

### Nazi Ideas

The German people suffered during the 1920s. Many Germans turned towards radical ideas and political parties for solutions. One of these parties was called the National Socialist or Nazi Party. The leader of this political party was a former German soldier named Adolph Hitler.

Adolph Hitler was a dynamic public speaker. Many of the ideas of the Nazi Party were explained in his speeches. Adolph Hitler was a "racist". He claimed that the German people were racially and culturally superior to other people. Adolph Hitler was a strong nationalist. He blamed other people, especially Jews, for Germany's defeat in the Great War. Adolph Hitler was also a Fascist. He believed that big business, the military and the government had to work together to govern Germany. He did not believe in democracy or rule by the people.

Read excerpts from the speeches of Adolph Hitler to learn more about the ideas of the Nazi Party.

A) "Only force rules. Force is the first law. Unfortunately, the world stresses internationalism instead of the values of race; democracy and the majority instead of the worth of the great leader."  
- Essen, Germany, Nov. 22, 1926.

B) "I believe that I have enough energy to lead our people to war, so that our people can acquire so much soil and territory that the sacrifice in blood can be returned to posterity (future generations) in four-fold measure."  
- Munich, Germany, May 23, 1928.

C) "If men wish to live, then they are forced to kill others. We will take every step which strengthens our arms, which increases the number of our forces, and which increases the strength of our people. Our rights will be protected only when the German Reich (nation) is again supported by the point of the German dagger."  
- Munich, Germany, March 15, 1929.

D) "We must train our people so that whenever someone has been appointed to command, the others will recognize it as their duty to obey him. This is the expression of an authoritarian state - not a weak, babbling democracy."  
- Nuremberg, Germany, Sept. 14, 1935.

Imagine that you are a reporter for an American newspaper. You have been asked by your editor to write an article about the ideas of Adolph Hitler and the Nazi Party.

A- Make a list of the main ideas you will include in your article.

B- Write a newspaper report including quotes from speeches by Adolph Hitler.

C- Include a letter to your editor. In the letter, explain your reactions to the ideas expressed by Adolph Hitler and the Nazi Party? Discuss whether you think the American people should be worried about Adolph Hitler.

## **RACISM AND DEATH IN NAZI GERMANY**

The Nazi Party blamed other groups for Germany's defeat during the "Great War." The Nazis blamed political opponents like Socialists and Communists, but their main scapegoat was Jewish people living in Germany. Many Jews had lived in Germany for decades and had played important roles in German society. But the Nazis said that the Jews were traitors who could never really be Germans. They wanted to deny Jews the same rights as other Germans. To support stereotypes and prejudice, the Nazis developed their own racial theories.

In *Mein Kampf*, a book written by Adolph Hitler, the Nazis charged that Jews were "the personification of the devil as the symbol of all evil."

In 1935, the government of Adolph Hitler passed a Reich Citizenship Law, also known as the Nuremberg Laws. This law said that "A Jew cannot be a Reich citizen. He is not allowed the right to vote in political affairs. He cannot hold public office." Government workers who were Jews were forced to resign their jobs. Marriages between Jews and non-Jews were also forbidden. The Nazis claimed that they had to do this to protect the "purity of the German Blood".

In November, 1938, the Nazis organized Kristalnacht or "Crystal Night".

"The National Socialists went on a rampage of destruction. Hundreds of Synagogues (Jewish temples) were destroyed, nearly 100 Jews were killed and over 7,000 Jewish shops and businesses were destroyed. It is being called the Night of Broken Glass due to all of the plate glass broken in the streets."

During the second World War, the Nazi Party developed a "final solution" for the Jews of Germany and Eastern Europe. It is now known as the "Holocaust." At first Jewish communities were wiped out or else Jews were forced to move to ghettos in larger cities. Finally in October, 1941, Germany began to ship trainloads of Jews to concentration camps. In these camps, Jews and other people that the Nazis did not like, were murdered. By 1945, approximately 6 million Jews and a total of about 12 million people were exterminated (murdered) in these camps. The dead included men, women and children.