

Nazi propaganda



What was Propaganda and why was it important to the Nazis?

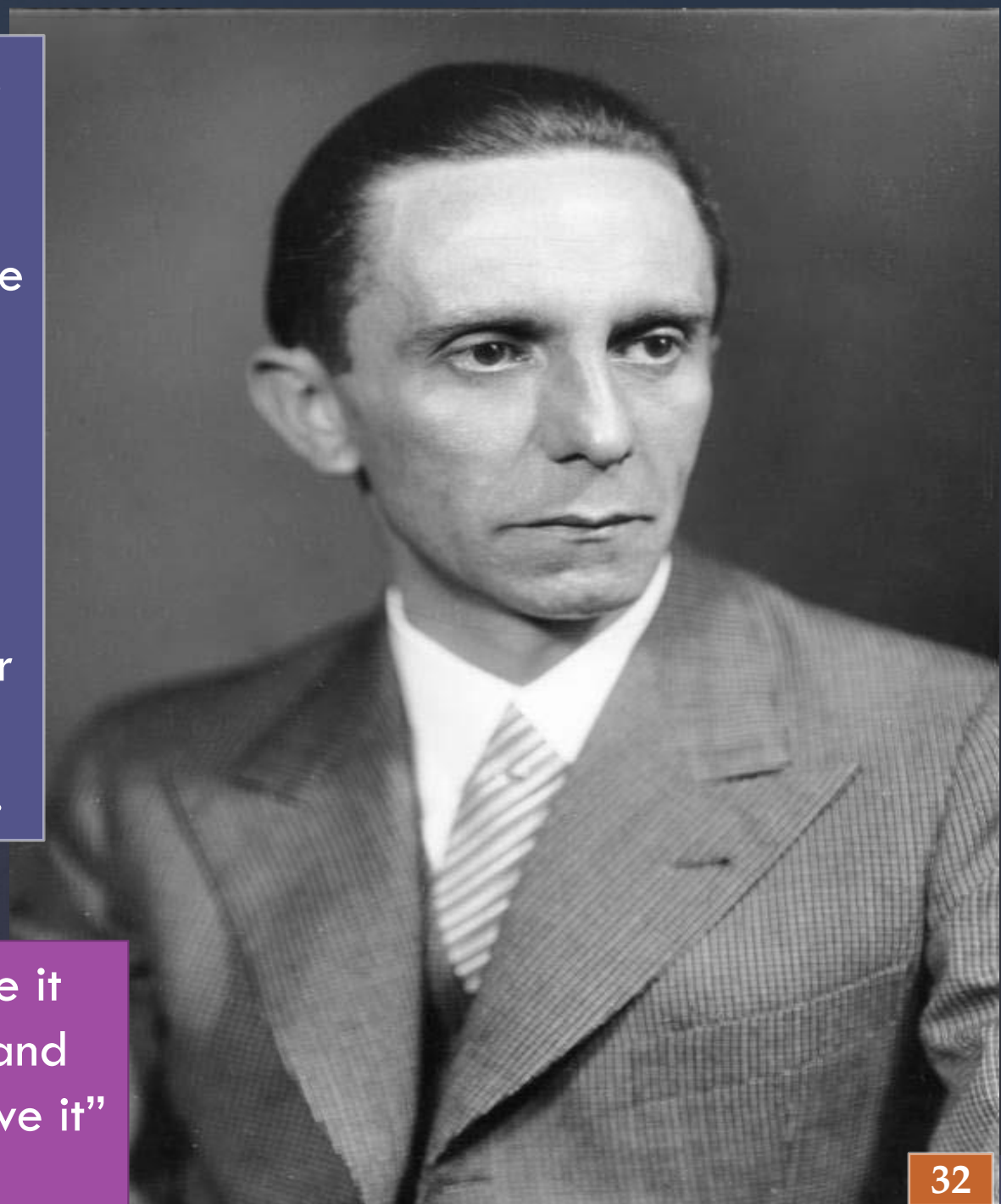
Propaganda within Nazi Germany was taken to a new level. Hitler was very aware of the value of good propaganda and he appointed **Joseph Goebbels** as head of propaganda. In 1933, he set up the Reich Chamber of Culture. Any artist who wanted to publish a play or book, make a film, write a piece of music had to be a member.

Propaganda is the art of persuasion - persuading others that your 'side of the story' is correct. Propaganda was used to encourage the German people to have the same ideas and beliefs of the Nazi Party and ensure that they stayed loyal to Hitler.

Censorship stopped people knowing anything different.

Information was strictly controlled. Germans were allowed to hear only about Nazi strengths and successes. Any information harmful to the Nazis was censored.

Dr Joseph Goebbels was in charge of propaganda. Goebbels' official title was Minister of Propaganda and National Enlightenment. Goebbels was given complete control over the radio, press, cinema, and theatre.



“Make the lie big, make it simple, keep saying it, and eventually they will believe it”
Adolf Hitler

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How did the Nazis use propaganda to control the German people?

Newspapers were allowed to print only stories which were pro-Nazi and were given detailed instructions about what to write. Anti-Nazi newspapers were closed and their editors sacked.

Cheap radios were made available to ensure that the Nazi message reached many homes. They were called the 'people's receivers'. They were made so that foreign stations could not be picked up, so that the only view of the world they received was the Nazi one. Loudspeakers were installed in public areas.

The cinema was used in their propaganda campaign. A typical programme at the cinema would also include newsreels and documentary films with a Nazi slant.

In May 1933, **books** which the Nazis disagreed with were publicly burnt in Berlin. "Where one burns books, one eventually burns people" commented the author Brecht.

How did the Nazis use propaganda to control the German people?

Huge rallies and marches of party members were used to impress people at home and abroad, especially the annual meeting at Nuremberg.

Arenas to hold 400,000 people were built. There were army parades, gymnastic displays, bands and choirs, firework displays and fly pasts by the air force.

The Nazis also used the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin as a massive propaganda event to demonstrate the superiority of the Aryan race. The black American athlete Jesse Owens winning four gold medals, however, dampened some of the Nazi celebrations.

Music had to be German and composers like Wagner, Beethoven and Mozart were in favour. German folksongs and marching music were also encouraged. However, jazz was banned because it was black American. Blacks were considered inferior.

The Berlin Olympic Games 1936



The Nazis used the 1936 Olympic Games as a massive propaganda event to show the superiority of the Aryan race.

Jesse Owens in the 100m race. He won four gold medals at the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games.



The People's Radio

To make sure that all Germans could hear Hitler speak, Goebbels organised the sale of cheap radios. These were called the "People's Radio" and they cost only 76 marks. Goebbels believed that if Hitler was to give speeches, the people should be able to hear him. Loud speakers were put up in streets so that people could not avoid any speeches by the Fuhrer.



A poster advertising cheap Nazi-produced radios. The text reads 'All Germany hears the Fuhrer on the People's Radio.' The radios had a short range and were unable to pick up foreign stations.



Checkpoint your understanding What do you know and understand?

- ✓ Joseph Goebbels was responsible for Nazi propaganda.
- ✓ He controlled the media through the Chamber of Culture.
- ✓ Huge rallies and marches of party members were used to impress people at home and abroad especially the annual meeting at Nuremberg.
- ✓ Goebbels attacked anyone critical of the Nazis.
- ✓ Radios were made cheap so everybody could hear the Nazi message.
- ✓ Goebbels organised the burning of books in Berlin in May 1933.
- ✓ The Olympic Games 1936 was used as propaganda.
- ✓ Information harmful to the Nazis was censored.

