

Explain how Nazis increase their control over Germany from 1933 – 1939

The Nazis used many ways to consolidate power in Germany. The first of these was having the SS recruited into the Police in Prussia. Prussia made up 66% of Germany and Herman Goring was the Minister of the Interior as well as a leading Nazi. Having the SS in the Police made disrupting opposition easier and other parties were blocked from public view. Opposition were beat up and threatened.

The next way in which Hitler consolidated power was through the Reichstag Fire. On 27th February 1933 the Reichstag fire burned down. A communist, Van der Lubbe was found at the scene. Hitler and the Nazis took this chance to blame many other communists. This resulted in the arrest of many opposition communists and the loss of support in them.

The third way was the law- For the Protection of People and State. This was passed after the Reichstag fire and gave the Government power to suspend civil rights that had been promised in the Weimar Constitution. These included Freedom of Opinion, Assembly and Free Speech. This meant opposition and enemies could not gather to try and revolt or talk freely of Hitler and the Nazis.

The penultimate way in which Hitler consolidated power was through the Enabling Act. This let Hitler pass any law he wants. It was passed by the Reichstag however on the day the SA surrounded the building to stop opposition from voting. With this new law he made the Nazi party the only legal party and bans communism. This means he has undisputed power as there is no party or person to get in his way.

The final way in which Hitler consolidated power was via Co-Ordination. Hitler closed down all local parliaments and opens them with Nazi majorities meaning he again had total control. With this also came the sacking of Jews from jobs and replacement by Nazis.

In these five ways Hitler became all powerful and could have control over everyone with anyone stopping him. However, there were many other ways in which Hitler increased his control. The first was getting rid of Jews and other undesirables in the legal profession and civil service. These positions were filled by Nazis.

The next was that all Trade Unions were outlawed by Hitler and replaced by one Nazi union, the DAF. This meant all workers were under the control of the Nazis and has lost any representation. This new Union was very employer pro and would side with them instead of the employee.

In January 1934 the Law for the Reconstruction was introduced which meant all state parliaments were shut down except Prussia's which was still run by Herman Goring. With these parliaments shut down it meant all of Germany was now under direct control of Hitler.

Hitler also had to control his own party. Divisions were starting to show so from Ernst Rohm, Head of the SA. He wanted the SA to replace the Army. Hitler was under pressure from the Army and he knew they were the only force that could stop him from achieving total domination. Hitler needed the Army to carry out his plan. The Nazis turned against Rohm as he was getting too big for his boots and a Homosexual, which was inappropriate. Hitler instigated the Night of the Long Knives in which many undesirable Nazis, including Rohm were killed.

The next threat to Hitler was the President. On the day before the President's death Hitler passed a law to combine the roles of President and Chancellor into the Fuhrer. When the President dies Hitler claimed this powerful position. With this and for removing the SA threat, the Army now swore an oath of personal loyalty to the Fuhrer.

To gain the support from Workers, Hitler and the Nazis set-up the Beauty of Labour to improve working conditions e.g. Lighting. Wages were improved slightly and rents controlled by state. Along with this Strength Through Joy was set up to give Workers affordable holidays and a range of sporting events. There was also a savings scheme set up to own a car, Volkswagen. All of these impressed Workers and gained support for the Nazis.

Propaganda was also used to control people's ideas and influence them along with censorship. Propaganda posters, films and rallies were everywhere which placed the Nazi ideas in people's heads. Propaganda was used to spread a good image of Hitler and gain the support of the people. Censorship was also used to control what people were allowed to see and think. Radio, Newspapers and the Arts were all censored. Anything that shows the Nazis in a bad light or enemies as good were destroyed. Many books were burned as part of this and Radio and Newspapers bought by the Nazis. Introducing censorship meant people would not think about betraying Nazis or have ideas that they were terrible.

All of this meant the Nazis and Hitler gained total control of Germany.