NAZISM 1919–1945
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THE RISE TO POWER 1919–1934
A Documentary Reader

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under a former Free Corps leader, von Pfeffer. He wanted to ensure it did not become either a military-style formation, as had happened during 1923, or a group of revolutionary conspirators, since in either event the Government might use this as an excuse to ban the Party. In his first orders to the new SA, therefore, on 1 November 1926, he made it clear it was to be purely a propaganda weapon and strong-arm squad:

Letter from Adolf Hitler to Captain von Pfeffer (SA Order 1)
To conclude our discussions about the programme of your reorganisation, I would like to sum up briefly my main instructions.

The training of the SA must be carried out, not on a military basis, but in accordance with the needs of the Party.

In so far as the members undergo physical training, the main emphasis must be, not on military drill, but far more on sports activities. Boxing and Jiu-Jitsu have always seemed to me far more important than any ineffective, because only incomplete, shooting practice. Physical training must implant in the individual the conviction of his superiority and give him that self-assurance which lies only in confidence in one’s own strength; furthermore, it should give him those athletic skills which serve as a weapon for the defence of the movement.

The organisation of the SA as well as its clothing and equipment must accordingly be carried out, not on the model of the old army, but in a way appropriate to its task.

In order right from the start to prevent the SA acquiring any secretive character, quite apart from the fact that its clothing is recognisable to everybody, the size of its membership must define the path which assists the movement, one which is known to the public. It must not meet in secret but should march in the open air and thereby be channelled into activities which conclusively destroy all legends of a ‘secret organisation’. To provide a mental diversion from any temptation to satisfy its activism by petty conspiracies, it must from the very beginning be initiated into the great idea of the movement and be trained in the task of representing this idea to such a degree that the horizon is widened right from the start and the individual SA man does not see his mission in the elimination of some crook or other whether big or small, but in helping to build a new National Socialist racialist state. Thereby the struggle against the present state will be raised above the atmosphere of petty acts of revenge and conspiracy to the greatness of an ideological war of extermination against Marxism, its constructions and its string pullers.

What we need is not a hundred or two hundred daring conspirators, but a hundred thousand and hundreds of thousands more fanatical fighters for our Weltanschauung. We must not work in secret conventicles but in huge mass marches, and neither by dagger nor poison nor pistol can the path be cleared for the movement, but only by conquering the street. We have to teach Marxism that National Socialism is the future master of the streets, just as it will one day be master of the State.

[signed] ADOLF HITLER
I hereby bring this letter to the notice of the SA leaders as a directive.

CHAPTER 3

The Emergence of Nazism
as a Mass Movement
1928–1933

By 1928, the Weimar Republic had superficially acquired a degree of political stability and economic prosperity. Yet, although these years 1928–29 are often seen as the high point of economic prosperity before the Wall Street crash and ensuing slump, this view requires qualification. Firstly, this economic prosperity was based on very insecure foundations. During the years 1924–28 German industry, agriculture, and local government had borrowed extensively on the American market at high rates of interest and largely on a short-term basis. If economic difficulties occurred in the United States, many of these loans were liable to recall at short notice.

Secondly, by the end of 1927, agriculture and the Mittelstand—artisans and small retailers—were already in economic difficulties. The years 1924–29 saw something of a shift in the economic balance of power towards big business on the one hand and organised labour on the other and against agriculture and the Mittelstand. It was a period of rationalisation in German industry, involving an acceleration of the historical trend towards the concentration of firms into big trusts and cartels against which small businesses found themselves competing at a disadvantage. At the same time, organised labour in the shape of the Trade Unions and the Social Democrats had some success in pressing demands for higher wages and improved welfare measures. Thus, a major new unemployment insurance scheme was introduced at the end of 1927, financed by contributions from employers and employees. Mittelstand groups found that, in addition to the
burden of high interest rates on their loans, they had to pay high taxes and social security contributions for their employees.

Finally, at the end of 1927, a world-wide agricultural depression began, whose effects were exacerbated by trade treaties with countries such as Poland, by which Germany agreed to import agricultural produce in return for German industrial goods. These treaties were a response to pressure both from the dominant export-oriented sections of industry—chemicals, electrical goods, and machinery—and also from organised labour which wanted cheap food. Inevitably, this agricultural crisis soon involved groups dependent on agriculture such as artisans and small traders in rural areas.

The economic difficulties of peasants and Mittelstand groups, which had already suffered the effects of hyperinflation in 1923, imposed increasing strains on the political system. The Protestant middle class electorate, already divided between several major parties began to fragment still further as new parties emerged offering to provide more determined representation of their specific interests—a process facilitated by the extreme form of proportional representation enshrined in the Weimar Constitution. The problem was that, although these special interest parties—for peasants, landlords, tenants, etc.—could sometimes play a pivotal role in Parliament, ultimately this fragmentation was bound to weaken the political weight of these groups. The growing awareness of this led to further disillusionment with the whole political system, a disillusionment which the Nazis were quick to exploit.

(i) The Breakthrough 1928–30

The relative prosperity and political stability of 1924–28 had created a climate conducive to the growth of Nazism. The tactics followed by the Party in concentrating on trying to win over the industrial workers made things worse. By the end of 1927 this policy had manifestly failed to achieve results. Workers remained loyal to the Social Democrats and the Communists. Moreover, the majority of the middle class suspected the Party’s working class, ‘Socialist’ image. It had built up a nucleus of diehard supporters but they were still fewer than 75,000 in the whole of Germany. Its seven deputies made the Party a negligible quantity in Parliament. The Nazi Party was a fringe group on the far right of German politics and without influence.

A new tactic was clearly necessary if the energies of the Party were not to turn inwards in self-destructive internal conflict. In fact, a change of emphasis by the beginning of 1928 led the Party, while continuing to try to attract workers, to concentrate increasingly on the middle class, now recognised as more responsive. In December 1927 the deputy Gauleiter of Hanover-North, Karl Dinklage, wrote to Franz Stöhr, a Nazi Reichstag deputy, and referred to the line which Hitler had taken at a conference of Party leaders in Weimar on 27 November:

...In full agreement with the remarks of our leader in Weimar we too believe that we shall not yet succeed in winning much ground from the Marxists in the coming election. We shall receive most sympathy from the small businessman as the strongest opponent of department stores and consumer cooperatives. Further, from the white-collar worker, who being in the DHV, is already an antisemite...

In the winter of 1927–28 discontent began among the rural population of north-west Germany and soon spread. It was sparked off by an increase in the salaries of civil servants on 16 December 1927. This infuriated the rural population which regarded itself as grossly overtaxed. The Nazis were quick to exploit the possibilities and in December 1927 Hitler made a major speech to a protest meeting of farmers from Schleswig-Holstein.

The following police report of a mass demonstration on 26 January 1928, in the city of Oldenburg, in the middle of a big livestock farming area in north-west Germany, describes these grievances. It also shows how the Nazis exploited them by trying to discredit the professional organisations which had organised the meeting, and to convince their members that the whole parliamentary system was at fault and that only a political movement dedicated to the overthrow of that system could bring relief:

...In meetings of the rural population which were held in many places in the state of Oldenburg during the past weeks, the majority of those participating demanded again and again that an open-air protest meeting should be held in the state capital of Oldenburg, in order to give weight to the demands of the rural population, outlined below, which emerged in the meetings and were in the meantime formulated by a committee. It would also open the eyes of the state government to the masses of discontented who stand behind these demands. The Rural League [Landbund], the Farmers’ Association [Bauernverein], the League of Smallholdings, the Artisans’ League, the Settlers’ Association, and the Shopkeepers’ Guild had therefore called their members to a combined mass demonstration which took place in the Horsefair on 26 January. According to fairly accurate estimates, approximately 20,000 country people had assembled in the Horsefair by 12 noon...

After the speeches of the representatives of various trade associations, the

14 Deutschnationaler Handlungsgesellenverband: the German Nationalist Commercial Employees’ Association, a white collar workers’ union with völkisch sympathies.
general secretary of the Oldenburg Farmers’ Association, a farmer named Brendebach, announced the following fourteen demands of the rural population and said that during the next few days a delegation was to go to Berlin to convey these demands to the Reich Government and to demand radical measures for improving the situation of the rural population:
1. An embargo on all superfluous foreign imports.
2. Protection of agriculture through tariffs equivalent to those already applied to industry.
3. Simplification of the tax system; replacement of current direct taxes by income tax and property tax after suitable alterations; furthermore, the right for states and parishes to impose surcharges on these taxes.
4. Tax remission for farmers, craftsmen, and shopkeepers who are in distress.
6. Economical management in all branches of public administration, and reduction in the number of officials.
7. Temporary suspension of the pay regulations for civil servants of 16 December 1927.
8. We do not see in the incorporation of Oldenburg into Prussia a measure making for cheaper administration.
9. Reduction of social insurance contributions to a level which business can stand.
10. Permission for voluntary overtime work after the 8-hour working period. Loyal application of the Reich regulations on contracts. Radical measures against non-guild work.
11. Planned reduction of controlled housing policy and promotion of building programmes.
12. The prerequisite for any settlement activity must be its profitability.
13. Availability of long-term cheap credit for improvement of the debt situation with the aim of wiping out debts.
14. The privileged treatment of civil servants in Parliament who receive a salary in addition to allowances and a substitute must cease.

The reading out of the demands drew loud and prolonged applause from the majority of the participants.

A certain Münchmeyer, 15 formerly pastor of Borkum, as well as the National Socialists, had used the assembly of large numbers of the rural population for propaganda purposes for their parties. After ineffective appeals to the leadership of the protest meeting to be allowed to speak at the Horsefair, Münchmeyer called a public meeting at the Lindenhof for 10 a.m., which was attended by approximately 800 people...

The NSDAP had scheduled two public meetings at the Lindenhof and the Ziegelhof at 3 p.m. At the meeting at the Lindenhof which was attended by over 1,000 people, Reichstag Deputy Kube 16 of Berlin was the speaker; Reichstag Deputy Gottfried Feder of Munich spoke at the meeting at the Ziegelhof which was attended by about 500 people... .

All the speakers at the Kube meeting expressed the view that the rural population could not be satisfied with the form and outcome of the demonstration. At the end the following resolution was read out and adopted unanimously:

‘The thousands of Oldenburg farmers and middle-class people assembled today in the Lindenhof, together with the tens of thousands of their fellow-countrypersons, who have come here in the most bitter distress to give visible expression of their despair, having listened to the speech of the National Socialist Reichstag Deputy Wilhelm Kube of Berlin, declare their absolute determination not to be deceived, misled, exploited and expropriated.

‘We have recognised that the distress of agriculture is inseparably bound up with the political misery of the whole German people; that parliamentarism which is corrupt through and through and a weak government are unable to overcome the German political and economic emergency.

‘Let us do away with this Marxist-capitalist extortion system that has made Germany, our homeland, powerless, without honour, defenceless, and that has turned us free German farmers and middle-class people into poor, misled slaves of the world stock exchange.

‘But let us also do away with the professional federations who only thrust dust in our eyes and neutralise any vigorous action because politically they stand in the camps of those parties who have caused all this misery by accepting the Dawes Plan. The middle class and the farmers of Oldenburg see in the German National Socialist Hitler movement the only salvation from the parliamentary morass, from the pathetic and cowardly fulfilment policy.

‘Only when Germany is reborn in power, freedom and honour, led by unselfish German men who are not burdened by the contemptible policy of the last few years, only then will the German farmer stand as a free man on free soil serving the great German community as the backbone of our people.

It was noted that after the meeting several farmers approached Reichstag Deputy Kube to secure him for talks in the countryside.

The Nazis' opponents stigmatised them as a radical, socialistic, working class party, the image it had tried to convey hitherto. Efforts to frighten the peasants with Point 17 of the Nazi programme led Hitler to ‘clarify’ it on 13 April 1928. This alteration indicates the significance attached by Hitler to the reorientation of the Party:

\[\text{43}\]

In view of the false interpretations on the part of our opponents of Point 17 of the Programme of the NSDAP, it is necessary to make the following statement:

Since the NSDAP accepts the principle of private property, it is self-evident that the phrase 'confiscation without compensation' refers simply to the creation of possible legal means for confiscation, when necessary, of land acquired illegally or not managed in the public interest. It is, therefore, aimed primarily against Jewish companies which speculate in land.

\[\text{15}\] A leading anti-semitic who was to join the Nazis in April.

\[\text{16}\] Wilhelm Kube, Gauleiter of Kurmark 1928-1936, General Commissioner of White Russia 1941-43.
This new orientation had insufficient time to have much effect before the Reichstag election in May 1928. The results appeared to reflect the improved situation. The extreme Right suffered a serious defeat compared with December 1924. The Nazis lost 100,000 votes and polled 2.6 per cent of the vote. The ultra-conservative German Nationalists with 78 seats had lost 25 seats. The Left increased their vote to over 40 per cent of the total. The Social Democrats gained 21 seats and had 152; the Communists with 54 gained 9 seats. Although greeted at home and abroad as a victory for Weimar democracy, the results in fact indicated the situation was by no means as satisfactory as appeared at first sight. Not only the Right lost support; the parties of the Centre—the Democrats or left-wing Liberals, the German People's Party or right-wing Liberals, and the Catholic Centre Party—all lost seats. Their voters had either stayed away—the percentage of those voting declined sharply—or supported the new economic interest parties established between 1924–28. The Business Party which catered for artisans and small shopkeepers increased its seats from 17 to 23.

This was an ominous result. For the past four years Germany had been ruled by a coalition of the Right and Centre—German Nationalists, German People's Party, Democrats, and Catholic Centre Party. The vote for the Left and against the Centre and Right, was not a vote of confidence in the existing government. If anything, it was a vote against or at least an abstention. Unfortunately, the conclusions which the Right and Centre parties drew led them to interpret the result to mean that participation in the Government would alienate their own supporters.

This reaction reflected the nature of the German party system. Parties tended to represent specific interests: the German Nationalists—agriculture, particularly the big arable landowners of the east, the Junkers; the German People's Party—industry, and particularly heavy industry; the Centre Party—the Catholics; the Social Democrats—the trade unions. At the same time, the parties competed with one another within a broad segment of the population—the German Nationalists, the People's Party and the Democrats competed for the support of the Protestant upper and middle classes; the Social Democrats and Communists competed for the support of the workers. Parties committed to specific interests and competing against rivals for support within the same segment of the population, made the formation of coalitions difficult at the best of times. The result of the election of 1928 made the position even worse. The parties were convinced that by participating in government they would damage their electoral prospects by compromising the interests of their voters and members to maintain a coalition with parties which represented other and often conflicting interests. This would play into the hands of rivals who were not members of the Government, as the growth of the economic interest parties, regarded as dangerous new competitors, showed. The party bureaucracies, primarily concerned about retaining the backing of interests and voters, applied increasing pressure on the parliamentary groups to stay in opposition to enable the party to assert without compromise the interests of their supporters. The parliamentary group in turn put pressure on their colleagues in the Government coalition to leave the Government rather than compromise.

These considerations determined the future trend of politics. The German Nationalists had previously compromised their hostility to the Republic, participating in government to protect the interests of their mainly agrarian supporters in the formulation of tariff legislation. From now onwards, they began to move to the Right, back to the uncompromisingly anti-Republican position they had adopted in the first years of the Republic. The People's Party did not follow this trend to the Right immediately. Indeed, it now entered a coalition with the Social Democrats, largely because of Gustav Stresemann, who was aware that the democratic system depended on a strong Centre and on a willingness to compromise with the moderate Left. Pressure, however, continued to build up within the party against this coalition, particularly in view of the competition from the intransigent Nationalists on the Right. When Stresemann died on 3 October 1929, it was to be only a matter of time before the coalition broke down under the strain of the rightward drift of the People's Party under the influence of its strong industrial wing.

Finally, even the Catholic Centre Party began to move Right, particularly under its new and more conservative leader, Ludwig Kaas, from the end of 1928. This drift of the parties of the Centre towards the Right was paralleled by a leftward trend of the Social Democrats, the result of increasing competition from the Communists, evident from their election gains in 1928. In short, after the election of 1928 a polarisation of politics began which threatened to paralyse the parliamentary system by making coalition governments impossible. Whether or not it would continue would depend on future economic developments; a deterioration in the economic situation would force the parties to uphold, even more rigidly, the particular interests of their members and voters.

Although the new middle-class campaign had not had time to take effect before the election, the low average Nazi vote of 2 per cent disguises district variations. In some north-west rural districts where the protest movement had been strong, they gained over 10 per cent. The Party summed up the lessons of the election in the *Völkischer Beobachter* on 31 May 1928:

...The election results from the rural areas in particular have proved that with a smaller expenditure of energy, money and time, better results can be achieved there than in the big cities. In small towns and villages mass meetings with good
speakers are events and are often talked about for weeks, while in the big cities the
effects of meetings with even three of four thousand people soon disappear. Local
successes in which the National Socialists are running first or second are,
surprisingly, almost invariably the result of the activity of the branch leader or of a
few energetic members...

Nazi Party membership steadily increased from 100,000 to 150,000
between October 1928 and 1 September 1929. The next turning-point came
in the autumn of 1929. With the Wall Street crash, the economic situation
in Germany rapidly deteriorated. American financiers, under pressure,
called in the numerous short-term loans made to Germany since 1924.
Bankruptcies followed. Moreover, since the crisis was international,
export markets disappeared and businesses were forced to shed labour or
close down. This reduced home demand, making the situation even worse.
Unemployment figures began to soar. At this point, an issue emerged
which was ideally adapted for a right-wing attack on the Republic.

Under the chairmanship of the American banker, Owen Young, the
Allied Reparations Commission had devised a plan finally to settle
German war reparations. Germany would pay less than originally intended
but would still make substantial annual payments until 1988, a total of
34,500 million goldmarks. This was seen by the extreme Right as an
excellent opportunity to exploit the growing discontent and regain the
support lost in the 1928 election. They claimed Germany's children were
being sold in slavery to the Allies. The German Nationalists had a new
leader, the press and film magnate Alfred Hugenberg, a co-founder of the
Pan German League. Hugenberg had used the Party's electoral failure and
subsequent financial difficulties to impose himself and his extreme anti-
Republican views on the Party. In the Autumn of 1929, he organised a
referendum for a law rejecting the Young Plan and making any politician
who agreed to the plan face trial:

§1. The Reich Government will solemnly inform the foreign powers without delay
that the compulsory recognition of war guilt in the Versailles Treaty
contradicts historical truth, is based on false preconceptions, and is not
binding under international law.

§2. The Reich Government will endeavour to secure abrogation of the recognition
of war guilt in Article 231 as well as of Articles 429 and 430 of the Versailles
Treaty. It will also endeavour to secure the immediate and unconditional
evacuation of the occupied territories and the removal of all controls over
German territory, irrespective of the acceptance or rejection of the Hague
Conference.

§3. New burdens and obligations vis-à-vis foreign powers on the basis of the
recognition of war guilt may not be undertaken.
This also includes the burdens and obligations which are to be undertaken by
Germany on the basis of the proposals of the Paris experts and the
agreements deriving therefrom. [i.e. the Young Plan.]

§4. Reich Chancellors, Reich Ministers and their plenipotentiaries who sign
treaties contrary to the regulation contained in §3.1 will be subject to the
penalties contained in §92. No.3 of the Penal Code. [i.e. Penal servitude for
not less than two years.]

To win maximum support for this draft law, Hugenberg invited the help
of all willing to cooperate including the Nazis.

Hitler saw this as an ideal opportunity for his party, giving him access to
the funds of the Right and national publicity in the Hugenberg press. More
important, the association of the Nazis with the conservative and upper-
class Nationalists would remove the stigma of being radical and working
class and make it more acceptable to the middle class. Finally, the Nazis
as the most active of all the groups participating in the campaign gave the
impression of being the most dynamic of the anti-Republican groups on the
Right. They appeared more attractive than their conservative rivals to the
growing number of those discontented with the Republican parties owing
to the deteriorating economic situation. The fact that the subsequent
plebiscite failed to win anything like sufficient support—5.8 million instead
of the necessary 21 million votes—did not detract from these advantages.
Indeed, the Young Plan campaign coincided with the state and local
government elections of November-December 1929, in which the Nazis
made significant gains. In the election in the state of Thuringia, for
example, they won 11.3% of the vote and participation in the Government.
Nazi local government propaganda used rumour and scandal to
discredit opponents. Whether the scandal was true or not did not matter;
they hoped to benefit from the belief that 'there's no smoke without fire'.
They aimed to discredit the local establishment whether Conservative or
Social Democrat.

There were, however, some within the Party who resented this reor-
tention of its propaganda towards the middle class and rural areas. They
continued to press for a more definite 'socialist' commitment; they also
objected to the subordination of the Party and its ideology to the leader.
A leading spokesman for this group was Otto Strasser, the brother of Gregor
Strasser. The newspapers of the Kampverlag, the Strasser publishing
house, continued to adopt a comparatively 'left wing' line, complicating
Hitler's appeal to the middle class. The issue was finally fought out at an
interview between Hitler and Otto Strasser in 1930. First, Hitler chal-
enged the claim of Strasser's associates that the 'idea', i.e. the ideology, of
the Party was distinct from and superior to the leader, then the argument turned to the question of the definition of Socialism about which Hitler and Strasser had very different views:

How do you justify Blank's theories?' Hitler demanded. 'His conception of loyalty, the distinction he makes between the Leader and the Idea, are incitements to Party members to rebel.'

'No,' I said, 'it is not a question of diminishing the Leader's prestige. But for the free and Protestant German the service of the Idea first and foremost is an ingrained necessity. The Idea is divine in origin, while men are only its vehicles, the body in which the Word is made flesh. The Leader is made to serve the Idea, and it is to the Idea alone that we owe absolute allegiance. The Leader is human, and it is human to err.'

'You are talking monumental idiocy. You wish to give Party members the right to decide whether or not the Führer has remained faithful to the so-called Idea. It's the lowest kind of democracy, and we want nothing to do with it! For us the Idea is the Führer, and each Party member has only to obey the Führer...'

'What you say would lead to the dissolution of our organisation, which is based on discipline. I have no intention of allowing our organisation to be disrupted by a crazy scribbler. You have been an officer; you see that your brother accepts my discipline, even if he doesn't always see eye to eye with me. Take a lesson from him; he's a fine man.'

He seized my hands, as he had done two years before. His voice was choked with sobs, and tears ran down his cheeks...

'All that is very simple for you, Herr Hitler,' Strasser continued, 'but it only serves to emphasise the profound difference in our revolutionary and Socialist ideas. The reasons you give for destroying the Kampfverlag I take to be only pretexts. The real reason is that you want to strangle the social revolution for the sake of legality and your new collaboration with the bourgeois parties of the Right.'

At this Hitler grew violent.

'I am a Socialist, and a very different kind of Socialist from your rich friend Reventlow. I was once an ordinary working-man. I would not allow my chauffeur to eat worse than I eat myself. But your kind of Socialism is nothing but Marxism. The mass of the working classes want nothing but bread and games. They will never understand the meaning of an ideal, and we cannot hope to win them over to one. What we have to do is to select from a new master-class men who will not allow themselves to be guided, like you, by the morality of pity. Those who rule must know they have the right to rule because they belong to a superior race. They must maintain that right and ruthlessly consoliade it....'

'What you preach is liberalism, nothing but liberalism. There is only one possible kind of revolution, and it is not economic or political or social, but racial, and it will always be the same: the struggle of inferior classes and inferior races against the superior races who are in the saddle. On the day the superior race forgets this law, it is lost. All revolutions—and I have studied them carefully—have been racial...'

'Let us assume, Herr Hitler, that you came into power tomorrow. What would you do about Krupp's? Would you leave it alone or not?'

'Of course I should leave it alone,' cried Hitler. 'Do you think me so crazy as to want to ruin Germany's great industry?'

'If you wish to preserve the capitalist regime, Herr Hitler, you have no right to talk of Socialism. For our supporters are Socialists, and your programme demands the socialisation of private enterprise.'

'That word "socialism" is the trouble,' said Hitler. He shrugged his shoulders, appeared to reflect for a moment and then went on:

'I have never said that all enterprises should be socialised. On the contrary, I have maintained that we might socialise enterprises prejudicial to the interests of the nation. Unless they were so guilty, I should consider it a crime to destroy essential elements in our economic life. Take Italian Fascism. Our National Socialist state, like the Fascist state, will safeguard both employers' and workers' interests while reserving the right of arbitration in case of dispute.'

Hitler, exasperated by my answers, continued: 'there is only one economic system, and that is responsibility and authority on the part of directors and executives. I ask Herr Amann to be responsible to me for the work of his subordinates and to exercise authority over them. Herr Amann asks his office manager to be responsible for his typists and to exercise his authority over them; and so on to the lowest rung of the ladder. That is how it has been for thousands of years, and that is how it will always be.'

'Yes, Herr Hitler, the administrative structure will be the same whether the state is capitalist or socialist. But the spirit of labour depends on the regime under which it lives. If it was possible a few years ago for a handful of men not appreciably different from the average to throw a quarter of a million Ruhr workers on the streets, if this act was legal and in conformity with the morality of our economic system, then it is not the men but the system that is criminal.'

'But that-' Hitler replied, looking at his watch and showing signs of acute impatience 'that is no reason for granting the workers a share in the profits of the enterprises that employ them, and more particularly for giving them the right to be consulted. A strong state will see that production is carried on in the national interest, and, if these interests are contravened, can proceed to expropriate the enterprise concerned and take over its administration.'

On 27 March 1930, the polarisation within the Reichstag finally brought the breakdown of the coalition government of the right-wing Liberal People's Party and the Social Democrats which had ruled Germany since 1928. The Government split on financing the deficit in the unemployment benefit fund, becoming daily larger as the numbers of unemployed rose. The interest groups behind the two parties made their weight felt. The People's Party under the influence of the industrialists wished to reduce the benefits, thereby putting the whole burden on the unemployed. The Social Democrats, on the other hand, under the pressure of the trade unions
insisted on an increase in the social insurance contributions, of which the employers would have to pay half. After months of negotiation compromise proved impossible and the Government was forced to resign.

This was to mark the end of parliamentary government in Germany for nearly twenty years. The issue at stake in the conflict was who would bear the main burden of the economic crisis—capital or labour? The trade unions regarded a cut in unemployment benefits as the thin end of the wedge. Were it accepted it would begin the erosion of the whole structure of wage and welfare concessions laboriously built up since 1918. It would discredit them in the eyes of their members and be grist to the mill of the Communists. The industrialists, on the other hand, saw the unemployment insurance issue as a classic demonstration of labour's success in exploiting the democratic system of Weimar to increase its share of the nation's wealth. Industry wanted a government that would cut back public expenditure and encourage profits. To achieve this would require the removal of the Social Democrats from the government as a minimum goal. Many went further and wished to curb the power of the Reichstag.

Although the issue of unemployment insurance was the overt cause of the collapse of the coalition, behind the scenes negotiations had been going on since at least December 1929 for the removal of the Social Democrats. The Army had become increasingly disillusioned with the way the parliamentary system operated. It had drawn the lesson from the First World War that modern war required the total mobilisation of the nation's resources. It was vital, therefore, for the Army to have political support not simply for rearmament but also to create a climate of public opinion favourable to national mobilisation. The Weimar political system, already associated in their eyes with defeat and revolution, had discredited itself above all because of its failure to provide such a climate. Democracy enabled the Left with its strong pacifist sentiments to exert too much influence.

The Army's political expert, General Kurt von Schleicher, found sympathy for its view within the entourage of Reich President von Hindenburg. The weakness of coalition governments had been producing growing disillusionment with the system for several years. For some time the President's State Secretary, Otto Meissner, had been contemplating schemes to reduce the influence of the legislature. Hindenburg needed little persuading of the need to seize the opportunity of the anticipated breakdown of the coalition to remove the Social Democrats and establish a strong government of the moderate Right, which would be able to remain largely independent of the Reichstag by using the emergency powers contained in Article 48 of the Constitution.

Schleicher's candidate for the Chancellorship was the leader of the parliamentary group of the Catholic Centre Party, Heinrich Brüning, who had a reputation as a financial expert. Brüning's background as a volunteer machine-gun officer in the war had given him a great respect for the Army and he regarded Hindenburg, the old war hero, with considerable awe. He too was disillusioned with the operation of the parliamentary system and believed in strengthening the executive at the expense of the legislature, ideally culminating in a restoration of the monarchy. Initially he hoped to achieve this by a Right/Centre coalition with a majority in the Reichstag, excluding the Social Democrats from influence. The key, however, lay with the German Nationalists, split into those who supported Hugenberg in his intransigent opposition to the Republic and a more moderate rebel group. Brüning hoped to strengthen the moderates, thereby acquiring a majority. If he did not succeed, he could always use the emergency powers in paragraph 2 of Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution to issue legislation by Presidential decree:

§2. If a Land fails to fulfil the responsibilities assigned to it under the Constitution or the Reich Laws, the Reich President can take the measures necessary to restore law and order with the help of the armed forces.

In the event of a serious disturbance of or threat to law and order, the Reich President can take the measures necessary to restore law and order, intervening if necessary with armed force. For this purpose he may provisionally abrogate either partially or completely the basic rights contained in Articles 114, 115, 117, 118, 123, 124, and 153.

§3. The Reich President is obliged to inform the Reichstag immediately of all measures taken under paragraphs 1 or 2 of this Article. The measures are to be revoked on the request of the Reichstag.

In the event of an emergency a Land Government may provisionally implement the measures in paragraph 2 in its own area. The measures are to be revoked on the request of the Reich President or the Reichstag.

Further details will be defined by a Reich Law.

Since the law mentioned in paragraph 3 was never passed, interpretation of when a threat to law and order existed was left to the Reich President himself.

The new Government's policy for solving the economic crisis reflected the emphasis of traditional economic theory on the need to balance the budget, particularly after the experience of hyperinflation in 1923. It was, however, also determined by Brüning's desire to demonstrate to the Allies that even with the best will in the world Germany was incapable of coping with the burden of reparations. He hoped to secure the ending of reparations and thereby free Germany's hands to pursue a more aggressive
foreign policy both for its own sake and to take the wind out of the sails of the radical Right.

When, on 16 July 1930, part of the Government’s tough budget was rejected by the Reichstag, the Nationalists voting against, Brüning implemented it by Presidential decree. When the Reichstag responded by demanding its revocation, it was dissolved and elections fixed for 14 September. Brüning hoped for a reduction in the Socialist vote, since they would probably be blamed for the economic crisis which had occurred under an SPD Chancellor. He also hoped the German Nationalist Party rebels would be strengthened and it would then be possible to form a Right/Centre coalition with a majority in Parliament. This disastrous miscalculation had far-reaching consequences.

At the Reichstag election on 14 September 1930 the most striking result was the increase in votes for the Nazi Party from 810,000 to 6½ million. Some of the increase came from new voters who had not voted in the previous election because they were disaffected or too young to qualify. Much, however, came from those who had previously voted for the middle class Liberal and Conservative parties (People’s Party, Democrats, and Nationalists), who lost 67 seats between them. The Catholic parties (Centre and Bavarian People’s Party) increased their support slightly, while the Social Democrats lost support mainly to the Communists who gained 23 seats. But there could be no doubt about the main significance of the result—the Nazi Party with 107 seats had become the second largest party in the Reichstag. The breakthrough for which the Party had been working for so long had at last been achieved.

(ii) Propaganda 1930–1932

An important factor in the Nazis’ electoral success between 1930–33 was the Party’s propaganda. Although there was not always a direct correlation between the areas of Nazis success and those of maximum propaganda activity, and although the propaganda effect was often indirect—for example through the recruitment of opinion leaders—rather than direct, there can be no doubt that the Party’s propaganda made a major contribution to its success.

By 1930 Nazi propaganda was controlled by a special propaganda department represented at all levels of the Party. At the top was the Reich propaganda department headed by Goebbels after 27 April 1930. Each Gau or Party regional headquarters had its propaganda department with its own chief and, below that, each branch had an official in charge of propaganda. Although this propaganda department was subject to the overall authority of the political leadership at the various levels, it also had its own separate chain of command. Directives from the Reich propaganda department to the propaganda departments of the Gaue were relayed to the propaganda officials in the local branches in their region. Reports of propaganda activity, information on political opponents, and suggestions were passed up the chain in the reverse direction. The Reich propaganda headquarters exercised a tight control over all aspects of propaganda, particularly at election times.

As the following memorandum of the Prussian Ministry of the Interior of May 1930 indicates, Nazi propaganda was already geared to a high pitch of efficiency and the campaign had merely to be intensified for the September Reichstag election among a population now acutely anxious about their economic situation and disillusioned with the failure of their professional and political representatives. The rest of the parties, on the other hand, were obliged to turn from their legislative activities and face a hostile electorate which had little sympathy for their political manoeuvrings.
surrounding district. National Socialist theatre groups travelling from place to place serve the same purpose.

On 10 September 1930 the Party issued the following manifesto:

49

The victory of the national socialist movement will mean the overcoming of the old class and caste spirit. It will allow a nation once more to rise up out of status mania and class madness.

It will train this nation to have an iron determination.

It will overcome democracy and reassert the authority of personality.

It will restore justice to the German people through the brutal assertion of the principle that one has no right to hang the little ones so long as the biggest criminals go unpunished and untouched.

The other parties may have come to terms with the thievery of the inflation, may recognize the fraudulent revolution. National socialism will bring the thieves and traitors to justice. National socialism fights for the German worker by getting him out of the hands of his swindlers and destroying the protectors of international bank and stock exchange capital.

With its victory the national socialist movement will purge the German administration of the parasites who, though with no right to belong and without qualifications, have got in simply on the basis of their party card and are a burden on the nation. Anyone who talks of new taxes should first free the administration of the revolutionary parasites who have stream in during the past twelve years. One protects the honest civil servant only by opening the way for his efficiency and honest labour and by removing the parliamentary profiteers from the civil service.

With its victory the national socialist movement will also seek to guarantee the economic protection of German people. As long as stock exchanges and department stores are inadequately taxed any further tax increases on the little man are a crime.

With its victory the national socialist movement will protect the peasant through the ruthless education of our people to consume our own products.

Our upper ten thousand will have to learn to eat black bread too, otherwise our rye will rot and wheat will have to be imported.

We will emphasise our national honour and national pride by avoiding all that is foreign as far as possible and giving preference to the results of our own hard work.

We will ensure that the reform of our attitude to defence and a change in our foreign policy will be at the top of the list of reforms.

After its victory the national socialist movement will no longer continue the policy of continually currying France's favours. Every hand which is offered to us in Europe which is in a similar plight and shares our way of thinking will be thankfully grasped.

We want to ensure that in future the importance of our nation once again corresponds to its natural worth rather than the pathetic representation of the past fifteen years.

THE EMERGENCE OF NAZISM AS A MASS MOVEMENT 1928–1933

The national socialist movement is not fighting a campaign on a short term basis. The path on which it has embarked may be a long one but victory will lie at the end...

During the following three years, the party propaganda machine became increasingly sophisticated. The most modern techniques were used: highly coordinated press campaigns, whirlwind campaigns by air, film shows and so on. During election campaigns, a stream of directives specified precise details of what themes were to be emphasised and slogans to be used at different stages. Furthermore, a selection of standard leaflets and posters were produced which the Gau were expected to order. The use of important speakers was centrally controlled and they were deployed where headquarters felt they would be most effective. The high degree of efficiency and attention to detail characteristic of the Nazi propaganda machine during these years is shown in the following excerpts from Reich Propaganda Department directives for the Presidential elections of March–April 1932 signed by Goebbels:

50

(a) Reich Propaganda Department to all Gaue and all Gaul Propaganda Departments.

...A striking slogan:

Those who want everything to stay as it is vote for Hindenburg. Those who want everything changed vote for Hitler.

(b) Reich Propaganda Department to all Gaue and all Gaul Propaganda Departments.

...Hitler Poster. The Hitler poster depicts a fascinating Hitler head on a completely black background. Subtitle: white on black—'Hitler'. In accordance with the Führer's wish this poster is to be put up only during the final days (of the campaign).

Since experience shows that during the final days there is a variety of coloured posters, this poster with its completely black background will contrast with all the others and will produce a tremendous effect on the masses...

(c) Reich Propaganda Department

Instructions for the National Socialist Press for the election of the Reich President

1. From Easter Tuesday 29 March until Sunday 10 April inclusive, all National Socialist papers, both daily and weekly, must appear in an enlarged edition with a tripled circulation. Two-thirds of this tripled circulation must be made available, without charge, to the Gaul leadership responsible for its area of distribution for propaganda purposes...

2. From Easter Tuesday 29 March until Sunday 3 April inclusive, a special topic must be dealt with every day on the first page of all our papers in a big spread.

Tuesday 29 March: Hitler as a man. Wednesday 30 March: Hitler as a fighter
(gigantic achievements through his willpower, etc.). Friday 1 April: Hitler as a statesman—plenty of photos.

3. On Sunday 3 April, at noon (end of an Easter truce), the great propaganda journey of the Führer through Germany will start, through which about a million people are to be reached directly through our Führer's speeches. The press organisation is planned so that four press centres will be set up in Germany, which in turn will pass on immediately any telephone calls to the other papers of their area, whose names have been given them.

The Party surpassed itself in the stage-management of mass rallies, particularly when Hitler himself was speaking. In the following account written at the time Frau Luise Solmitz, a Hamburg school teacher married to a former army officer, gives her impression of such a meeting in 1932:

...The April sun shone hot like in summer and turned everything into a picture of gay expectation. There was immaculate order and discipline, although the police left the whole square to the stewards and stood on the sidelines. Nobody spoke of 'Hitler', always just 'the Führer', 'the Führer says', 'the Führer wants', and what he said and wanted seemed right and good. The hours passed, the sun shone, expectations rose. In the background, at the edge of the track there were columns of carriers like ammunition carriers. What they carried were crates of beer, aeroplanes above us. Testing of the loudspeakers, buzzing of the cine-cameras. It was nearly 3 p.m. 'The Führer is coming!' A ripple went through the crowds. Around the speaker's platform one could see hands raised in the Hitler salute. A speaker opened the meeting, abused the 'system', nobody listened to him. A second speaker welcomed Hitler and made way for the man who had drawn 120,000 people of all classes and ages. There stood Hitler in a simple black coat and looked over the crowd, waiting—a forest of swastika pennants swished up, the jubilation of this moment was given vent in a roaring salute. Main theme: Out of parties shall grow a nation, the German nation. He censured the 'system' ('I want to know what there is left to be ruined in this state!'). 'On the way here Socialists confronted me with a poster, "Turn back, Adolf Hitler". Thirteen years ago I was a simple unknown soldier, I went my way. I never turned back. Nor shall I turn back now.' Otherwise he made no personal attacks, nor any promises, vague or definite. His voice was hoarse after all his speaking during the previous days. When the speech was over, there was roaring enthusiasm and applause. Hitler saluted, gave his thanks, the Horst Wessel song sounded out across the course. Hitler was helped into his coat. Then he went—How many look up to him with touching faith! as their helper, their saviour, their deliverer from unbearable distress—to him who rescues the Prussian prince, the scholar, the clergyman, the farmer, the worker, the unemployed, who rescues them from the parties back into the nation.

Although he spared no effort in his personal campaigning, particularly at the time of the Presidential elections in 1932, the main burden of propaganda lay on the Gau and local Party organisations. Their energy and resourcefulness kept the Party firmly in the public eye. Numerous speakers from all classes, graded according to ability were deployed at local, regional or national level. Beside expenses they were paid a graded fee for their pains, and, since many were unemployed, they had an incentive to speak as often as possible.

An indication of the care devoted to local propaganda is provided by the instructions for the organisation of rural propaganda contained in the July 1931 issue of Wille und Weg, the monthly magazine of the Reich Propaganda Department:

The first meeting in a village must be prepared in such a way that it is well attended. A prerequisite is that the speaker should be fairly well informed about specifically rural questions. Then, it is most advisable to go to a neighbouring village some time after, but to advertise the meeting in the first village as well, then many people will certainly come over for it. After this, one holds a big German Evening in a central hall for a number of villages with the cooperation of the SA and the SA band.

The German Evening, provided it is skilfully and generously geared to producing a big public impact, has the primary task of making the audience enthusiastic for our cause; secondly, it is intended to raise the money necessary for the further build-up of propaganda. The preparation of the village meetings is best carried out in the following way: most effectively through written personal invitations to every farmer or inhabitant; in the bigger villages through a circular carried from farm to farm by Party comrades. For the meeting itself the question of finance has to be considered. Our movement is so poor that every penny counts. Collections must therefore be held during all discussion evenings and also in the big mass meetings if permitted by the police, either in the interval or at the end, even when an entrance fee has been taken at the beginning of the meeting. In this way, especially when plates and not caps are used, surprising amounts can sometimes be got out of a meeting.

One key to the Nazis' success in acquiring mass support was awareness of the extent to which German society had disintegrated into its sectional components, a process accelerated by postwar economic crises of inflation and then depression. By developing separate departments to organise the various economic interests and social groups, they successfully combined the pose of effectively representing individual interests and of a party of integration creating a unified national community of which they claimed the Party was already a microcosm. Thus, there were Party organisations for, among others, doctors, lawyers, teachers, war-disabled and war-pensioners, and civil servants. Perhaps the most successful were the
Agrarian Office and the Mittelstand Office (for artisans and retail traders), later known as the Combat League of Middle Class Tradespeople. Networks of specialists, often leading farmers or leading representatives of particular trades canvassed their colleagues and through the very fact of their own support for the movement provided invaluable propaganda.

The Mittelstand Office emphasised the Nazis' determination to preserve small businesses in face of the competition from the large department stores which had become intense during the depression. They were particularly astute at exploiting local issues:

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_Draft pamphlet [undated: c. April 1932]_

Attention! Gravediggers at work!
Middle-class citizens! Retailers! Craftsmen! Tradesmen!
A new blow aimed at your ruin is being prepared and carried out in Hanover!
The present system enables the gigantic concern

WOOLWORTH (America)
supported by finance capital, to build a new vampire business in the centre of the city in the Georgstrasse to expose you to complete ruin. This is the wish and aim of the black-red system as expressed in the following remarks of Marxist leaders.
The Marxist Engels declared in May 1890: 'If capital destroys the small artisans and retailers it does a good thing...'.

That is the black-red system of today!
Put an end to this system and its abettors! Defend yourself, middle-class citizen!
Join the mighty organisation that alone is in a position to conquer your arch-enemies. Fight with us in the Section for Craftsmen and Retail Traders within the great freedom movement of Adolf Hitler!

Put an end to the system!
Mittelstand, vote for List 8!

These departments also encouraged the infiltration of the main professional organisations and purged their leadership by pressure from below. The agrarian office very successfully took over the main professional organisation of agriculture, the Landbund. An example of the tactics used is provided by the Party's take-over of the North-West German Artisans' Association in 1932:

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_Urgent circular to the District Leaders and District Representatives of the Mittelstand Office in Gau Hanover-South-Brunswick_

The Gauleiter
Hanover, 11 January 1932
CONFIDENTIAL!
A discussion between the Gauleiter and the executive committee of the North-West German Artisans' Association resulted in a decision to arrange the entry of NSDAP members into the executive committee and Association leadership. Since the general meeting of the representatives of the Association is to be held in three weeks' time, the following must be clarified immediately:
1. The political attitude and personal qualities of the chairman and secretary of your particular district Artisans' Association.
2. Which Party members, or, if there aren't any available, which artisans of the National Socialist persuasion are eligible for membership of the executive committee and Association leadership.
3. Which members of the NSDAP are organised in the North-West German Artisans' Association and therefore what influence can be thrown into the scales. The situation requires an immediate meeting of the district leaders and district experts with the Gau leadership on 14 January 1932 in Hanover.

Three weeks later Gauleiter Rust reported to Party headquarters in Munich that his attempt to penetrate the Artisans' Association from below had succeeded and that its leaders would be replaced by National Socialists or Nazi sympathisers:

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_Gau Hanover-South-Brunswick_ 1 February 1932

The Gauleiter

Dear Herr Wagener,

I take note with interest of your acceptance of the invitation to Brunswick. I hope to be able to introduce to you a mainly National Socialist executive committee of the North-West German Artisans' Association. For about ten weeks we have had a major fight to win control of the Association. On 8 and 9 February an extraordinary meeting of delegates will take place in Hanover at which I have demanded the removal of the present president, Freidel of the Business Party, his replacement by a president who, though not a member of the NSDAP, is working completely along our lines, and two vice-presidential posts for members of the NSDAP. Meetings of

---

20 Black for the Catholic Centre Party and red for the Social Democrats, who together formed the coalition government in the state of Prussia.

20 Otto Wagener was head of the NSDAP's Economics Section in the Nazi Reich Headquarters.
The penetration and politicising of economic associations by the Nazi Party was a most effective way of winning new supporters and helped prepare the way for the 'coordination' of these groups after the Nazi takeover of power in Germany.

The Nazi appeal to youth proved particularly strong. Its dynamic and colourful style of politics, its proclaimed aim of breaking down class barriers, its leader-follower relationship, and its remarkably young membership and leadership offered young people the type of commitment in politics which they were seeking and which the other parties' traditional parliamentary methods did not offer. Only the Communists offered anything similar and they, because of their class commitment, remained largely confined to the working class, particularly the young unemployed. Young people, particularly from the middle class, saw the Nazi movement both as a means to destroy the hidebound conventions and social and occupational barriers associated with the older generation and as a national crusade to restore Germany to greatness. The basically emotional appeal to this group is shown by the following report from 1931 on the problems of containing the growth of Nazism in the Protestant youth movement:

56

The cause which at the moment is most closely associated with the name of National Socialism and with which, at a moderate estimate, certainly 70 per cent of our young people, often lacking knowledge of the facts, are in ardent sympathy, must be regarded, as far as our ranks are concerned, more as an ethical than a political matter. Our young people show little political interest. Fifth-formers are not really much concerned with the study of Hitler's thoughts; it is simply something irrational, something infectious that makes the blood pulse through one's veins and conveys an impression that something great is under way, the roaring of a stream which one does not wish to escape: 'If you can't feel it you will never grasp it....'

To exploit this appeal to youth the Nazis developed the Hitler Youth movement for those under 18, a pupils league for boys in grammar schools, and a students' league. The activities of these organisations increasingly politised schools and universities. In the state of Oldenburg, for example, there were complaints that the children of Republicans were being harassed by the fellow pupils:

57

To the Oldenburg Ministry for Churches and Schools:

21 November 1930

The Committee of the Oldenburg branch of the Reichsbanner Black-Red-Gold submits the following matter to the State Ministry with a request for a prompt comment:

Leaflets have recently been distributed in the playgrounds of the schools of the city of Oldenburg and its vicinity, inviting people to join a National Socialist Pupils' Association. We enclose one of these leaflets.

A number of pupils have already followed the appeal to join this pupils' association. These consider themselves pledged, in the spirit of the leaflet, to bully those who disagree with them. In the playground these pupils join together and sing National Socialist combat songs. Children of Republicans are called names, their satchels are smeared with swastikas, and they are given leaflets with swastikas or 'Heil Hitler' or 'Germany awake' written on them. In the school in Metjendorf the son of a Republican was beaten up during the break by members of the pupils' association so badly that he had to stay at home for over a week. Grown-ups who are known to be members of a Republican party are called names by the pupils when they pass by the school. In one case this even happened out of the window of a classroom.

Since the children of Republicans are unfortunately in a minority in secondary schools they cannot defend themselves against these combined attacks. With an effort they preserve their self-control, but as soon as the child gets home, this too collapses. He then seeks refuge in tears and complaints. The parents find that lessons following breaks in which their child has been molested by his classmates are useless because he is too preoccupied with the events of the break. Sometimes teachers, not knowing the reason for the child's inattention, punish him as well. The same state of mind influences his homework, which therefore cannot be of a standard which a child in a good, cheerful mood would normally achieve. Again this has its effects at school.

It might be answered that parents and children have the right to make a complaint. This is true and yet at the same time not true. It must unfortunately be said that apart from a group of teachers who would treat such a complaint objectively, there are a number from whom this cannot be counted on and to whom one does not turn because they too are National Socialists or are active in other right-wing associations. The relationship of trust necessary between teachers and parents and their children has completely gone.

Since we have heard that some headmasters have already declared that they are

21 The Reichsbanner Black-Red-Gold was a pro-Republican paramilitary organisation set up in 1924 by Social Democrats and Democrats to defend the Republic against the right-wing paramilitary organisations.
not in a position to deal with these incidents as required, since they have still received no instructions from the Ministry, we request that such instructions should be issued as soon as possible. We can presumably be sure that the State Ministry will adopt an attitude which does justice to all concerned and will decree that pupils' associations of political organisations are forbidden.

Yours faithfully,
The Committee of the Oldenburg Branch of the Reichsbanner Black-Red-Gold.

Although the Nazis concentrated much of their propaganda on specific groups, one of their main themes was a general appeal to nationalism and a claim that they, alone of all the parties, had succeeded in bridging the barriers between class and occupation. An example of such propaganda was the way they used the Kaiser's fourth son, Prince August-Wilhelm of Hohenzollern, as a speaker. He was always paired with an 'ordinary citizen', usually a farmer or a worker. At a meeting in Oettingen in central Bavaria in June 1931 such a meeting drew a crowd of between 900 and 1000 people, according to the police report:

The speakers were:
Prinz August-Wilhelm of Prussia
Farmer Stegmann from Schillingsfürst
Julius Streicher—NSDAP Gauleiter of Franconia

The speech of Prince August-Wilhelm, which was kept short and matter-of-fact, was followed by the national anthem which was sung standing up in the hall, whereas the Streicher speech had been followed by the Hitler song. The meeting did not have the character of a political but rather of a patriotic meeting or rally. The audience had arrived in large numbers from far and wide on motor cycles and by car.

The effect of such propaganda is clear from an entry in the diary of the upper middle class Hamburg lady already referred to:

...I myself also know that not only the desperate but also those who purposely contract debts in our neighbourhood are enthusiastic Hitler people—as are all those who hope for something from a swing to the Left or the Right or anywhere.
and in industrial areas generally, particularly in predominantly Catholic ones (e.g. Düsseldorf East and West). In the cities it tended to draw most support from upper middle class districts. It was also weakest in overwhelmingly Catholic rural areas (e.g. Koblenz-Trier). The religious factor is most evident in Bavaria, where the north (Franconia) contained many Protestants who tended to vote Nazi, while in the overwhelmingly Catholic south (Upper and Lower Bavaria) the Nazi vote was among the lowest in Germany, although the Party had originated and was still based there.

Exceptions to this general pattern were the high Nazi vote in much of Silesia (Liegnitz and Breslau), a predominantly Catholic area with industry, and in the Palatinate, mainly Catholic and rural. The border issue may have played a part here. Silesia had been hotly contested with Poland and, after a plebiscite ordered under the Versailles treaty, much of Upper Silesia was awarded to Poland. The Nazis probably benefited from the intense nationalism generated by this conflict. In the Palatinate, France's attempt to establish a separatist regime in the early 1920s had also generated nationalist feelings which may help to account for the vote. In mixed Protestant and Catholic areas such as Franconia Nazism tended to unify the Protestants, long resentful of the dominance of the Catholic Centre/Bavarian People's Party but whose vote, split among several parties, had been less able to influence events.

Electoral Map for 31 July 1932
### Table: Age of Nazi Party membership as of 1 January 1935, divided according to date of joining

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of birth</th>
<th>Before 14 ix. 30</th>
<th>From 14 ix. 30 to 30 i. 33</th>
<th>After 30 i. 33</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893–1884</td>
<td>24,546</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>12,546</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>49,979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883–1874</td>
<td>12,546</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>31,424</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>41,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873 and 1861</td>
<td>5,467</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>24,751</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>30,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42,561</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>68,711</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>121,235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In the percentage columns, the upper of the two figures shows the percentage of Party membership on 1 January 1935; the lower figure shows the percentage of Party membership within the period of time covered by each pair of vertical columns.
### Party members as of 1 January 1935, divided according to jobs and date of membership

#### Date of Party membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job</th>
<th>Before seizure of power</th>
<th>After seizure of power</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Society June 1933</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before 14 ix.30</td>
<td>From 14 ix.30 until 30.1.33</td>
<td>Up to 30.1.33</td>
<td>After 30.1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Persons in employment</td>
<td>121,151</td>
<td>5.1 669,678</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>796,329</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>95.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Workers</td>
<td>33,944</td>
<td>4.5 233,479</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>267,423</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>29.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 White-collar employees</td>
<td>31,067</td>
<td>6.4 147,855</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>178,922</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>18.6</td>
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<td>3 Self-employed</td>
<td>24,563</td>
<td>5.2 124,579</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>149,142</td>
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<td></td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>19.8</td>
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<td>Artisans</td>
<td>11,059</td>
<td>5.3 55,814</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>66,873</td>
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<td>8.5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
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<td>Tradesmen</td>
<td>9,918</td>
<td>5.3 48,920</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>58,838</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>7.8</td>
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<td>Professions</td>
<td>3,586</td>
<td>4.5 19,845</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>23,431</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Civil servants</td>
<td>10,015</td>
<td>3.3 46,967</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>56,982</td>
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<td>7.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>15.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil servants</td>
<td>7,992</td>
<td>3.6 36,088</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>44,080</td>
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<td>6.2</td>
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<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2,023</td>
<td>2.4 10,879</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>12,902</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
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<td>5 Peasants</td>
<td>17,181</td>
<td>6.7 89,800</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>106,981</td>
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<td>13.2</td>
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<td>9.0</td>
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<td>6 Others</td>
<td>4,381</td>
<td>5.5 26,998</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>31,379</td>
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<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<td>II Persons not in employment</td>
<td>2,453</td>
<td>6.5 11,664</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>14,137</td>
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<td>7 Pensioners</td>
<td>1.9</td>
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<td>1.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>III Family dependents without a full-time job</td>
<td>5,959</td>
<td>6.1 38,084</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>44,043</td>
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<td>4.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Housewives</td>
<td>4,706</td>
<td>7.3 29,304</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>34,010</td>
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<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Students and school children</td>
<td>1,253</td>
<td>3.7 8,780</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>10,033</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>129,563</td>
<td>5.2 719,446</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>849,009</td>
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**Note:** In the percentage columns, the upper of the two figures shows the percentage of Party membership on 1 January 1935; the lower figure shows the percentage of Party membership within the period of time covered by each pair of vertical columns.