

Hitler's Rise from Felon to Fuhrer

Nazi war monger utilized media manipulation, surging nationalism in rise from obscurity to absolute power

By Ginny Dumond

NUREMBERG, Germany — While the old relics of the Third Reich have either been disposed of or are serving as memorial sights, and most of the towns and important buildings have been restored, one question still comes to mind 53 years after the war's end: How could this happen?

One wonders that at the sight of Nazi soldiers standing over a truck full of dead concentration camp prisoners. One wonders that at the apparent brainwashing of an entire county, and one wonders that when looking at the stern face of a the sinister 45-year-old man who made it all possible.

"At first the people were happy to have Hitler because Germany was in a hell of a mess," said David Durlbut, Dachau concentration camp volunteer. "You had a world depression and Germany was even worse."

The years after World War I, in which Germany was embarrassed and heavily bombed, were filled with hunger and high unemployment rates.

Though tried for treason against Germany in 1924, Hitler brought pride back into the German mindset. In his book, *Mein Kampf*, which was written from prison, Hitler urged the use of force to take back what was rightfully German land and respect.

Therefore, when Hitler with his National Socialism Party put themselves into power the people rarely resisted.

"People thought Hitler was the man," Durlbut said. "He got the country going and got people back to work."

"My father once said that during the Depression that Roosevelt put food on the table. I would have done anything Roosevelt wanted," he said. "Well, we should be damn glad that Roosevelt wasn't a Hitler if that was the case."

After officially coming to power in 1933, Hitler's popularity was evident in that 95 percent of Germans voted to allow the dictatorship.

What is even more telling is that 2,154 of 2,242 inmates at Dachau concentration camp cast their votes in favor of Hitler.

Hitler's first act of business after the election was the revamping of the German education system to include extensive military training as well as anti-semitic propaganda. He then could use this brainwashing of the children against rebellious parents.

"When an opponent declares, 'I will not come over to your side,'" he said in a November 1933 speech, "I will calmly say, 'Your child belongs to us already ..What are you? You will pass on. Your descendants, however, now stand in the new camp. In a short time they will know nothing else but this new community.'"

From ages 6 to 10, boys would serve a short apprenticeship in the Hitler youth, then at age 10 they graduated into Young Folk where the following oath was taken: "In the presence of this blood banner, which represents our Fuhrer, I swear to devote all my energies and my strength to the savior of our country, Adolf Hitler. I am willing and ready to give up my life for him, so help me God."

In the school system all books and teachings were being rewritten to build morale of the Aryan Germans and create a hatred for Jews. At the University of Berlin, 25 new courses in racial science were brought about and world-renowned scientists such as Franck, Einstein, and Warburg were fired or retired. "German Physics," as it was being called, was then introduced.

"Modern Physics is an instrument of world Jewery for the destruction of Nordic science... True physics is the creation of the German spirit... In fact, all European science is the result of Aryan, or, better, German thought," wrote Professor Rudolphe Tomashek, director of the Institute of Physics in Dresden.

Georg Schafer, former anti-aircraft gunner for the Germans during World War II, says because of the Hitler-controlled press most Germans had no idea what had happened until after the war was over.

"We were just defending our town," Schafer said.

"The first time we got knowledge of all that had happened was as seen through American eyes [in American newspapers].

"In the first place, we didn't believe it...until we saw the [concentration camp] pictures," he said. "I mean, it was absolutely horrible."

"You know the thing about all this that gives me sleepless nights?" Durlbut asked.
"It's that after the war doctors examined some of the S.S. men and the concentration camp officials and discovered that most of these were normal people like you and me.

"Normal people had been brought to the point that they thought what they were doing was right because the people were inferior."