

introduced a bill to embargo all arms to countries at war in Europe, a plan resisted vigorously by President Wilson. Germany's resumption of submarine warfare in 1917, and the publication of the Zimmermann telegram, brought Hitchcock to support of the administration. Reluctantly, he voted to declare war on Germany.

Hitchcock's greatest influence in the Senate began when he assumed chairmanship of the Foreign Relations Committee in April 1918. He was a reluctant internationalist, and it was only during World War I that he saw the necessity for some international agency to secure the peace. Yet, despite his conversion to advocacy of the League of Nations, Hitchcock's relations with President Wilson remained cool. The President ignored Hitchcock's suggestion that the modifications of the League's collective security provisions proposed by Republican senator Henry Cabot Lodge be incorporated into the Treaty of Versailles to make it more acceptable. Meanwhile, Democratic counter-proposals, acceptable to the President, had little general success. Though Hitchcock supported Wilson to the end, the League and the treaty were defeated.

Hitchcock was defeated for reelection in 1922 and in 1930. He served as chairman of the Democratic platform committee in 1932. He died in Washington, D.C., on Feb. 3, 1934.

### Further Reading

There is no good biography of Hitchcock. Brief notes are available in the Congressional Directory for the years of his House and Senate careers. For Hitchcock's role in the peace negotiations see Thomas A. Bailey, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great Betrayal* (1945); John A. Garraty, *Henry Cabot Lodge* (1953); and Arthur S. Link, *Wilson the Diplomatist* (1957). □

## Adolf Hitler

The German dictator Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) led the extreme nationalist and racist Nazi party and served as chancellor-president of Germany from 1933 to 1945. Probably the most effective and powerful demagogue of the 20th century, his leadership led to the extermination of approximately 6 million Jews.

Adolf Hitler and his National Socialist movement belong among the many irrationally nationalistic, racist, and fundamentally nihilist political movements that sprang from the ground of political, economic, and social desperation following World War I and the deeply upsetting economic dislocations of the interwar period. Taking their name from the first such movement to gain power—Mussolini's fascism in Italy (1922)—fascist movements reached the peak of their popular appeal and political power in the widespread panic and mass psychosis that spread to all levels of the traditional industrial and semi-industrial societies of Europe with the world de-

pression of the 1930s. Always deeply chauvinistic, anti-liberal and antirational, and violently anti-Semitic, these movements varied in form from the outright atheistic and industrialist German national socialism to the lesser-known mystical-religious and peasant-oriented movements of eastern Europe.

### Early Life

Adolf Hitler was born on April 20, 1889, in the small Austrian town of Braunau on the Inn River along the Bavarian-German border, son of an Austrian customs official of moderate means. His early youth in Linz on the Danube seems to have been under the repressive influence of an authoritarian and, after retirement in 1895, increasingly short-tempered and domineering father until the latter's death in 1903. After an initially fine performance in elementary school, Adolf soon became rebellious and began failing in the *Realschule* (college preparatory school). Following transfer to another school, he finally left formal education altogether in 1905 and, refusing to bow to the discipline of a regular job, began his long years of dilettante, aimless existence, reading, painting, wandering in the woods, and dreaming of becoming a famous artist. In 1907, when his mother died, he moved to Vienna in an attempt to enroll in the famed Academy of Fine Arts. His failure to gain admission that year and the next led him into a period of deep depression and seclusion from his friends. Wandering through the streets of Vienna, he lived on a modest orphan's pension and the money he could earn by painting and selling picture postcards. It was during this time of his vaga-



bond existence among the rootless, displaced elements of the old Hapsburg capital, that he first became fascinated by the immense potential of mass political manipulation. He was particularly impressed by the successes of the anti-Semitic, nationalist Christian-Socialist party of Vienna Mayor Karl Lueger and his efficient machine of propaganda and mass organization. Under Lueger's influence and that of former Catholic monk and race theorist Lanz von Liebenfels, Hitler first developed the fanatical anti-Semitism and racial mythology that were to remain central to his own "ideology" and that of the Nazi party.

In May 1913, apparently in an attempt to avoid induction into the Austrian military service after he had failed to register for conscription, Hitler slipped across the German border to Munich, only to be arrested and turned over to the Austrian police. He was able to persuade the authorities not to detain him for draft evasion and duly presented himself for the draft physical examination, which he failed to pass. He returned to Munich, and after the outbreak of World War I a year later, he volunteered for action in the German army. During the war he fought on Germany's Western front with distinction but gained no promotion beyond the rank of corporal. Injured twice, he won several awards for bravery, among them the highly respected Iron Cross First Class. Although isolated in his troop, he seems to have thoroughly enjoyed his success on the front and continued to look back fondly upon his war experience.

### Early Nazi Years

The end of the war suddenly left Hitler without a place or goal and drove him to join the many disillusioned veterans who continued to fight in the streets of Germany. In the spring of 1919 he found employment as a political officer in the army in Munich with the help of an adventurer-soldier by the name of Ernst Roehm—later head of Hitler's storm troopers (SA). In this capacity Hitler attended a meeting of the so-called German Workers' party, a nationalist, anti-Semitic, and socialist group, in September 1919. He quickly distinguished himself as this party's most popular and impressive speaker and propagandist, helped to increase its membership dramatically to some 6,000 by 1921, and in April that year became Führer (leader) of the now-renamed National Socialist German Workers' party (NSDAP), the official name of the Nazi party.

The worsening economic conditions of the two following years, which included a runaway inflation that wiped out the savings of great numbers of middle-income citizens, massive unemployment, and finally foreign occupation of the economically crucial Ruhr Valley, contributed to the continued rapid growth of the party. By the end of 1923 Hitler could count on a following of some 56,000 members and many more sympathizers and regarded himself as a significant force in Bavarian and German politics. Inspired by Mussolini's "March on Rome," he hoped to use the crisis conditions accompanying the end of the Ruhr occupation in the fall of 1923 to stage his own coup against the Berlin government. For this purpose he staged the well-known Nazi Beer Hall Putsch of Nov. 8/9, 1923, by which he hoped—in coalition with right-wingers around World War I

general Erich Ludendorff—to force the conservative-nationalist Bavarian government of Gustav von Kahr to cooperate with him in a rightist "March on Berlin." The attempt failed, however. Hitler was tried for treason and given the rather mild sentence of a year's imprisonment in the old fort of Landsberg.

It was during this prison term that many of Hitler's basic ideas of political strategy and tactics matured. Here he outlined his major plans and beliefs in *Mein Kampf*, which he dictated to his loyal confidant Rudolf Hess. He planned the reorganization of his party, which had been outlawed and which, with the return of prosperity, had lost much of its appeal. After his release Hitler reconstituted the party around a group of loyal followers who were to remain the cadre of the Nazi movement and state. Progress was slow in the prosperous 1920s, however, and on the eve of the Depression, the NSDAP still was able to attract only some 2.5 percent of the electoral vote.

### Rise to Power

With the outbreak of world depression, the fortunes of Hitler's movement rose rapidly. In the elections of September 1930 the Nazis polled almost 6.5 million votes and increased their parliamentary representation from 12 to 107. In the presidential elections of the spring of 1932, Hitler ran an impressive second to the popular World War I hero Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg, and in July he outpolled all other parties with some 14 million votes and 230 seats in the Reichstag (parliament). Although the party lost 2 million of its voters in another election, in November 1932, President Hindenburg on Jan. 30, 1933, reluctantly called Hitler to the chancellorship to head a coalition government of Nazis, conservative German nationalists, and several prominent independents.

### Consolidation of Power

The first 2 years in office were almost wholly dedicated to the consolidation of power. With several prominent Nazis in key positions (Hermann Göring, as minister of interior in Prussia, and Wilhelm Frick, as minister of interior of the central government, controlled the police forces) and his military ally Werner von Blomberg in the Defense Ministry, he quickly gained practical control. He persuaded the aging president and the Reichstag to invest him with emergency powers suspending the constitution in the so-called Enabling Act of Feb. 28, 1933. Under this act and with the help of a mysterious fire in the Reichstag building, he rapidly eliminated his political rivals and brought all levels of government and major political institutions under his control. By means of the Roehm purge of the summer of 1934 he assured himself of the loyalty of the army by the subordination of the Nazi storm troopers and the murder of its chief together with the liquidation of major rivals within the army. The death of President Hindenburg in August 1934 cleared the way for the abolition of the presidential title by plebiscite. Hitler became officially Führer of Germany and thereby head of state as well as commander in chief of the armed forces. Joseph Goebbels's extensive propaganda machine and Heinrich Himmler's police system simulta-

neously perfected totalitarian control of Germany, as demonstrated most impressively in the great Nazi mass rally of 1934 in Nuremberg, where millions marched in unison and saluted Hitler's theatrical appeals.

### Preparation for War

Once internal control was assured, Hitler began mobilizing Germany's resources for military conquest and racial domination of the land masses of central and eastern Europe. He put Germany's 6 million unemployed to work on a vast rearmament and building program, coupled with a propaganda campaign to prepare the nation for war. Germany's mythical enemy, world Jewry—which was associated with all internal and external obstacles in the way of total power—was systematically and ruthlessly attacked in anti-Semitic mass propaganda, with economic sanctions, and in the end by the "final solution" of physical destruction of Jewish men, women, and children in Himmler's concentration camps.

Foreign relations were similarly directed toward preparation for war: the improvement of Germany's military position, the acquisition of strong allies or the establishment of convenient neutrals, and the division of Germany's enemies. Playing on the weaknesses of the Versailles Peace Treaty and the general fear of war, this policy was initially most successful in the face of appeasement-minded governments in England and France. After an unsuccessful coup attempt in Austria in 1934, Hitler gained Mussolini's alliance and dependence as a result of Italy's Ethiopian war in 1935, illegally marched into the Rhineland in 1936 (demilitarized at Versailles), and successfully intervened—in cooperation with Mussolini—in the Spanish Civil War. Under the popular banner of national self-determination, he annexed Austria and the German-speaking Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia with the concurrence of the West in 1938 (Munich Agreement), only to occupy all of Czechoslovakia early in 1939. Finally, through threats and promises of territory, he was able to gain the benevolent neutrality of the Soviet Union for the coming war (Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, August 1939). Alliances with Italy (Pact of Steel) and Japan followed.

### the War

On Sept. 1, 1939, Hitler began World War II—which he hoped would lead to his control of most of the Eurasian continent—with the lightning invasion of Poland, which he immediately followed with the liquidation of Jews and the Polish intelligentsia, the enslavement of the local "subhuman" population, and the beginnings of a German rearmament. Following the declaration of war by France and England, he temporarily turned his military machine toward the lightning, mobile attacks of the German Blitzkrieg, where the lightning, mobile attacks of the German Blitzkrieg triumphed. In April 1940 Denmark surrendered, and Norway was taken by an amphibious operation. Day after day the rapidly advancing tank forces defeated France and the Low Countries.

The major goal of Hitler's conquest lay in the East, however, and already in the middle of 1940 German war preparations were preparing for an eastern campaign. The Air

Force was reorganized for the Battle of Britain, which Hitler had hoped would permit either German invasion or (this continued to be his dream) an alliance with "Germanic" England, was broken off, and Germany's naval operations collapsed for lack of reinforcements and matériel.

On June 22, 1941, the German army advanced on Russia in the so-called Operation Barbarossa, which Hitler regarded as Germany's final struggle for existence and "living space" (*Lebensraum*) and for the creation of the "new order" of German racial domination. After initial rapid advances, the German troops were stopped by the severe Russian winter, however, and failed to reach any of their three major goals: Leningrad, Moscow, and Stalingrad. The following year's advances were again slower than expected, and with the first major setback at Stalingrad (1943) the long retreat from Russia began. A year later, the Western Allies, too, started advancing on Germany.

### German Defeat

With the waning fortunes of the German war effort, Hitler withdrew almost entirely from the public; his orders became increasingly erratic and pedantic; and recalling his earlier triumphs over the generals, he refused to listen to advice from his military counselors. He dreamed of miracle weapons and suspected treason everywhere. Under the slogan of "total victory or total ruin," the entire German nation from young boys to old men, often barely equipped or untrained, was mobilized and sent to the front. After an unsuccessful assassination attempt by a group of former leading politicians and military men on July 20, 1944, the regime of terror further tightened.

In the last days of the Third Reich, with the Russian troops in the suburbs of Berlin, Hitler entered into a last stage of desperation in his underground bunker in Berlin. He ordered Germany destroyed since it was not worthy of him; he expelled his trusted lieutenants Himmler and Göring from the party; and made a last, theatrical appeal to the German nation. Adolf Hitler committed suicide on April 30, 1945, leaving the last bits of unconquered German territory to the administration of non-Nazi Adm. Karl Doenitz.

### Further Reading

Hitler's own writings start with *Mein Kampf*; of its many translations, that of Ralph Mannheim (1943) is preferred. *Hitler's Secret Book* (1961), with an introduction by Telford Taylor, is a second book on foreign policy written by Hitler in 1928 but not published during the Nazi years. The most important book of speeches is Norman H. Baynes, ed., *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler* (2 vols., 1942). Records of Hitler's conversations are in Hermann Rauschning, *The Voice of Destruction* (1940); H. R. Trevor-Roper, ed., *Hitler's Secret Conversations* (1953); and François Genoud, ed., *The Testament of Adolf Hitler* (1961). Of the numerous biographies of Hitler, Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny* (1952; rev. ed. 1962), is outstanding, and it is also the best general book on Nazi Germany. A shorter recent biography by a German historian is Helmut Heiber, *Adolf Hitler: A Short Biography* (1961). Konrad Heiden, *Der Fuehrer: Hitler's Rise to Power* (1944), is the classic biography written during the Nazi years, which contains important insights for the period up to 1934. The young Hitler was de-