

How did the nazi consolidate their power?

[People](#), [Adolf Hitler](#)



' Nazi consolidation of power in 1933 was primarily due to the use of terror and violence. ' How far do you agree with this judgement? The Nazi Party's rise was to an extent due to the use of terror and violence, however there were limitations with this as the party was not strong enough to exert this. Their consolidation of power in 1933 was also enabled by their means of legality, and Hitler becoming Chancellor in January 1933.

This rise to power was viable due to numerous factors; Hitler's own tactical manoeuvring of the Reichstag, Germany's growing economic downfall, Germany changed political landscape and in according to the title, terror and violence caused by the SA. They were the reason the Nazi party were often referred to as a party with the backbone of thugs and forcefulness. The origins of the Nazi party aimed to support German's working classes to gain equality with the rest of Germany; they were originally more lenient to the left wing of the political spectrum.

Its members mainly came from military decent; all against the Treaty of Versailles and the newly establish Weimar Republic. Early on in 1923 they arranged the Munich Putsch, this was an attempt to gain power over Bavaria, with a significant failure. It is evident that prior to 1933, the Nazi's were all for utilising terror and violence if it benefitted them. Hitler as a result was arrested and imprisoned, the Nazi party's developments ceased; here Hitler formed his enduring political testament that would source his beliefs for his future career.

This start for the Nazi party was always headed off and suppressed by the powers within the Reichstag so; it could be seen as an early failure for Hitler. However their actions brought the party to the public eye and as a result in <https://assignbuster.com/how-did-the-nazi-consolidate-their-power/>

the 1924 election the Nazi party gained 6.5% of elections to the Reichstag, this was not a significant enough amount, but it was a start. Most Germans were fearful of Communism; this allowed Nazis to consolidate more power through means of terror.

On the other hand the Nazi party's rule of legality and the risk of communism are, to an extent, underlining most vital aspect of explaining how the Nazis were able to destroy political opposition and become dominant and consolidating power in 1933. Legality gave way to a policy where Hitler's objective was to legally consolidate power which was appropriate and pleased the German people. Hitler and the Nazi's ability to implement terror and violence were later on secured legally. Which, though arguably corrupt, were still technically legal; the enabling act being an example permitted the Nazis to do such, without being held legally liable, as it was made legal through Hitler and the act. The Nazis consolidation was further developed by the party's ability to rearrange its organisation to appeal to an extensive range of citizens, and making alliances with other parties to gain seats in the Reichstag. Hitler introduced the DAP 25 point programme, this interested an array of people on either side of the political spectrum and gave the Nazi party more publicity.

Furthermore, the formation of the Nazi professional body enabled skilled workers such as doctors to help spread propaganda at elections. These skilled personnel were deeply trusted and respected in society, so they helped to bring the Nazis to power in 1933. In 1932 the Nazi percentage of the vote increased to 37.3% translated in 230 seats, making them the largest party in the Reichstag. It was attractive as an ally due to its mass

movement and broad base support; largely made up of the middle class voting in complaint against the let-downs of the Weimar Republic and the political system itself.

The Nazi party had unique system. However, the Nazi party failed to reach everyone; industrial workers who supported the DNVP, along with urban areas who made up 54.3% of the vote. Terror and violence were prominent factor in consolidating power for the Nazi's in 1933, for the reason that the violence and a significant impact on political development; the negotiations between Hitler, von Papen and Hindenburg took place against the backdrop of well publicised acts of SA brutality.

May 1933 saw the SA attack the trade union headquarters and disbanded it; this violence resulted in many of the SPD leaders fleeing abroad, by June the party was officially banned. Within Germany's politically important middle class, the violence and thuggery of elements of the Nazi movement caused deep concern. The Nazis tried to balance their use of violence by attempting to ensure that the consolidation of power had the veneer of legality. The Nazi leaders were pragmatic in their understanding that their revolution had to achieve by legal means for it to be acceptable to the vast majority of the German population.

Propaganda was another important tool for the consolidation of power. Goebbels was one of only three Nazis in the first of Hitler's cabinets. He was responsible for the Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda which was established in March 1933. Hitler and Goebbels both understood that propaganda was essential to the establishment of the Nazi government. Indeed, the very phrase 'legal revolution' is an example of Nazi propaganda

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as it emphasises one aspect of the Nazi take over whilst simultaneously playing down others. Cinema was of prime importance. 1933 saw the release of *Hitlerjunge Quex* a cinematic representation of the death of a blue eyed and blond haired boy at the hand of the Communists. This emphasised the evil of the Communists who had received a legal and carnal beating in the early stages of the Nazi government; thus encouraging public sentiment helpful to the consolidation of the regime. Propaganda also emphasised Hitler as the embodiment of the Nation. Several of their posters stressed and emphasised that the Nazi revolution was for the good of the nation as a whole and went beyond ordinary politics.

In this sense it justified the legally dubious aspects of Nazi consolidation by appealing to the national interest which was perceived as higher than any written law. The Reichstag fire provided opportunity for the Nazi's to legally consolidate their power; crucial to the seizure of power was the issuing of the emergency decree 'For the Protection of People and State' on 28th February. The rights of freedom of speech, a free press and freedom of assembly enshrined in the Weimar constitution were suspended.

Immediately Goebbels ensured that the Nazi propaganda portrayed the decree as a necessary step in the battle against communism; for that reason, it was wildly welcomed. This shows that Nazis were keen to ensure there was a legal front to their activities despite the fact that in reality the decree signalled the collapse of the rule of law; although it undermined the constitution, the decree was broadly welcomed, such was the fear of a communist regime. Hitler's presentation of the Enabling Act to an intimidated Reichstag saw an increase to the Nazi seizure of power.

By terms of the Act, Hitler was granted four years of power as a dictator, though this appeared to be legal, the communist deputies were barred from the Reichstag and Goring, as speaker, reduced the required number of votes needed from 432 to 378. The Enabling Act was passed by 444 votes to 94; democracy in Germany had been killed off and the Reichstag's power and influence removed. The Weimar constitution was dead; support for the Nazi proposal came from a wide cross-section of the country's political elite.

As part of the consolidation of Nazi power, Hitler attempted to control all aspects of German political and social life under Nazi control. The aftermath of the Enabling act was the destruction of the local state government; new state governors, Reichsstatthalter, were appointed with full powers to introduce Nazi policies. By the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service of 7 April 1933, Jews and political opponents were thrown out of the civil service.

Trade union organisations were disbanded and its assets seized the German Labour Front (DAF) was established in its stead; similarly, professional groups lost their independent organisations and were forced to join Nazi bodies. On the 14 July, the Nazi party was declared the only legal political party in Germany, the centralisation of the state was completed in January by the abolition of the upper house of the Reichstag, the Reichsrat, because they still had the power to vote down new Nazi laws. Little by little, the Nazi infiltrated every aspect of the state and forged it into an authoritarian regime.

To conclude, it is certain that terror and violence was an integral party of the Nazis consolidation of power, as violence was an important aspect of Nazism

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and never strayed too far from the surface. However, there were other factors that worked symbiotically towards the Nazis seizure of power, their policy of legality, alliances formed with parties and well implemented propoganda all aided in the Nazi consolidation of power. The Nazi used legal revolutions and arranged propoganda successfully as a means to misleading the nation of their real objectives and significances of their deeds, which ultimately led to their consolidation of power.