

History cw investigation

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Had Hitler not have used coercion in this example then it could have been possible that the " radical ambitions of the AS, who kept longing for a real social revolution. " 6 May have had enough trench to remove Hitler from power and begin a revolution of their own; therefore in this case coercion proved to be important to him and his challenge of maintaining power. Hitler also created a secret police called the Gestapo, which included many members from the AS. The Gestapo was created as an " organization to hunt down 'enemies of the state. 7 And were responsible for placing these 'enemies of the state' into concentration camps. The Gestapo portrayed forms of psychological coercion more than it did physical relying more on threats than actual violence. Hitler grew to rely on he Gestapo and their work as the idea of being sent to these concentration camps " enforced the message that an individual should be totally loyal to the state. " 8 The sheer fear factor of the Gestapo lead to many German people becoming 'informers' and giving up information on people in the area who were against Nazi ideology.

In fact, " the Gestapo relied on the active cooperation of the German people. " 9 Because despite " Its fearsome reputation, the Gestapo was not particularly large. " 10 With " major areas such as Frankfurt, Hannover and Bremen having under 50 officers each" 11 This suggests that psychological coercion was key in helping Hitler maintain power, as Hitler and the Nazi party were able to control the German citizens as they had installed so much fear into them that they were tricked into believing the Gestapo were everywhere.

However it could be argued that the German citizens may have had more of an idea that so little Gestapo were really in their towns than first believed which means that rather than spilling information on local 'enemies of the state' due to fear they did it as they were in support of Nazi ideology and rather it was their ideology that proved to be the key factor in Hitler maintaining power, not coercion. Hitler furthered his coercion tactics during his reign as chancellor creating concentration camps in which Hitler disposed enemies of the state. Here they were "consigned to an uncertain fate." 1 2 Hitler presented these camps as "educative institutions that provided a correction and a warning" 1 3 The camps were used as a tactic to scare German civilians into complying with the Nazis rule they were undoubtedly 'successful' in removing any enemies that Hitler believed posed a threat to his party with "Jews, trade union leaders, socialists and unionists" 14 all given a "promise of savage brutality." 1 5 With any political opposition unable to gather enough support, due to the majority of them being hidden away in these camps, Hitler never had to worry that he may be voted out of power by the German public.

With little opposition, particularly politically, the people of Germany would have become 'used' to this way of living, fearing that if they did speak out against the regime they would be sent to these camps where they would be "beaten, tortured, starved and often murdered" 16 This use of terror, a tactic which he himself admitted was "the cost effective instrument" 17 was a clear example of coercion and without it Hitler's position as chancellor may not have been as stable as it showed to be during his time in power.