***Women***

***WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW***

***You need to explain what role the Nazis saw women having in Germany, how they went about achieving their aim and how successful they were.***

For the Nazis, a woman’s role was neatly encapsulated by the 3 Ks – Kinder, Kirche und Küche – Children, Church and Cooking. A number of strategies were implemented to achieve this:

1. Some women – particularly those married or in the professions like medicine or lecturing– were forced from the workplace.

2. By giving every newly married couple a loan of 1000 marks, 25 per cent of which was written off for every child born, the Law for the Encouragement of Marriage of June 1933 encouraged women to marry and have large families.

3. Women who had large families were awarded the Mother’s Cross. They also received additional welfare benefits and were liable for lower rates of tax.

4. Contraception and abortion were made more difficult to obtain for everyone *except Jews*.

5. Divorce to end childless marriages was made easier.

6. Unmarried mothers were encouraged to live in homes (Lebensborn) where racially pure SS men could impregnate them. Very few women took this opportunity.

These policies had mixed results. Although the birth rate had increased by 1939, it remained lower than it was during the ‘Golden Twenties’. A large number of women kept their jobs because of labour shortages, although the numbers of professional women did go down. The numbers of women in jobs actually went up in the later 1930s as the drive for rearmament and self-sufficiency took off.

How did Hitler and the Nazis change the lives of women between 1933 and 1939? [6]

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**YOUTH**

The Nazis saw indoctrination of the youth as the key to their future control of the country. To this end they set about influencing children inside and outside school. Inside School

The Nazis:

◆ dismissed Jewish teachers and those regarded as unreliable

◆ encouraged teachers to join the NSLB (National Socialist Teachers’ League). By 1939, 97 per cent of teachers were members

◆ Nazified the curriculum to reflect the importance of subjects such as History, Biology, Geography and PE

◆ prepared boys for life in the military and girls for their role as mothers

◆ established special schools (Napolas and Adolf Hitler Schools) to teach Germany’s future leaders.

Boys identified as high fliers went to Ordensburgen (Castles of Order).

Free Time The Hitler Youth Movement was established to control the activities of young people outside the classroom. Led by Baldur von Schirach, membership became compulsory for certain ages in 1936 and others in 1939.

The Nazis’ youth policies had mixed results. Evidence suggests that the quality and breadth of education suffered badly. Nor were all young people enamoured with the Hitler Youth. A significant minority avoided joining the Nazi youth movements and instead established rival groups. The two most notable were the Edelweiss Pirates and the Swing Youth.

In what ways did Hitler and the Nazis have an impact on the lives of young people in Germany between 1933 and 1939? [6]

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**RELIGION**

Although the Nazi Party officially supported what it called “positive Christianity”, Hitler believed that traditional Christian values like mercy and love had no place in the new Germany. Furthermore, he believed the Churches should obey the government. However, he knew that he had to tame the Churches rather than destroy it – too many Germans were Christian.

Catholicism

In July 1933 an agreement (concordat) was signed with the Catholic Church. The Church agreed not to involve itself in politics in return for being allowed to retain control over its schools and youth groups. Initially this arrangement worked well, but by 1936 most of the terms were being flaunted. In 1937 Pope Pius XI responded by condemning the Nazi regime, whilst German Church leaders such as Bishop Clemens von Galen of Münster spoke out strongly against Nazi policies in areas such as euthanasia of the mentally ill.

Lutheranism

The Lutheran Church was divided in its attitude to Nazism. Pro-Nazi Lutherans were known as the German Christians. They were led by Ludwig Müller, who became the first Reich Bishop in July 1933. In 1934 those Lutherans who disagreed with Nazism set up the Confessional Church. One of their leaders was Pastor Martin Niemöller who was arrested by the Nazis in 1937 and sent to Dachau Concentration Camp.

The Nazis also set up their own Church, the German Faith Movement. This was based more upon pagan beliefs than Christian values, and attracted few members.

Overall, the Nazis were unsuccessful in their aim of destroying traditional Christianity; however they were able to reduce the influence of the Churches. Although a number of individual clerics spoke out against aspects of the regime, by and large the Churches remained more concerned with ensuring their survival.

**ANTI-SEMITISM (The JEWS)**

Once in power, Hitler wasted no time in putting his anti-Semitism into operation.

**April 1933** Boycott of Jewish shops.

**April 1933** Jews banned from civil service

**October 1933** Jews banned from media jobs.

**September 1935 Nuremberg Laws.** There were two main elements:

• Jews deprived of many political and economic rights.

• Illegal for Jews and Aryans to marry or engage in sexual relations outside marriage. 1935 Jews banned from joining the army.

**1936** Persecution of the Jews eased off during the 1936 Olympic Games, which were held in Berlin.

**1937** Jewish businesses had to be registered; this made it easier for the state to confiscate them later.

**1938** Jews had to carry identity cards and have their passports stamped with a J shaped symbol.

Jews forced to use new names: Israel for men, Sarah for women.

This made persecution and discrimination easier.

**November 1938** The murder of a Nazi diplomat by a Jew in Paris on 7 November was the catalyst for a massive outbreak of anti-Jewish persecution. It became known as Kristallnacht. More than 400 synagogues and 7,500 shops were destroyed. Ninety-one Jews were killed and, over the following months, 20,000 were sent to concentration camps. The Nazis also fined the Jews one billion marks for the damage caused on Kristallnacht. Jews also had to clean up the streets.

**November 1938** Remaining Jewish businesses confiscated or closed down. 1939 Jews encouraged to emigrate from Germany.

**1939** Hitler spoke of future annihilation of Jews in the event of another World War.

**Explain how Nazi policies affected the churches and the lives of Jews in Germany between 1933 and 1939. In your answer refer to**

**• Actions towards the churches**

**• Laws and actions towards Jews. [12]**

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**PROPAGANDA**

One of the easiest ways of ensuring control of society was by winning the people over to the regime. This was the job of Dr Joseph Göbbels, Minister for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda. One of the most spectacular propaganda methods the Nazis used were the annual Nuremberg rallies. Light, sound and costume were used to create a hypnotic atmosphere. Other smaller-scale rallies were held throughout the year. Control of the media was also a key aim. This was achieved in a variety of ways:

◆ Most newspapers were bought up by Eher Verlag, the Nazi publishers.

◆ Journalists had to be approved by the Nazis.

◆ The Editors’ Law held editors responsible for the content of their newspapers.

◆ Newspapers that printed stories the regime disapproved of were shut down.

◆ Newspaper editors went to a daily Propaganda Ministry briefing to be told what to print.

◆ All radio stations were brought under Nazi control.

◆ People were encouraged to buy cheap radios made by the Reich Radio Company. These could only pick up Nazi broadcasts. By 1939, 70 per cent of households owned one.

◆ Loudspeakers were erected in public places.

The Propaganda Ministry also controlled censorship. To this end, it censored cinema, theatre, music and literature, to ensure that they conformed to Nazi ideas. In May 1933, 20,000 books were symbolically burned in Berlin. It is difficult to decide the extent to which ordinary Germans believed Nazi ideas. It is probably safe to say that Nazi propaganda helped reinforce existing beliefs but was less successful in trying to get people to accept new ideas. Censorship ensured that the quality of much of Germany’s culture was damaged. Only in the area of cinema was high-quality work produced, particularly by Leni Riefenstahl.

**The Police State**

‘Just in case anyone remained unpersuaded by Nazism, the security and justice systems also came under state control. The decree For the Protection of People and State allowed for opponents to be arrested and placed in ‘protective custody’ in concentration camps, the first of which was established at Dachau in March 1933. While most early inmates tended to be political prisoners, before long, other groups suffered internment, including:

◆ criminals

◆ the ‘work shy’ (people who found it difficult to find work)

◆ gypsies

◆ homosexuals

◆ the ‘anti-social’

◆ Jews.

Between 1933 and 1939, over 200,000 Germans were convicted and imprisoned for political crimes. In the same period, over 160,000 Germans were placed in ‘protective custody’ (effectively, arrested without trial).

**Security Forces**

Following the Night of the Long Knives Heinrich Himmler’s SS became the Party’s main police force. In conjunction with the Gestapo and SD, the SS eliminated all opposition within Germany. Historians argue that the SS became so powerful that it became a ‘state within a state’. The Gestapo (the secret state police and a branch of the SS) arrested ‘enemies of the state’. Also led by Himmler, much of the information it worked on came from ordinary Germans denouncing others. The SD was the intelligence arm of the SS; headed by Himmler’s student Reinhard Heydrich, it monitored the security of the Reich.

**The courts**

Judges and lawyers also came under state control. The aim was to ensure that the legal system did not protect those that the state wanted to punish. Special People’s Courts were established to judge those accused of crimes against the state. Overall, the police state was very successful. Although individuals might have grumbled about aspects of the Nazi state, there was no real organised opposition to the regime until World War II.

**Explain how the Nazis tried to control the German people from 1933 to 1939. In your answer refer to:**

**• The Gestapo and the SS**

**• Censorship and propaganda**

**And any other facts**

**[12]**

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**Nazi Economic Policy (I); Unions and Unemployment**

**Destroying the Unions**

Hitler was afraid that unions could interfere with his plans and so, in May 1933, they were banned and strikes were declared illegal. Unions were replaced by the German Labour Front (DAF – Deutsche Arbeitsfront) led by Dr Robert Ley. Within two years, all workers were members. While the DAF was meant to represent the workers in discussions with the employees, it tended to side with employers, and workers found their freedom restricted and their working hours increased. By 1939 a six day week and a 12 hour working day was common.

On a positive note, wages improved a bit, and prices and rents were strictly controlled by the state.

**Free Time**

The Nazis were also keen to ensure that their workers were happy outside the workplace. Therefore, Strength Through Joy (KDF – Kraft Durch Freude) was established in November 1933 to improve workers’ free time. Again led by Dr Ley, the KDF provided cheap holidays and organised a broad range of sporting activities. Workers were also given the chance to pay into a savings scheme to own a car, the Volkswagen (people’s car). However, no cars had been distributed when the war started in 1939.

**Unemployment**

One of the most important tasks facing Hitler was the need to reduce unemployment. By the end of 1939, only 300,000 Germans were officially listed as unemployed. This was achieved in a number of ways:

1. Public work schemes were increased with the establishment of the National Labour Service (RAD – Reichsarbeitsdienst). The RAD built schools, hospitals and motorways. Those involved lived in camps and wore military-style uniforms. While no wages were paid, workers got free meals and pocket money. The RAD became compulsory in 1935.

2. Many people – especially professional women and Jews – were forced from the workplace and their jobs were then given to those who were unemployed. Neither of these groups was then counted as unemployed.

3. The introduction of conscription into the armed forces 1935 had a significant impact on unemployment levels.

4. As Germany prepared for war, thousands of jobs were created in the armament and associated industries. The problem was Germany was not making any goods which other countries wanted to buy – it was mainly making tanks, bombers and artificial oil and rubber.

New Plan

In May 1933, respected economist Dr Hjalmar Schacht became President of the Reichsbank. Within a year, he had been appointed Minister of Economics. Schacht’s 1934 New Plan oversaw the revitalisation of the German economy by:

◆ drastically reducing welfare spending

◆ imposing limits on imports (so Germans had to buy goods made by other Germans)

◆ implementing a series of trade agreements with countries to ensure that Germany was supplied with vital raw materials (oil, steel, rubber, tin) in return for German industrial goods

◆ introducing targeted government spending on key industries. Under Schacht’s guidance, the German economy recovered; however, this was not enough to ensure his survival. By 1936 Hitler was pressurising him to increase spending on rearmament. Since Schacht was reluctant to do this, he was increasingly ignored and a year later he had resigned from the government.

**Four Year Plan**

Despite his total lack of economic expertise, Herman Göring was the man Hitler appointed to prepare the economy for war. In 1936 he introduced the Four Year Plan. Its aim was to ensure that Germany was economically self sufficient during any future conflict. The Four Year Plan introduced a range of strategies to ensure autarky (economic selfsufficiency):

◆ New factories were constructed.

◆ Import levels were reduced. ◆ Higher targets were set for the production of essential materials such as oil, rubber and steel.

However, by 1939 Germany was still importing over 30 per cent of its raw materials. It had become clear that the only way to make enough money was to seize the resources of other states through military conquest.

In what ways did the Nazis try to improve the German economy between 1933 and 1939? [5]

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How did the Nazis try to reduce unemployment in Germany between 1933 and 1939? [5]

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Explain how the Nazis tried to control the lives of Jews and workers in Germany between 1933 and 1939. In your answer refer to the bullet points and use other relevant knowledge.

• Laws and actions towards Jews

• Policies and actions towards workers. [12]

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FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS

In what ways did the lives of women in Germany change between 1933 and 1939? [5]

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How did the actions of Hitler and the Nazis affect the lives of Jews between 1933 and 1939? [6]

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