

led by the very people who he claimed had betrayed Germany.

When Hitler was released from prison after only nine months of confinement, the German economic situation had improved. The Nazis might have disappeared had it not been for the Great Depression. When millions became unemployed in 1930 and bread lines formed, Hitler was delighted. His party promised jobs, food, and national pride. In 1928 only 12 Reichstag deputies were Nazis, but in 1930, 107 Nazis were elected, and in 1932 they won 230 seats, making Hitler's the largest single party in Germany. In January 1933 President Hindenburg named Hitler as chancellor.

Hitler's lieutenants constantly battled among themselves. Ernst Röhm led the SA Brown Shirts, a military group that supported Hitler. They had been useful when Hitler was outside government, but now Hitler was the führer (leader) and needed the support of wealthy industrialists and the aristocrats. A new elite group was picked from the best of the SAs in 1930: the SS, headed by Heinrich Himmler. They were better educated, from more respectable families, and very loyal to Hitler. To take charge of information gathering, Himmler created the SD under Reinhard Heydrich. Spies and informers gave Heydrich the information that he needed to justify Röhm's arrest. On June 30, 1934, the "Night of the Long Knives," Röhm and 200 other SA men were arrested and executed.

In 1936 Hitler named Himmler head of all police in Germany. There were not only ordinary police, but also criminal police and political police (gestapo). Political prisoners were sent to a new concentration camp at Dachau, which was a few miles from Munich. Since Dachau held only 5,000 prisoners and many new customers were being picked up every week, other camps were built, the most famous being Buchenwald.

SS units created fear in Germany and silenced all but the bravest. Ministers and priests were watched carefully. If they criticized Hitler's policies, they were sent to concentration camps. Many of them died there. The SS followed the army during invasions, going after Jews, gypsies, union leaders, Communists, or those listed as "subhumans."

Selling the Nazi regime to foreigners and the nation was the job of Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop and Dr. Joseph Goebbels, minister of propaganda. Neither worried about lies or deception. The world was faced with a government based on hate and fear with no conscience to trouble it. Nazi Germany joined Japan and Italy in creating wars.

Debate in 1936

The situation in Germany is serious, and the United States should take a major part in ending the Nazi regime.