

Session 7: The Nazification of Germany (1933-1938)

Morris Wortman, M. D.



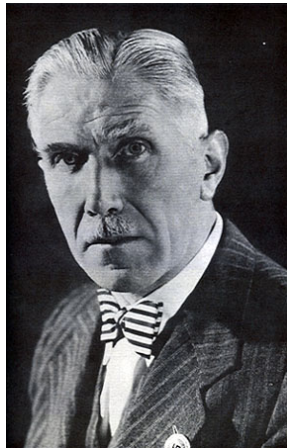
Paul von Hindenburg
Weimar President 1925-1934



Gen. Kurt von Schleicher
Author of "25/48/53"



Dr. Heinrich Brüning
Chancellor 1930-1932



Franz von Papen
Chancellor June 1st -November 17th 1932
Vice-Chancellor January 30, 1933



Adolph Hitler
Chancellor—January 30, 1933
Presidency and Chancellery merge
August 19, 1934--*Gleichschaltung*:

Paul von Hindenburg

Paul von Hindenburg, a decorated soldier in the Seven Weeks War against Austria and the Franco-Prussian War (1866), retired from active military service as head of the Fourth Army Corp in 1911. He was recalled to military service to lead the Eighth Army in Prussia. By mid-September 1914 he had achieved national fame by defeating the Russian Army at Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes. Following that he was given sole command of the Eastern Front.

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Hindenburg played an important role in the Treaty of Brest-Litvosk with Russia. After the war Hindenburg used his influence to persuade Kaiser Wilhelm to abdicate and go to Holland while he remained in control of the German army until 1919 when he, once again, retired.

In 1925, Hindenburg, now 78, was persuaded to run for president following President Ebert's death. He won the 1925 election and was re-elected in 1932. He played the role of the republican equivalent of a constitutional monarch and was referred to as the *Ersatzkaiser* (substitute Emperor). He made no effort to restore the monarchy and was faithful to the Weimar constitution. Privately, the 78 year old Hindenburg would have preferred retirement but felt a responsibility to the Weimar. At a time of nationwide financial woes Hindenburg had little understanding of economics but surrounded himself by advisors—who were, contemptuous of the Weimar constitution. These advisors included his son, Oskar, Otto Meißner, General Wilhelm Groener, and General Kurt von Schleicher—a group known as the *Kamarilla*.

General von Schleicher came up with the notion of a “*Presidential government*” called the “25/48/53” formula. This “loop hole” in the Weimar's democratically elected system made the chancellor responsible to the head of state—the president—rather than the legislative body (the Reichstag). The 25/48/53 formula referred to the 3 articles of the constitution that gave the president almost unchecked power.

- Article 25 allowed the President to dissolve the Reichstag.
- Article 48 allowed the President to sign into law emergency bills without the consent of the Reichstag. However, the Reichstag could cancel any law passed by Article 48 by a simple majority within sixty days of its passage.
- Article 53 allowed the President to appoint the Chancellor.

Schleicher wanted to have Hindenburg appoint a man who would rule under Article 48 -- and who would be chosen by Schleicher. If the Reichstag threatened to annul any laws Hindenburg could then dissolve the government under Article 25. Though unenthusiastic, Hindenburg was pressured to go along with his Schleicher's wishes—which also reflected those of his son, Oskar.

After some failed starts Heinrich Brüning, the parliamentary leader of the Catholic Center Party (*Zentrum*), was named Chancellor by Hindenburg on **May 30, 1930**. Brüning governed largely using Article 48 in signing emergency economic measures which caused Hindenburg to become increasingly annoyed—largely because Hindenburg did not understand Brüning's economic policies. In order to address the onset of the Great Depression Brüning's policies including raising taxes and cutting spending. The only area of increased government spending was reserved for Germany's military and for subsidies for her Eastern Aid program.

In the **March 13, 1932** election Hindenburg was the frontrunner but failed to gain a majority thus forcing a runoff election the following month—Hindenburg defeating Hitler for the Presidency on **April 10, 1932**.

In **May 1932** Schleicher had Hindenburg dismiss Groener as Defense Minister in a way meant to humiliate both Groener and Brüning. On **May 30, 1932** Brüning resigned as Chancellor and was replaced with Schleicher's designee—Franz von Papen. Unfortunately von Papen's government—“The Government of Barons” wished to destroy German's democracy by supplanting it with another form of a “presidential government” governing primarily under Article 48.

Hindenburg dissolved the Reichstag, in accordance with a “gentleman's agreement”, and set new elections for **July 31, 1932**. Papen had miscalculated believing that the Nazis would support him. But with a solid plurality of seats in the Reichstag—*the Nazis had achieved 37.3% of the popular vote and garnering 230 of the Reichstag's 608 seats*—there was widespread belief that

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Hitler would be appointed Chancellor. Instead, Papen asked Hitler to become his Vice-Chancellor on August 13, 1932 knowing that he needed to form a stable government and that it was not possible without Nazi support. Hitler, now the leader of Germany's strongest party, refused. Hindenburg, in turn, refused to appoint the "Bohemian lance corporal" to the position of Chancellor. This stalemate would force a no-confidence vote, the Papen government along with the new Reichstag was dissolved and new elections were set for **November 6, 1932**.

Although the Nazis lost 34 seats, they still remained the largest part in the Reichstag. On **December 3, 1932** General von Schleicher was appointed chancellor of Germany. It soon became apparent that von Schleicher was incapable of establishing a coalition government and Hindenburg was forced to dismiss him on **January 28, 1933** leaving the president with few choices but to use his constitutional authority—under Article 53—to appoint Hitler as Chancellor on **January 30, 1933**. The Nazis refer to this as ***Machtergreifung*** ("Seizure of Power"). The hope was that Hitler could restore social order and yet be controlled. The plan was an utter failure. Six months later democracy had died in Germany and the Nazis were the only legal party in Germany.

By the end of 1933 fifty concentration camps—including Dachau—were opened throughout Germany to house political opponents of the Reich. By **July 1933** more than 25,000 Socialists, Communists and Jews had been sent to concentration camps or prisons.

The Jewish population of Germany at the time was 565,000—less than 1%. Nazi ideology, however, required the elimination of Jews from German life.



On the night of January 30, 1933, the Nazis organized a massive torchlight parade in Berlin to celebrate the appointment of Hitler as Chancellor of Germany. Above -- Adolf Hitler and Hermann Göring greet the participants in the parade as they pass beneath the window of Hitler's new office. Courtesy USHMM



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1933

January 30, 1933—*Machtergreifung (Seizure of Power)*: Hitler is appointed Chancellor, even though his National Socialists have never captured more than 37 percent of the national vote. Von Papen is appointed Vice-Chancellor in what is called a 'Government of National Concentration.' SA Brownshirts celebrate Hitler's accession to power with a torchlight parade through Berlin while SA throughout Germany take to the streets in force to violently clash with Communists and other opponents. Hitler's takes the oath of office: *"I will employ my strength for the welfare of the German people, protect the Constitution and laws of the German people, conscientiously discharge the duties imposed on me, and conduct my affairs of office impartially and with justice to everyone."*

February 1, 1933--Hitler obtains a decree from Hindenburg ordering dissolution of the Reichstag. New elections are called for March 5, 1933.

February 4, 1933--Hitler announces a new rule 'for the protection of the German people' which allows the Nazis to forbid meetings of other political groups. He authorizes the Government to ban newspapers and rallies on the pretext that they are distributing false news to harm the State or defame the authorities and civil service.

February 17, 1933--Göring issues a decree authorizing the Prussian police to fire on demonstrations at will.

February 22, 1933--Göring convinces the Prussian government to decree the gradual abolition of the interdenominational schools and reintroduce religious instruction in the vocational schools 'for political reasons.'

February 27, 1933—The German *Reichstag* building is set ablaze. The Nazi blame the fire on the communists.

February 28, 1933—Hindenburg signs the 'Decree for the Protection of the People and the State,' which has been quickly drafted by Hitler and his aides. This emergency decree suspends the civil liberties granted under the Weimar Constitution allowing the Nazis to put their political opponents in prison and establish concentration camps. Hermann Göring orders the arrest of 4,000 Communist functionaries. An excerpt from the Decree:

"Restrictions on personal liberty, on the right of free expression of opinion, including freedom of the press; on the rights of assembly and association; and violations of the privacy of postal, telegraphic and telephonic communications; and warrants for house searches, orders for confiscations as well as restrictions on property, are also permissible beyond the legal limits otherwise prescribed."

March 5, 1933--The last multiparty general election for the Reichstag draws 88.8% of eligible voters to the polls. The Combat Front coalition formed by the NSDAP and Alfred Hugenberg's *Deutschnationale Volkspartei* or DNVP (national-conservative party in Germany) wins a 51.9% majority but falls short of the 2/3rds majority needed to amend the constitution.

March 7, 1933-- Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss assumes dictatorial powers.

March 8, 1933--Dollfuss suspends freedom of the press in Austria.

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March 9-10, 1933—Riots begin against German Jews perpetrated by the *Sturmabteilung* (SA or Storm Troopers).

March 21, 1933--Potsdam Day: From the tomb of Frederick the Great at Potsdam, Hitler carefully stages a ceremonial opening of the first Reichstag of the Third Reich. Hitler and Goebbels intentionally fail to attend special Catholic services because Catholic bishops in a number of recent declarations had called Hitler and members of the NSDAP renegades of the Church, who should not be admitted to the sacraments.

March 22, 1933—Dachau, the first German concentration camp is established in south Germany.

March 23, 1933—*Ermächtigungsgesetz* (Enabling Act) passed by the Reichstag, gives Hitler's government dictatorial powers.

By **April 1, 1933** the Nazis attempt a boycott of Jewish businesses. Nazi Storm Troopers and SS posted signs that advised "Don't Buy from Jews." The word *Jude* (Jew) along with the Star of David was painted across thousands of doors and windows throughout Germany.



Though the boycott was largely unsuccessful Hitler soon decided that other measures could be used to isolate and deprive the country's Jewish population. Between 1933 and 1939 hundreds of anti-Jewish measures would be passed that would define, segregate and impoverish the Jews of the Third Reich.

April 7, 1933—The Law for Restoration of the Professional Civil Service. The law was intent at reshaping the entire government bureaucracy in order to ensure the loyalty of more than 2 million state and municipal employees to the Nazi regime. Paragraph 3 became known as the Aryan paragraph. "*1. Civil servants not of Aryan origin are to retire.*"

Although Hitler was far from defining who was and was not a Jew, the April 7th law was supplemented by an April 11th decree that defined "non-Aryan" as "anyone descended from non-Aryan, particularly Jewish, parents or grandparents. It suffices if one parent or grandparent is non-Aryan."

Jewish lawyers were excluded from the national association of lawyers and listed, not in the annual directory, but in a separate guide.

April 8, 1933—All Jewish teaching assistants at universities in the state of Baden were to be expelled in April 8, 1933:.

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Vice-Chancellor von Papen secretly meets Monsignor Kaas in Munich. Together they travel on to Rome. Papen offers a treaty—the *Reichskonkordat*—to the Vatican defining the German state's relationship with the Roman Catholic Church.

April 19, 1933—Jews were not permitted to speak *Yiddish* in the cattle markets at Baden.

April 22, 1933—Jewish doctors were barred from clinics and hospitals run by the national health insurance organization. At the time the law was enacted 11% of Germany's physicians were Jewish.

April 25, 1933—Law for Preventing Overcrowding in German Schools of Higher Education takes effect restricting Jewish enrollment in public schools.

April 26, 1933—Hermann Göring establishes the Gestapo—secret State Police.

April 26, 1933—Hitler meets with Bishop Wilhelm Berning and Monsignor Steinmann, prelates of the Roman Catholic Church in Germany. Hitler reminds the prelates that he is only doing to Jews what the Catholic Church has done for the past 1600 years and that he is “doing Christianity a great favor.”

April 27, 1933—Germany prohibits the practice of ritual Jewish slaughter of animals.

May 10, 1933—Books of “un-German spirit” are burned throughout Germany—20,000 volumes are destroyed in Berlin alone. In Berlin, a huge bonfire was lit in front of the Kroll Opera House. The books of Karl Marx, Ferdinand Lassalle, Sigmund Freud, Maximilian Harden and Kurt Tuscholsky were hurled into the flames.



Burning of books in Berlin May 10, 1933. Courtesy of USHMM

May 13, 1933—It was forbidden to change Jewish names to non-Jewish ones.

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“Where they burn books, so too will they in the end burn human beings”

“Dort, wo man Bücher verbrennt, verbrennt man auch am Ende Menschen”

Heinrich Heine in his 1821 play, *Almansor*—referring to the burning of the Qur’an during the Spanish Inquisition

June 23, 1933—The *Akademie für Deutsches Recht* (Academy for German Law) is established to rewrite the entirety of German law to NSDAP specifications.

July 1, 1933—German government states that “Reich Chancellor Hitler still belongs to the Catholic Church and has no intention of leaving it.”

July 2, 1933—Despite the news of continuing arrests of priests in Germany, final agreement on the concordat is reached. Papen reports that Pius XI “had insisted on the conclusion of the Concordat because he wanted to come to an agreement with Italy and Germany as the countries which, in his opinion, represented the nucleus of the Christian world.”

July 14, 1933—Hitler’s Cabinet approves the Concordat with the Vatican. Hitler stresses the significance of the Concordat, especially ‘in the urgent fight against the international Jews.’ The Nazi Party is made the only legal political party of Germany. Eastern European Jews living in Germany are stripped of their German citizenship.

Germany also enacts the Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Diseases. This law will not be announced until July 25, to avoid jeopardizing the signing of the Concordat. The law provides for sterilization of “unfit” parents and potential parents, as well as “euthanasia” of the “defective” and of “useless eaters.” Among the hereditary disease that triggered this law were feeble-mindedness, schizophrenia, manic-depressive illness, insanity, genetic epilepsy, Huntington’s chorea, genetic blindness, genetic deafness and severe alcoholism. The law is endorsed by the American Eugenics Society.

July 20, 1933—The *Reichconcordat* is signed. The Reich Concordat was an agreement between the Vatican and the Nazi Government. The person primarily responsible for the negotiation and signing of this document was the Cardinal Secretary of State, Eugenio Pacelli, the future Pope Pius XII with the endorsement of Pius XI.



Bundesarchiv, Bild 153-R24301
Foto: o. Ang. | 20. Juli 1933

From left to right: German prelate Ludwig Kaas, German Vice-Chancellor Franz von Papen, Giuseppe Cardinal Pizzardo, Cardinal Secretary of State Pacelli (the future Pope Pius XII), Alfredo Cardinal Ottaviani, and German ambassador Rudolf Buttman

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The Concordat, Pacelli believed, would safeguard against Nazi persecution of the German Catholic minority. In exchange, the local Catholic clergy would ‘voluntarily’ withdraw from politics and even disband the powerful Catholic Center Party. This eliminated any political opposition against the Nazis and allowed the Nazis to pursue their anti-Semitic policies.

July 31, 1933—Nearly thirty thousand people have been interned in Nazi concentration camps—now full of political prisoners held in detention.

August 25, 1933—The *Haavara* agreement was the only officially signed contract between an official Third Reich authority—the German Ministry of the Economy--and a Zionist organization. The pact allowed 50,000 Jews to emigrate from Palestine—while forcing them to give up most of their possessions.

September 29, 1933—German Jews are forbidden from farming.

September 1933—Jews were prevented from belonging to the *Journalists' Association*.

October 4, 1933—Jews were forbidden from being newspaper editors.

October 14, 1933--Hitler announces he is withdrawing Germany from the League of Nations and Disarmament Conference and that the German people will be called on to ratify the action in a referendum.

The bishop of the Nazi Christian Church, Ludwig Müller (Mueller), declares that Christianity has in its origins a war against Jews.

October 19, 1933—Hitler formally announces Germany’s withdrawal from the League of Nations.

November 24, 1933—The German Law Against Dangerous and Habitual Criminals allows for compulsory castration of “hereditary” criminals.

December 15, 1933--Catholic leaders encourage Austrians to do their Christmas shopping in non-Jewish stores.

1934

1934 was a year of “conflict resolution” within the Reich. The Nazi’s Party populist wing and the *Sturmabteilung* (SA or Stormtroopers), thought that the Nazi revolution—which Hitler had already promised would last 1000 years—was incomplete and slow-moving. The SA believed that German bureaucracy, the military and traditional Jewish life had been left relatively unchanged.

The SA originated in 1921 with membership largely composed of WWI veterans who felt that Germany had been “stabbed in the back”. This was the Nazi Party’s private army, often used to maintain “order” at party meetings and rallies, and it had grown to half a million men by the time Hitler became Chancellor. A year later the SA had grown to 4.5 million making it larger than Germany’s post-WWI military and a potential rival for its current military--the *Reichswehr*.

In the eyes of German industrial leaders the its military the SA—with its penchant for street violence and thuggery--was seen as a destabilizing force, especially given the ambitions of Röhm, its leader, to make it the true army of the Third Reich. In the spring of 1934 Hindenburg was nearing the end of his life. Hitler knew that if the SA were not held in check, his one-time organization of support could be used as a revolutionary force against him. Seeking to become Hindenburg’s uncontested successor Hitler need to neutralize the SA leadership and gain Hindenburg’s support.

On **June 30th and July 1, 1934** the Nazi regime carried out “Operation Hummingbird” also known as the Night of Long Knives (*Nacht der langen Messer*) which decapitated the SA leadership. The bloodbath mostly targeted members of the *Sturmabteilung* and the paramilitary Brownshirts along with its leader Ernst Röhm. In Germany it is referred to as the “Röhm Putsch”. Additionally the purge was used to eliminate Hitler’s critics--those loyal to Vice-Chancellor Franz von Papen—and to settle old scores. The numbers that died during those 2 days is unknown and estimates vary from 85 to several hundred. Most of the killings were carried out by the *Schutzstaffel* (SA) and the Gestapo (*Geheime Staatspolizei*)—the Nazi’s secret police.

The purge strengthened Hitler’s support among the *Reichswehr*—Germany’s military. Perhaps most frightening is that the purge swept aside legal prohibitions against extra-judicial killings.

As a result of the purge the SS, under Reichsführer-SS Himmler, gained independence of the SA. Within a few days of the purge Himmler appointed Theodor Eicke—the commandant of Dachau who murdered Ernst Röhm—as *inspector* of concentration camps. With the help of Eicke Himmler controlled the vast Nazi-sponsored security empire. Soon Himmler would become a key architect in the Final Solution.

In Hitler’s speech to the *Reichstag* on July 13th Hitler stated:

“In this hour I was responsible for the fate of the German people, and thereby I became the supreme judge of the German people. I gave the order to shoot the ringleaders in this treason, and I further gave the order to cauterize down to the raw flesh the ulcers of this poisoning of the wells in our domestic life. Let the nation know that its existence—which depends on its internal order and security—cannot be threatened with impunity by anyone! And let it be known for all time to come that if anyone raises his hand to strike the State, then certain death is his lot.”

The Reichstag—satisfied with Hitler’s explanation of the purge—passed a resolution legitimizing the purge as “emergency defense of the state.” In addition to Reichstag and military support for the purge, Hindenburg himself congratulated Hitler noting he Hitler “saved the nation from serious danger.” Three weeks later Hindenburg died.

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The plan was already in place and with the president's death the office of chancellor and president were merged. Hitler now became Nazi Party chief, head of state, and the military's supreme commander. Within weeks Hitler became *Führer* and Reich chancellor.

Hitler would establish himself as *Führer* while "paper violence" legitimized the social and economic isolation of the country's Jews.

January 1934—Hitler orders the production of 4000 aircraft by October 1935.

January 26, 1934—Germany and Poland sign a 10 year non-aggression pact.

January 30, 1934—Hitler publicly states his intention to re-arm Germany.

May 17, 1934—Thousands attend a pro-Nazi rally sponsored by the German-American Bund at Madison Square Garden in New York.

June 17, 1934-- Vice-Chancellor von Papen speaks in Marburg and is critical of the Nazi regime's control of the press and propaganda machine.

"We know that rumors and whispering propaganda must be brought out from the darkness where they have taken refuge. Frank and manly discussion is better for the German people than, for instance, a press without an outlet, described by the Minister for Propaganda 'as no longer having a face.' This deficiency undoubtedly exists. The function of the press should be to inform the Government where deficiencies have crept in, where corruption has settled down, where grave mistakes have been committed, where incapable men are in the wrong places, where offenses are committed against the spirit of the German revolution. An anonymous or secret information service, however well organized it may be, can never be a substitute for this task of the press. For the newspaper editor is responsible to the law and to his conscience, whereas anonymous news sources are not subject to control and are exposed to the danger of Byzantinism."

June 30-July 1, 1934—The Night of Long Knives (*Nacht der Langen Messer*). The same day as the Night of the Long Knives), Vice-Chancellor von Papen is placed under house-arrest by the SS. Papen's secretary, Herbert von Bose, and his speech writer, Edgar Julius Jung, are murdered. From Papen's testimony before the International Military Tribunal:

"On the morning of 30 June, I received a telephone call from Minister Goering, asking me to come to have a talk with him. I went to see Göring; he told me that a revolution had broken out in the Reich - an SA revolution - that Hitler was in Munich to put down this uprising there, and that he, Göring, was charged with restoring law and order in Berlin. Herr Göring asked me, in the interests of my own safety, as he said, to return to my apartment and stay there. I protested quite vehemently against this demand, but Herr Göring insisted. On my way back to my apartment, I went first to my office in the Vice Chancellery. On arriving there, I found my office occupied by the SS, and I was permitted only to enter my own room and get my files. I went on home to my apartment, where I found a large number of SS. The telephone was disconnected; the radio was disconnected; and I was completely cut off from the outside world for 3 whole days."

July 3, 1934—After 3 days of house arrest Papen resigns. However, on July 12, 1934 Von Papen praises the so-called 'Night of the Long Knives in a letter to Hitler: "*Allow me to say how manly and humanly great of you I think this is. Your courageous and firm intervention has met with nothing but recognition throughout the entire world. I congratulate you for all you have given anew to the German nation by crushing the intended second revolution.*"

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July 25, 1934--Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss is murdered.

July 26, 1934-- Von Papen is sent to Vienna as Minister to Austria

August 2, 1934—President Paul von Hindenburg dies. Hitler declares himself Führer of the German state and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Members of the Armed Forces must take a personal oath of allegiance to Hitler.

August 19, 1934-- *Gleichschaltung*: The German electorate approves Hitler's merging the two offices of Chancellor and President by 90% of the vote. Hitler *is Führer und Reichskanzler*.

September 4-10, 1934—A massive Nazi Party Congress is staged at Nuremberg.



Rally of Unity and Strength" (*Reichsparteitag der Einheit und Stärke*), "Rally of Power" (*Reichsparteitag der Macht*) or "Rally of Will" (*Reichsparteitag des Willens*). The Leni Riefenstahl film *Triumph des Willens* was made at this rally.

1935

In response to attempts to isolate the Jews from German society Rabbi Leo Baeck and Otto Hirsch formed the *Reichsvertretung der Deutschen Ju der Deutschen Juden den*—The Reich Representation of German Jews. The organization, perhaps naively hopeful, tried to help their people with vocational training, welfare, educational needs as well as emigration assistance. The name was changed, in 1935, to *Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland* (National Representation of Jews in Germany at the behest of the Nazi authorities.

Nevertheless, the *Reichsvertretung* --like most individual Jews in Germany--did not fully perceive the Nazis' uncompromisingly anti-Jewish position. Jews just could not believe that the persecution would escalate. Notwithstanding increasing social and economic isolation many Jews were hopeful that anti-Jewish laws would not continue to escalate and that some sort of peaceful socioeconomic coexistence would be possible.

At the 1935 Nazi Party rally at Nuremberg on **September 15, 1935** Hitler verbally assaulted Germany's Jews and insisted that the continuing Jewish problem required the government "to bring about, by means of a singular momentous measure, a **framework** within which the German people would be in a position to establish tolerable relations with the Jewish people." Hitler warned that continued Jewish agitation would require, "a new evaluation of the situation."

The "framework" consisted of **three** laws—the Nuremberg Laws. The first of these, *The Reich Flag Law* had little impact on Jewish life. The second law, *The Reich Citizenship Law*, in effect, stripped Jews of their citizenship and left them as "subjects"—although ones that still "enjoy[ed] protection of the German Reich and who in consequence has specific obligations toward it."

The Nuremberg Laws required further refinement in defining who was considered a Jew. This occurred on November 14th 1935 with the *First Implementation Order to the Reich Citizenship Law*. This law would define groups of crossbreeds called *Mischlinge*—estimated to be about 250,000. The net effect of these laws was to define the "Jews" racially, to strip them of German citizenship, to prevent them from "contaminating" German blood and even from having Jews demonstrate a symbol of German identification—the German flag.

From a German perspective there were now more "Jews" than the Jewish community recognized. For a Jew the definition depended more on religious practice and participation in the Jewish community. Now these Jews were joined, not only by secular non-practicing Jews, but also ones that may have converted to Christianity. Thus, my dad's cautionary note--"if you didn't know whether or not you were Jewish, Hitler would tell you."

May 12, 1935—Polish dictator Jozef Pilsudski dies.

Pilsudski's regime saw an improvement in relations with ethnic minorities who comprised about a third of Poland's population.

In Pilsudski's regime a "state assimilation policy" had replaced the National Democrats' "ethnic-assimilation" policy: citizens were judged not by their ethnicity but by their loyalty to the state. Widely recognized for his opposition to the National Democrats anti-Semitic policies, he extended his policy to Polish Jews. Pilsudski was seen as a friend of the Jewish people and their only hope for restraining anti-Semitism in Poland and for maintaining public order. Pilsudski's death in 1935 brought deterioration in the quality of life of Poland's Jews.

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Following Pilsudski's death Poland began modeling its 'Jewish-policy' on that of Nazi Germany. Jews were attacked throughout Poland. Tens of thousands Polish Jews emigrated to Holland, France, Belgium and Palestine. Anti-Jewish riots erupt in Polish universities where Jews are restricted to special seats. Meanwhile in the United States there are quotas for Jews at universities as well as for jobs and housing.

May 16, 1945—In defiance of the Treaty of Versailles Germany initiates conscription into the *Wehrmacht* (for former *Reichswehr*).

May 31, 1935—Jews are banned from the *Wehrmacht*.

June 26, 1935—Law for Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring (*Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses*) of July 14, 1933 is amended to provide for compulsory abortion of "unfit" fetuses up to 6 months in utero.

July 1, 1935—The *Ahnenerbe Forschungs- und Lehrgemeinschaft* (Society for Research into Ancestral Heritage) is founded to study the racial history of the German people.

August 25, 1935—Pastor Martin Niemöller, the leading Protestant anti-Nazi, states that Jewish history is 'dark and sinister' and that Jewish people are forever "under a curse" because they not only "brought the Christ of God to the cross" but they also bear the responsibility for the "blood of all the righteous men who were ever murdered."

November 15, 1935—The German Churches begin collaborating with the Nazis by supplying records to the government indicating who is a Christian and who is not—and is therefore a Jew.

December 12, 1935—SS chief Heinrich Himmler orders the establishment of the Lebensborn (Fountain of Life) network of maternity homes. The purpose is to accommodate and look after racially and genetically valuable expectant mothers.



Lebensborn: A 'school for brides' in Berlin

The “Lebensborn” Program

Faced with years of a declining birth rate Himmler sought to reverse the trend and increase the German/Nordic population. The Lebensborn program encouraged the SS and the Wehrmacht officers to have children with Aryan women—the hope was these children would grow up as leaders of the Third Reich. The Registered Society Lebensborn - *Lebensborn Eingetragener Verein*—would offer suitable, young “racially pure” the opportunity to give birth to a child in secret. The child was then given to the SS, who in turn would provide for the child’s education and adoption. Both mother and father had to verify their “racial purity” by tracing their family lineage for at least 3 generations. The majority of mothers were unmarried—70% in 1940.

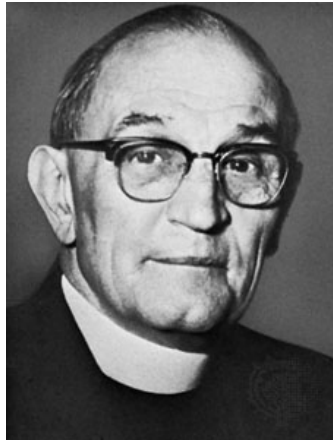
The first Lebensborn home was opened in 1936 in Steinhöring—a small village outside of Munich. Furnishings for the homes were supplied from looted Jewish property of those that been sent to Dachau. Ultimately, there were 10 Lebensborn homes established in Germany, nine in Norway, two in Austria, and one each in Belgium, Holland, France, Luxembourg and Denmark.

By 1939, the program had not produced the results Himmler had hoped. This likely led to one of the most horrible sides of the Lebensborn program; the kidnapping of children “racially good” in the eastern occupied countries after 1939. Some of these children were orphans, but it is well documented that many were simply stolen from their parents by the SS.

Up to 100,000 children may have been stolen from Poland alone and transferred to Lebensborn homes. In these centers the children were ‘programmed’ to abandon their parents and previous identity. The children were often told that they had been abandoned by their parents. Many children were adopted by SS families—most would be transferred to concentration and extermination camps.

It is nearly impossible to know how many children were kidnapped in the eastern occupied countries. In 1946, it was estimated that more than 250,000 were kidnapped and sent by force to Germany. Only 25,000 were retrieved after the war and sent back to their families. It is known that several German families refused to give back the children they had received from the Lebensborn centers. In some cases, the children themselves refused to come back to their original family - they were victims of the Nazi propaganda and believed that they were pure Germans. It is also known that thousands of children were not ‘superior’ enough to be Germanized--they were simply exterminated. During the ten years of the program’s existence, at least 7,500 children were born in Germany and 10,000 in Norway.

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Friedrich Gustav Emil Martin Niemöller (14 January 1892 – 6 March 1984)

Niemöller was U-boat commander in World War I. A seminal incident in his moral outlook, as he related in many public speeches later in his life, occurred when he commanded his submarine crew not to rescue the sailors of a boat he torpedoed, but let them drown instead. Niemöller began studying theology in Münster in the 1920s. At this time, and at least until the mid-1930s, Niemöller was a typical Christian anti-Semite who openly professed his belief that the Jews had been punished through the ages because they had “brought the Christ of God to the cross.”

Initially a supporter of Adolf Hitler and a National Conservative he became one of the founders of the Confessing Church which opposed the Nazification of German Protestant churches. He vehemently opposed the Nazis' Aryan Paragraph. In his earlier years he made remarks about Jews that were anti-Semitic.

Because of his opposition to the Nazification of churches Niemöller was imprisoned in Sachsenhausen and Dachau concentration camps (1937 to 1945). He escaped execution and survived imprisonment after which he expressed deep regret about not having done enough to help the victims of the Nazis. He cast aside his earlier nationalistic beliefs and was one of the initiators of the *Stuttgart Declaration of Guilt*. From the 1950s on, he was a vocal pacifist and anti-war activist, and vice-chair of War Resisters' International from 1966 to 1972.

Niemöller may be best known for the following quote which has appeared in many different variations through the years. It is posted on the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D. C.

"First they came for the communists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a communist; Then they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist; Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist; Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew; Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak out for me."

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1936

The most important event in Germany in 1936 was the Summer Olympics. Just as the Olympics of today are an opportunity for the host country to showcase itself on an international stage, they presented the same opportunity for Hitler over 7 decades ago.

Why would the IOC (International Olympic Committee) award the Games of the XI Olympiad to Hitler's Germany? The simple fact is that the Olympics were awarded to Berlin on April 26, 1931—almost 2 years before Hitler became Chancellor.

The IOC had considered moving the games from Nazi German to another venue in protest to the Nazi ideology of racism and anti-Semitism. The United States and Russia both strongly considered boycotting the games. Avery Brundage, of the United States Olympic Committee opposed the boycott, stating that Jewish athletes were being treated fairly and that the games should continue. Brundage stated that “the very foundation of the modern Olympic revival will be undermined if individual countries are allowed to restrict participation by reason of class, creed, or race.” Brundage also believed that there was a “Jewish-Communist conspiracy” that existed to keep the U.S. out of competing in the Olympiad. Eventually Hitler made a number of concessions to keep the IOC at bay and persuade them to leave the Olympics in Berlin.

By allowing only Aryans to compete for Germany, Hitler gained a world stage to promote his ideological belief in racial supremacy. During the run up to the games the Nazi Party removed anti-Jewish signs and slogans from the city's main tourist attractions. In addition, gypsies were arrested and removed from the streets in order to “clean up” Berlin. Filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl, a favorite of Hitler's, was commissioned by the IOC to film the games.



Olympic Stadium in Berlin 1936

Berlin: A Modern Olympic Games

The Berlin Olympics featured many “media firsts.” It was the first Olympic competition to use telex transmissions of results, and zeppelins were used to quickly transport newsreel footage to other European cities. The Games were televised for the first time, transmitted by closed circuit to specially equipped theatres in Berlin. The 1936 Games also introduced the torch relay for the first time. The torch relay of modern times which transports the flame from Greece to the various designated sites of the games had no ancient precedent and was introduced by Carl Diem. The relay, captured in Leni Riefenstahl's film *Olympia*, was part of the Nazi propaganda machine's attempt to add myth and mystique to Adolf Hitler's regime. Hitler saw the link with the ancient Games as the perfect way to illustrate his belief that classical Greece was an Aryan forerunner of the modern German Reich.



Torch relay of the 1936 Berlin Olympiad

This was also the Olympics of Jesse Owens, who won three individual gold medals and a fourth in 4 x 100 meter relay. The success of Jesse Owens and other African American athletes—whom the Nazi press referred to as the “black auxiliaries”—was considered somewhat of a blow to Hitler's Aryan ideals. The Germans did, however, prevail in the medal count and dominated gymnastics, rowing and equestrian events.

The 1936 Olympics was the first to host basketball. The U.S. Basketball team won the gold medal that year. Among its stars was Samuel Balter, a Jew. Balter was one of 10 Jewish athletes to medal in the 1936 Olympics.



Jesse Owens in the long jump competition

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If Jews thought that the Olympic Games would bring improved tolerance of Jews in Germany they soon learned they were mistaken. By the year's end the campaign to drive Jews out of Germany would resume.

February 29, 1936—August Cardinal Hondo, the head of the Polish Catholic Church, issues a pastoral letter advocating discrimination against Polish Jews “so long as they remain Jews.” He writes that Polish Catholics “ought to fence themselves off against the Jews’ harmful moral influence of Jewry” and “out to separate themselves from its anti-Christian culture.” Hlong goes on to say that Polish Catholics “ought to boycott the Jewish press” and other “demoralizing Jewish publications.” Hlong’s pastoral letter goes on to say: *there will be a Jewish problem as long as the Jews remain...It is a fact that the Jews fight against the Catholic Church, they are free-thinkers, and constitute the vanguard of atheism, bolshevism and revolution. It is true that the Jews are committing frauds, practicing usury, and dealing in white slavery. It is also true that in the schools the Jewish youth is having an evil influence, from an ethical and religious point of view, on the Catholic youth.*”



August Cardinal Hlond—The Polish Prelate

March 3, 1936—Jewish doctors are denied the right to practice in German government hospitals.

March 7, 1936—German troops occupy the Rhineland, in defiance of the Treaty of Versailles. The United States, Britain and France publicly denounce Hitler but quietly acquiesce.

March 9, 1936—Jews are killed during an anti-Semitic pogrom in Prztyk, Poland.

April 15, 1936—Two Jews are murdered during an Arab strike in Palestine in protest against Jewish immigration.

June 17, 1936—Himmler is appointed chief of German police.

June 26, 1936—Himmler appoints Reinhard Heydrich to head the SD (Security Service branch of the SS).

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August 1-16, 1936—The Summer Olympics in Berlin.

September 7, 1936—A 25-percent tax is imposed on all Jewish assets in Germany.

September 23, 1936—A concentration camp at Sachsenhausen, Germany.

October 1, 1936—Criminal-court judges in Berlin swear an oath of allegiance to Hitler.

October 25, 1936—Benito Mussolini and Hitler sign a treaty forming the Berlin-Rome Axis in preparation for war.

November 25, 1936—Germany and Japan sign the Anti-Comintern Pact. In the event of an attack by the Soviet Union against Germany or Japan, the two countries agreed to consult on what measures to take “to safeguard their common interests.” They also agreed that neither of them would make any political treaties with the Soviet Union, and Germany also agreed to recognize Manchuria. Italy would eventually join the pact on November 6, 1937 and the “axis” would be established.

1937

On March 14, 1937 Pope Pius XI sensed the coming storm that was later echoed by Churchill—“We seem to be moving toward some hideous catastrophe.” Despite the *Reichconcordat* of July 20, 1933 Nazi anti-Catholic pressure was unrelenting as nuns and priests were arrested and subjected to violence. On March 14, 1937 Pope Pius XI issued an encyclical, *Mit brennender Sorge* (With Burning Concern), protesting the Catholic Church’s difficulties in Germany. The encyclical was written in German and not the usual Latin of official Catholic Church documents. It was read from the pulpits of the German Catholic parishes on Palm Sunday 1937. Cesare Orsenigo, the Archbishop and nuncio in Berlin had the encyclical distributed by courier in an attempt to ensure its unhindered public reading.

Mit brennender Sorge asserts that “race” is a “fundamental value of the human community and condemn exaltation of race or the people. It also condemns paganism of the national-socialism ideology, the myth of race and blood and the fallacy of their conception of God. Pius XI warns Catholics that the growing Nazi ideology, the myth of race and blood, and their fallacious concept of God.

“Whoever exalts race, or the people, or the state, or a particular form of state, or the depositories of power, or any other fundamental value of the human community—however necessary and honorable be their function in worldly things—whenever raises these notions above their standard value and divinizes them to an idolatrous level, distorts and perverts an order of the world planned and created by God.”

The German police confiscated as many copies as they could and called it “high treason.” Nazi reprisals against the German Church followed including staged prosecutions of monks for homosexuality. The encyclical increased persecution of Catholics and the Church in Germany. Some scholars have asserted that the encyclical had little positive effect and may have, in fact, exacerbated the crisis.

From a Jewish perspective, the encyclical offered no condemnation of the persecution of German Jews. In fact the encyclical referred to the Chosen People as those who were “constantly straying” from God and who had crucified Christ.

In 1937 racial anti-Semitism was spreading outside of Germany as well. In August of 1937 some 350 attacks on Jews were recording in Poland alone.

Though 1937 was a “quiet year” for the Holocaust it was simply the calm before a brewing storm.

March 14, 1937—*“Mit brennender Sorge”* is released by Pius XI. Pius does not denounce German Christian anti-Semitism. Instead the reader is reminded of the Jewish crime of deicide.

March 15, 1937—Large anti-Nazi rally occurs in New York City. Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, whose mother is Jewish, denounces Nazism.

April 24, 1937—Pastor Martin Niemöller preaches that it is unfortunate that God permitted Jewish to be born a Jew.

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July 15, 1937—Buchenwald concentration camp is established.

September 6-13, 1937—Six-hundred thousand German troops parade before Hitler at Nuremberg.

September 7, 1937—Hitler declares the Treaty of Versailles invalid and ended.

November 8, 1937—The exhibit, “The Eternal Jew”, opens in Munich. The exhibit ran until January 31, 1938 and drew over 400,000 visitors. The exhibit claimed to show the “typical outward features” of Jews and ‘expose’ a world-wide ‘Jewish-Bolshevik’ conspiracy.

In November 1937—*Der ewige Jude*-- ‘The Eternal Jew’--exhibition opened in Munich, and was showcased in the Deutsches Museum until 31 January 1938, claiming to show the 'typical outward features' of Jews and to demonstrate their allegedly Middle Eastern and Asiatic characteristics. The exhibition also attempted to 'expose' a world-wide 'Jewish-Bolshevik' conspiracy.

The striking poster for the exhibition contrasted Jewish individualism and ‘self-seeking’ with the Nazi ideal of a ‘people's community’. It did this by revealing an ‘eastern’ Jew - wearing a caftan, and holding gold coins in one hand and a whip in the other. Under his arm is a map of the world, with the imprint of the hammer and sickle.

The Secret Police reports claimed that it helped to promote a sharp rise in anti-Semitic feelings, and in some cases violence against the Jewish community.



November 25, 1937—Hitler signs military agreement with Japan.

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1938

1938 was a year of escalation toward what would become the Holocaust. The *Anschluss*—the annexation of Austria—of March 12, 1938 had many implications for the Jews. First, it brought the third largest Jewish population in Europe under Hitler's regime. 190,000 Jews were now targeted for persecution, expropriation, forced emigration and concentration in the east. Hitler was now faced with a yet a larger "Jewish problem"—*inheriting* as many Jews as had been forced to leave Germany in the preceding five years. Second, the *Anschluss*,--in clear violation of the Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain--demonstrated to Hitler that the world was prepared to do little more than issue denouncements in their attempt to placate him.

In the spring of 1938 *Untersturmführer* Adolph Eichmann was sent to Vienna where he established a Central Office for Jewish Emigration. This office had the sole authority to issue permits to Jews desperately seeking emigration from Austria. In his capacity Eichmann and his office extorted wealth in return for safe passage. Scarcely a year after his "program" began more than half of Austria's Jews had left with a passport stripped of their possessions.

The *Anschluss* had precipitated an international refugee crisis. On March 23, 1938 President Roosevelt announced an international conference to address the escalating issue. Fearing reprisals from Hitler, Switzerland refused to host the meeting. Finally a site was selected at Évian-les-Bains on the shores of Lake Geneva in France. Between July 6th and 15, 1938 delegates from 32 countries and 39 private relief organizations met at what is now called the Evian Conference. Country after country expressed their "sympathies". The conference was, arguably, constructed to fail. FDR sent a long time friend and industrialist, Myron Taylor—no high-ranking State Department official attended. The conference ended as a complete failure and paradoxically may have worsened the Jewish plight in Europe. First, it demonstrated to Hitler that the community of nations would pay lip service to the Jewish plight while sealing their doors. Second, it served to clarify that the Jewish problem could not be solved by emigration alone. Joachim von Ribbentrop would later say to his French counterpart, Georges Bonnet, "that we all wanted to get rid of our Jews but that the difficulties lay in the fact that no country wished to receive them."

A week after FDR announced the Evian Conference the Polish Parliament, on March 31, 1938, passed legislation that would revoke citizenship of Poles who lived abroad. This effectively prevented the return of tens of thousands of Polish Jews to their homeland.

On June 9, 1938 Munich's main synagogue was razed. Two months later the same fate would befall the Nuremberg synagogue.

On September 29-30, 1938 The Munich Conference was attended by British PM Neville Chamberlain, French Premier Eduard Daladier, Italian dictator Benito Mussolini and Hitler. In a final climactic act of appeasement France and Great Britain permit Germany to illegally annex the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia. The Czechs are not represented at the conference. Neville Chamberlain signed a Friendship Treaty with Germany without informing its French ally. Arriving home he triumphantly announces "peace in our time."

On October 15, 1938 German authorities cancelled the passports of all German Jews, trapping them inside the Reich. Three days later, on October 18, 1938 more than 12,000 Polish-born Jews who had been legally living in Germany were expelled; ordered to take one suitcase each and leaving their possessions behind as they boarded trains that would take them inside the Polish border. Four thousand were accepted into Poland leaving 8,000 on stone floors of a nearby horse stable in the Polish border station of Zbaszyn. The Polish authorities procrastinated in issuing entry permits while thousands waited—confused, hungry, penniless and angry.

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One of the expelled couples, Mr. and Mrs. Grynszpan, had been living in Hanover for 27 years. Their 17 year old son, Herschel, escaped deportation as he was living in Paris at the time. Herschel's sister Berta sent him a postcard from the railway station at Zbasyn. "No one told us what was up, but we realized this was gong to be the end...We haven't a penny. Could you send us something?" Within day Mr. and Mrs. Grynszpan's son, Herschel would walk into the German embassy in Paris and unwittingly provide the Nazi regime with the trigger for *Kristallnacht*. Few knew what had been set in motion. Only later would the Night of Broken Glass be understood for what it was—the beginning of the Holocaust.

January 1938:--The Dachau concentration camp is enlarged.

January 21, 1938—The Romanian government strips Jews of their citizenship.

February 4, 1938—Hitler names himself supreme commander of the *Wehrmacht*.

March 12, 1938—The Wehrmacht enters Vienna. Austria is annexed and its Jews are immediately subject to the same anti-Jewish laws that were in effect in Germany.

April 5, 1938—Anti-Jewish riots spread across Poland.

April 21, 1938—Germany issues a decree effectively eliminating Jews from the economy.

April 26, 1938—Jews are forced to register all real estate with German authorities. This is the beginning of "Aryanization" of Jewish property.

May 3, 1938—Flossenbürg concentration camp is established.

June 15, 1938—Any German Jew previously convicted of a crime is arrested.

June 25, 1938—German Jewish doctors are allowed to treat only Jewish patients.

July 6-15, 1938—The Evian Conference.

July 23, 1938—German Jews must apply for identity cards to be shown to police on demand.

July 25, 1938—Father Charles Coughlin calls for the establishment of an American Christian Front to combat Communists and Jews. The Christian Front is composed largely of Irish and German Americans that adhere to the belief that America is a Christian nation and that Catholics and Protestants should unite against the Jews.

July 30, 1938—During his 75th birthday celebration, industrialist and rabid anti-Semite Henry Ford, accepts the Third Reich's medal of the Grand Cross of the German Eagle. A year later, Ford will claim that "the Jew bankers" are responsible for World War II.

August 18, 1938—The Swiss government denies entry to Jews.

August 26, 1938—The Central Office of Jewish Emigration is set up in Vienna under Eichmann.

September 15, 1938—British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain meets with Hitler at Berchtesgaden, Germany, to discuss the Sudeten crisis. Hitler demands that the Sudetenland, which was part of Austria through the end of WWI, be ceded by Czechoslovakia to Germany.

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The Sudetenland

The Sudetenland is an area some 200 miles long and 20-40 miles wide that covers an area north of Bohemia and Moravia as well as part of Silesia. At the end of World War I the Treaty of St. Germain incorporated the area into the newly created Czechoslovak Republic. The area incorporated over three million Germans from the three provinces. After WWI these “Sudeten Germans” invoked their right of self-determination and wished to reunite with Austria, which in turn expressed their wish to reunite with the German Reich. The peace conference at St. Germain (1919) ruled against both the union of the Sudeten German region with Austria as well as the union of Austria and Germany. The result was that 3.1 million Sudeten Germans were forced into Czechoslovakia—a country which discarded their rights as a people and which discriminated against them.

In the St. Germain conference the Czechs promised to established a multinational country—a promise they never kept. Instead they closed down German schools and declared Czech the only official language. They ousted Germans from civil service jobs and other government-owned enterprises, transferred German firms to Czech hands and restricted the powers of local governments in German-speaking towns and districts.

Eventually the anti-German policies of Czechoslovakia caused enormous tensions between Sudeten Germans and the newly formed Czech Republic. All of this was amplified by the worldwide depression of the 1930s during which one of three German Czechs was unemployed.

The Sudeten crisis reached its climax when in the fall of 1939 Britain and France proposed that the Sudeten region of Czechoslovakia be ceded to the Germans in accordance with the recommendations of Lord Runciman, the arbitration of the Czech-German conflict. Czechoslovakia accepted this proposal on September 21, 1938. The subsequent Munich Agreement, signed the following week spelled out the details of the annexation. Finally the dreams of Sudeten Germans were realized!



On **September 15, 1938** Neville Chamberlain gave consent to Hitler’s annexation of the Sudetenland. The French PM Edouard Daladier added his endorsement days later.

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September 26, 1938—Hitler promises that the Sudetenland will his last territorial demand in Europe.

September 30, 1938--Hitler, Chamberlain, Daladier of France and Mussolini of Italy met at the so called "Munich Conference." The Czech government was not represented but "agreed" to comply. Neville Chamberlain returned home promising "peace in our time." The Czechs were informed by the British and the French that they could either submit to the annexation or resist on their own. On October 1st, 1938 German troops moved into the Sudetenland. Now Hitler had succeeded in bring both Austria (*Anschluss of March 12, 1938*) and the Sudetenland into the Reich.

October 1, 1938—The *Wehrmacht* occupies the Czech Sudetenland.

October 1938—*Civilita Cattolica*, published in Rome and controlled by the Vatican calls Judaism sinister and accuses Jews of trying to control the world through money and secularism. The journal declares that the devil is the Jew's master: Judaism is evil and "a standing menace to the world."

November 7, 1938—Herschel Grynszpan enters the German embassy in Paris and mortally wounds Third Secretary of Legation Ernst vom Rath.

November 9-10, 1938—*Kristallnacht* (see Session 8).

November 15, 1938—All Jewish students are expelled from German schools. President Roosevelt withdraws his ambassador from Germany.

November 18, 1938—Hitler recalls Hans Heinrich Dieckhoff, German ambassador to the U.S.

November 21, 1938—British House of Commons objects to German persecution of minorities.

November 24, 1938—Winston Churchill decides that Palestine cannot be considered a primary refuge for Jews.

December 1938—The British Cabinet allows 10,000 Jewish children into Britain in an action called the *Kindertransport*. Most of the children will never see their parents again. Most are converted to Christianity.

December 3, 1938—The German government demands "Aryanization" of all Jewish industries, shops and businesses.

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The Anti-Semite Henry Ford

Hitler kept a life-size portrait of Ford next to his desk. No doubt the man that had industrialized automobile production was admired by the man who industrialized murder. In July 1938, on his 75th birthday, Ford was awarded the Grand Cross of the German Eagle—the highest medal awarded by the Nazis to foreigners.



In 1918 Ford's aide, Ernest Liebold purchased *The Dearborn Independent* for Ford. The paper ran from 1920 to 1927 during with Liebold as its editor. The paper published the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, a proven forgery alleging a Jewish plot to take over the world.

The Protocols was a work that purported to be a transcription of plans concocted at an 1897 Zionist conclave. At this secret meeting, high ranking Jewish officials, the Elders of Zion, came up with 24 Protocols which were designed to enslave the Christian world through various sinister means. The Tenth Protocol represents a typical excerpt, proclaiming that was the duty of Jews to wear everyone out by dissensions, animosities, feuds and famines, until the Gentiles see no other way of escape except to appeal to their money and power. In fact The Protocols were a Russian forgery plagiarized from a 1869 German novel which was, in turn, "borrowed" from a French political satire entitled *Dialogue aux enfers entre Machiavelli et Montesquieu*. The satire was an indictment of Napoleon III. Serge Nilus, a little-known Czarist official in Moscow, edited several editions of the Protocols, each with a different account of how he discovered the document. In his 1911 edition Nilus claimed that his source had stolen the document from (a non-existent) Zionist headquarters in France. Other "editors" of the Protocols maintained that the document was read at the First Zionist Congress held in 1897 in Basel, Switzerland.

Along with the *Protocols*, anti-Jewish articles published by *The Dearborn Independent* were released in the early 1920s as a set of four bound volumes, in a non-Ford publication in the Weimar Republic cumulatively titled *The International Jew, the World's Foremost Problem*. Vincent Curcio wrote of these widely-distributed publications that influenced a little known German corporal—Adolph Hitler. Ford, in fact, is the only American mentioned in *Mein Kampf*.

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On Line Resources

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