

How did Hitler become Führer/dictator?

Different to Chancellor

What do you know?

Ideas to help

- Reichstag Fire
- Enabling Act
- Night of the Long Knives

Reichstag Fire- 27th February 1933

- Van Der Lubbe, a Dutch Communist and known arsonist found in the building
- 4000 leading Communists were arrested that night
- 28th Feb: Emergency decree passed by the President suspending personal liberty- freedom of speech, assembly. Police given powers detail people and search them without warrant or trial
- 20th March: Himmler establishes first Concentration Camp at Dachau

Enabling Act- 23rd March

- March 1933 election: Nazis gain 288 seats (43.9%). They are in coalition with the Nationalists who take 52 seats (8%).
- Hitler wants an act that will allow him to pass laws without the Reichstag. To change the constitution he needs a 2/3rds majority
- Prevents Communists from turning up (they had 81 seats)
- Signs concordat (alliance) with the Pope that gets the support of the Catholic Centre party (74 seats)
- This gives him enough to defeat the Social Democrats (120 seats)

Enabling Act (continued)

- Once passed Hitler:
- Closed down state parliaments (Lander)
- Merged trade unions into German Labour Front
- Occupied the offices of the Social Democrats, destroyed newspapers and confiscated money. Nazis only party left standing

Night of the Long Knives-30th June 1934



Night of the Long Knives (Continued)

- SA under Ernst Rohm wanted to merge with the army. They also wanted a second revolution to take money from the rich.
- There were 2 million members of the SA
- SA disliked universally, especially by the rich and the army. Hitler wanted both on his side.
- Hitler no longer needed SA- he had the SS, an elite personal body guard under Himmler.
- Leading Nazis were jealous of Rohm's power (Himmler and Goring)

30th June 1934

- SS arrests leading member of SA who are instantly shot, including Rohm and Strasser.
- Up to 200 people were killed including political rivals such as von Schleicher.
- SS now directly responsible to Hitler.
- Army swears and oath of personal and unconditional loyalty to Hitler from August 1934
- 2nd August Hindenburg dies. Within hours Hitler declares himself Head of State and Commander of the army. He was officially Fuhrer and Reich Chancellor.