propaganda and Public Enlightenment** – see right.
- His ministry controlled radio messages, all newspapers, films and organised posters and displays of propaganda through rallies – see below.
- These messages persuaded many Germans to support the Nazis.



Newspapers

- The Nazis **took control** over existing papers and closed any opposition papers down.
- By 1939 they owned **two-thirds** of all German newspapers and magazines
- Any articles that did not show the Nazis in a positive way would be **censored** (banned).

Radio

- The Ministry for Propaganda controlled the output of every radio station so that they always included Nazi messages, Hitler's speeches.
- The Nazis produced **cheap radio sets**, the People's Receivers. These were sold at a week's wage for the average manual worker and could be paid for in instalments.
- In 1933, **1.5 million** of these sets were produced, and by 1939, **70 per cent** of Germans had a radio in their home.



Posters

- The Nazis were mastered at the visual message, using bold colours and eye catching phrases which made messages clear and obvious. Thousands were out up all over Germany.

Rallies

- Giant rallies were held to emphasise and celebrate the strength of the Nazi movement. They involved speeches, choruses, marches, torch-lit parades and even mock battles.
- The annual party rally at Nuremberg was the largest of these and the 1934 event lasted a whole week.
- For the 1934 **Nuremberg Rally**, **30,000 swastika flags** were placed around the field, each with its own spotlight.

How much opposition was there to Nazi Rule?

Opposition: 1933-1945

Opposition from the Social Democrats

- After the Nazi takeover in 1933, the leaders of the **Social Democratic Party** fled the country.
- They produced anti-Nazi leaflets and posters, but were hunted down by the Gestapo, who **arrested 1200** of them in the Rhine Ruhr region alone.

Opposition from the Communists

- The Communists were more active than the Social Democrats. They aimed to provide visible resistance with meetings, propaganda and newsletters.
- One of these newsletters, The Red Flag, produced **10,000 copies at least once a month**.
- However, this visibility meant Communists were easily identified and **soon arrested** by the Gestapo.

Opposition from the Church

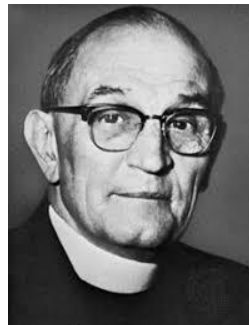
- With about **22 million Catholics, 40 million Protestants**, religious groups were by far the largest non-Nazi organisations in Germany.
- Hitler saw the Church as a potential threat and so he:
- made an agreement called the '**Concordat**' with the leader of the Pope. The Pope promised that German Catholics would stay out of politics if, in return, the Nazis would leave them alone.

Resistance from Individuals (Niemoller and Cardinal Galen)

- Martin Niemoller was a Protestant pastor (priest – see right above) refused to join the Reich Church and instead founded an alternative, the non-Nazi **Confessional Church**.
- By 1934, **6,000 pastors had joined**. The Confessional Church preached against violence and Nazi racial policy.
- **800** pastors were arrested and sent to concentration camps.
- Niemoller was sent to **Sachsenhausen** then Dachau but survived.
- In 1934 the Catholic Bishop of Münster, **Cardinal Galen** began sermons criticising the Nazi regime over its racial policy.
- The Gestapo were sent to question Galen, but he **was too high profile** to remove from power, so he continued to provide resistance.



Ernst Thälmann
(pictured above)
Leader of the
German
Communist Party.
He was arrested in
1933.



Swing Kids

- These young people came together to listen to **jazz**, dance and talk openly. The Swing Kids wanted to develop their own individual personalities.
- Himmler saw the group as so dangerous he personally wrote to Heydrich, asking the Gestapo to deal with them. Many were arrested and some were sent to concentration camps.



Edelweiss Pirates

- Members of this group wore an **Edelweiss flower** on their clothing.
- Some listened to **foreign radio** and spread news. They produced flyers and **painted slogans on walls**. Some actively picked fights with the Nazis, with reported **beatings of the Hitler Youth members**.



Public Criticism: The White Rose Group

- The White Rose was a group at Munich University centred around **Hans and Sophie Scholl**.
- The students decided to produce a series of **anti-Nazi leaflets**.
- Between **6000 and 9000 leaflets** were distributed to **nine** large cities around Germany
- On **18 February 1943** the Scholls distributed their leaflets outside lecture theatres at Munich University.
- They were then identified, **arrested and executed**.



Wartime Opposition

- As the war progressed, German army officers such as **Colonel Stauffenberg** became disillusioned with the Nazi leadership and particularly disagreed with the **policy towards Jews**.
- He (Stauffenberg) joined a resistance group led by Ludwig Beck and Henning von Tresckow, and took charge of planning and leading an assassination attempt. The plan was to kill Hitler and initiate **Operation Valkyrie**, an emergency order which would allow the plotters to use the reserve army to remove the SS and the Gestapo.
- On 20 July 1944 Stauffenberg planted a bomb at the **Wolfschanze ('Wolf's Lair')**, Hitler's headquarters in Rastenburg, East Prussia. The bomb exploded yet Hitler survived.
- Back in Berlin, the plotters were tried in a hastily arranged **court martial** and **executed** by firing squad.



How did the lives of German people change, 1933-1939?

Workers, Women, Youth and Jews

Workers

- On the surface, the Nazis greatly improved life for workers. During the election of 1932, when there were **nearly 6 million unemployed**
- By 1939, unemployment had officially been reduced to **35,000 out of a total of 25 million men**.

Nazi Policies towards Workers

- The Nazis set up the **Deutsche Arbeitsfront (DAF)**, literally meaning German Labour Front.
- One aspect of the DAF was the **Strength Through Joy Programme (KdF)**. This improved workers' leisure time. This included subsidised holidays, cheap theatre tickets, touring orchestras and gym evenings.

Nazi Policies towards Workers

- The **Beauty Through Labour** aimed to improve work places.
- Through this branch, new toilets, changing rooms and showers were built at factories across Germany.

Nazi Policies towards Workers

- The **Reich Labour Service** was set up to tackle unemployment by providing cheap labour for big state projects like new motorways. From 1935, all men aged between **18 and 25** had to serve for **six months**.
- In 1938, the DAF created the **Volkswagen scheme**, which meant that workers could **pay 5 marks per week** and eventually earn a car.
- Many paid in to the scheme but no one ever received a car as the Second World War stopped production

Nazi views on how women should live

- Women should **not smoke**, should appear natural and **not wear makeup**.
- Women should dress in **traditional German clothes**
- Women should not be thin but **'physically robust'**. Strong women were best for bearing children

Nazi policies towards women

- Loans to encourage women to marry and have children**.
- The couple could receive goods of up to **1000 Reichsmarks** in value if the woman gave up her job.
- The loan was reduced by a quarter for every child the couple went on to have.



Impact of Nazi policies towards women

- Marriages did increase from **516,000** in 1932 to **772,000** in 1939.
- Births rose in the early 1930s but by 1939 the rate had **declined again**.
- The average number of children per couple in 1932 had been **3.6** and by 1939 it had dropped to **3.3**.
- The number of women in employment **increased** between 1933 and 1939.

Nazi policies on education

- After the Nazis took power in 1933 unreliable teachers had to resign whilst Jewish teachers were banned. A National Socialist Teachers League was established, **97 per cent** of teachers had joined it by 1936.

Nazi control of the school curriculum

- Old textbooks were thrown out and a Nazi curriculum was imposed. History was taught with a focus on how Germany was betrayed by Communists and Jews in World War 1.
- PE took up an extensive part of the curriculum while Biology focussed on race study.

Youth Organisations

- The **Hitler Youth** led by **Baldur von Schirach** and became compulsory to join in 1936. No other youth organisations were allowed.
- Meetings for both boys and girls focused on indoctrination and physical activities. Commonly they sang political songs, read Nazi books and paraded through towns. Boys' activities were often more focused on **preparation for the military**.
- Girls' groups concentrated on **domestic duties** and even military nursing. For both boys and girls there was the possibility of going on holiday camps. This was particularly attractive to the working classes.

Nazi Policies Against Jews

- March 1933:** Jewish lawyers are banned from conducting legal affairs in Berlin.
- September 1935:** Marriages between Germans and German Jews are punishable by imprisonment. Jews are no longer 'citizens'; they are just 'subjects' with no rights.
- October 1938:** Jewish passports have to be stamped with a 'J' and passports belonging to Jews whose emigration is undesirable are to be confiscated.
- November 1938:** All Jewish children are expelled from non-Jewish state schools.
- Jews are no longer allowed to buy newspapers and magazines.
- Jews are banned from cinemas, theatres, operas and concerts.

Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass) – 9-10 November 1938

- 267** synagogues were destroyed and **7500 Jewish businesses** had their windows smashed.
- At least **91** Jews were murdered while up to **30,000** Jewish men were arrested.

What was the impact of Second World War on the German People?

War Economy, Shortages, Women, Bombing, Evacuation and Total War

War Economy

- In December 1939, Hitler announced that Germany would become a war economy.
- All industries would focus on supporting the war effort and there would be ambitious targets for every aspect of war production.
- In 1939, 23 per cent of the goods produced in German factories were related to the military; by 1941 this had risen to 47 per cent.
- By 1941, 55 per cent of the German workforce was employed in war-related work



Albert Speer

- By the end of 1941 Germany was not producing many tanks, guns and aircraft.
- Things changed in **February 1942** with the appointment of **Albert Speer** as **Minister of Armaments and War Production**.
- He decided to: focus factories on producing a single product; employ more women in factories and use concentration camp prisoners as workers. This had a massive impact on production.
- In 1940 Germany produced **1,600 tanks**. In 1944 they produced **19,000**.
- In 1940 Germany produced **10,200 aircraft**. In 1944 they produced **39,600**.



Shortages

- The war economy led to serious **shortages of food** and other products throughout the war years.
- Rationing had been introduced from the outset.



Women

- The Nazi leadership was divided over the role of women in the war effort.
- Speer wanted them to work in the factories to boost production, but Hitler and others still believed they should remain at home to continue their role as wives and mothers.
- In 1939, **760,000 women** worked in war industries and this had risen to **1.5 million** by 1941.
- However, the total number of German women aged 15 to 65 was nearly **30 million**. With men away at war it seemed that most women preferred to stay at home.



Bombing

- On 28 August 1940, British planes made a first devastating attack on Berlin.
- Hamburg, Berlin and Dresden were repeatedly bombed by the British and Americans
- During the autumn of 1940, people in many cities were faced with air raids three or four nights each week.
- The German government introduced a massive programme to build air raid shelters and to improve air defences in the cities.
- Night after night, people sought protection in the air raid shelters, but they were not always safe..



Evacuation

- In September 1940, the Nazis became increasingly concerned about the safety of German children in the cities.
- They therefore introduced a programme of evacuation known as **KLV**.
- This system of voluntary evacuation to the countryside was first applied to the cities of **Hamburg and Berlin**, which were considered to be most at risk from attack.
- All children below the age of fourteen could live in the countryside.



The move towards 'Total War'

- At the beginning of 1943 Germany had **suffered two defeats**, one against the Russians at **Stalingrad** and another against the British in North Africa.
- Faced with these losses, the Nazis needed a **new plan**. The war could only be won if the German people made **huge sacrifices**. **'Total war'** was now required.
- On **18 February 1943** Joseph Goebbels made a speech to a huge crowd of Nazi supporters. He explained the need for 'total war' – that every part of German society needed to be involved in the war effort.



Impact of the 'Total War' speech

- **The Nazis finally tried to mobilise women into the war effort.**
- A total of 3 million eligible women between the ages of 17 and 45 were called to work. Only 1 million actually took up the call
- **Anything that did not contribute to the war effort was eliminated** - Professional sport stopped.
- **The shortages became even worse.** In August 1943, Germany stopped producing clothes.
- **There was an increase in propaganda** encouraging people to embrace the idea of total war. Goebbels' speech was shown in cinemas around the country and posters.

What did Nazi rule mean for the people of Europe, 1939-1945?

The Contrasting Nature of Nazi Rule: East and West and The Holocaust

Nazi Rule in Poland

- Nazi leaders believed that Germany needed **Lebensraum**. So when the Nazis invaded Poland in September 1939, they aimed to **remove any element of Polish control or culture**. Their plan was to **totally Germanise** the country.
- From 1940, thousands of native Polish citizens were expelled, and **500,000 'ethnic Germans'** were settled in their houses

Treatment of the Poles

- The Nazis considered Slavic Poles to be **racially inferior** and, from the outset, large numbers were murdered by the Wehrmacht and the SS.
- It is estimated that **1.9 million non-Jewish citizens were killed**. Other Poles were sent to work in Germany through forced labour schemes.
- Between 1939 and 1945, **over 1.5 million were deported and forced to work in labour camps**. In May 1940, the Polish Decrees established rules for Poles working in Germany.

Nazi Rule in the Netherlands (Holland)

- By **May 1940** the **German Luftwaffe** had bombed the city of **Rotterdam** and forced the Dutch to surrender.
- The Dutch shared the **same ethnic background as Germans** and were therefore **treated very differently** from the Slavs of the east.
- Civil servants were **allowed to continue working** if they chose to, although 30 per cent of town mayors stepped down.
- The Dutch education system was **not changed** as the Nazi rulers realised there would be a backlash if they tried to interfere

Responses to Nazi Rule

- **Collaboration:** working with the Nazis and helping them to rule
- **Accommodation:** doing as you were told by the Nazis
- **Resistance:** Opposing the Nazis.
- **Collaboration Example:** In Latvia, the SS created the Latvian Auxiliary Security Police. The group took up the job of killing Jews and Communists. The group alone murdered **26,000 Jews**, half the Jewish population of Latvia.
- **Accommodation Example:** Many if not most people in France, Holland and Belgium simply got on with their lives.
- **Resistance Example:** The 'French Resistance' undertook **guerrilla warfare** against the Nazis, publishing underground newspapers and providing intelligence to the Allies.



The First Solution: Persecution and Emigration (1938-39)

- In the countries the Nazis occupied before the start of the Second World War, the first solution was to **force Jews to leave** the country.
- This policy was adopted in Austria following the Nazi invasion in March 1938.
- During the Nazi occupation of Austria, Jews were **beaten and humiliated** by being forced to scrub the pavements to get rid of pro-Austrian graffiti. .
- The persecution led many Jews to **consider emigration**. This was actively encouraged by the Nazis, who created a **Central Office for Jewish Emigration**.
- According to official reports, **110,000 Jews emigrated in two years**.

The Second Solution: Concentration in Ghettos (1939-41)

- When the Nazis invaded Poland in 1939 they controlled **over 3.5 million Polish Jews** – too many for emigration.
- Polish Jews were now forced into **ghettos** – enclosed districts that isolated Jews from the rest of the population.
- The largest ghetto in Nazi-occupied Poland was in **Warsaw**.
- Completed in November 1940, the ghetto had three-metre-high walls topped with barbed wire. By March 1941, the Warsaw Ghetto **held 445,000 Jewish inhabitants**.
- This was a **third of the city's population**, in just **2.4 per cent** of its area.
- On average, **fifteen people** shared a small apartment. Unsurprisingly, these conditions led to disease and death, particularly among the vulnerable, like the young and old.

The Final Solution: Murder (1941-5)

Phase One: The Einsatzgruppen

- The mass murder of Jews began with the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in **June 1941**. For the Nazis, this was a life-and-death struggle against **communists and Jews** in the east. The men who carried out the mass murders in the east belonged to the **Einsatzgruppen**. These were **mobile killing units**, which consisted of SS men.
- **Four Einsatzgruppen** (A, B, C and D), each consisting of **500–1000 men**, followed the German fighting troops as they advanced into Russian-held territory.
- As they reached different villages and towns, the Einsatzgruppen rounded up Jews and communists. Men, women and children were taken to secluded areas, often in woodland.
- There, the victims were forced to dig a large pit. They were then lined up at the edge of the pit and shot.
- Approximately **90 per cent** of those murdered in the autumn and winter of 1941 were Jews, **around 1 million people**

The Final Solution: Murder (1941-5)

Phase Two: Use of Poison Gas

- In the autumn of 1941, **Operation Reinhard**, the extermination of all the Jews in the General Government, was agreed. New extermination or death camps were created, the sole purpose of which was to murder. By 1942, **Belzec** (March), **Sobibor** (May) and **Treblinka** (July) were all operational, murdering Jews in newly constructed gas chambers.