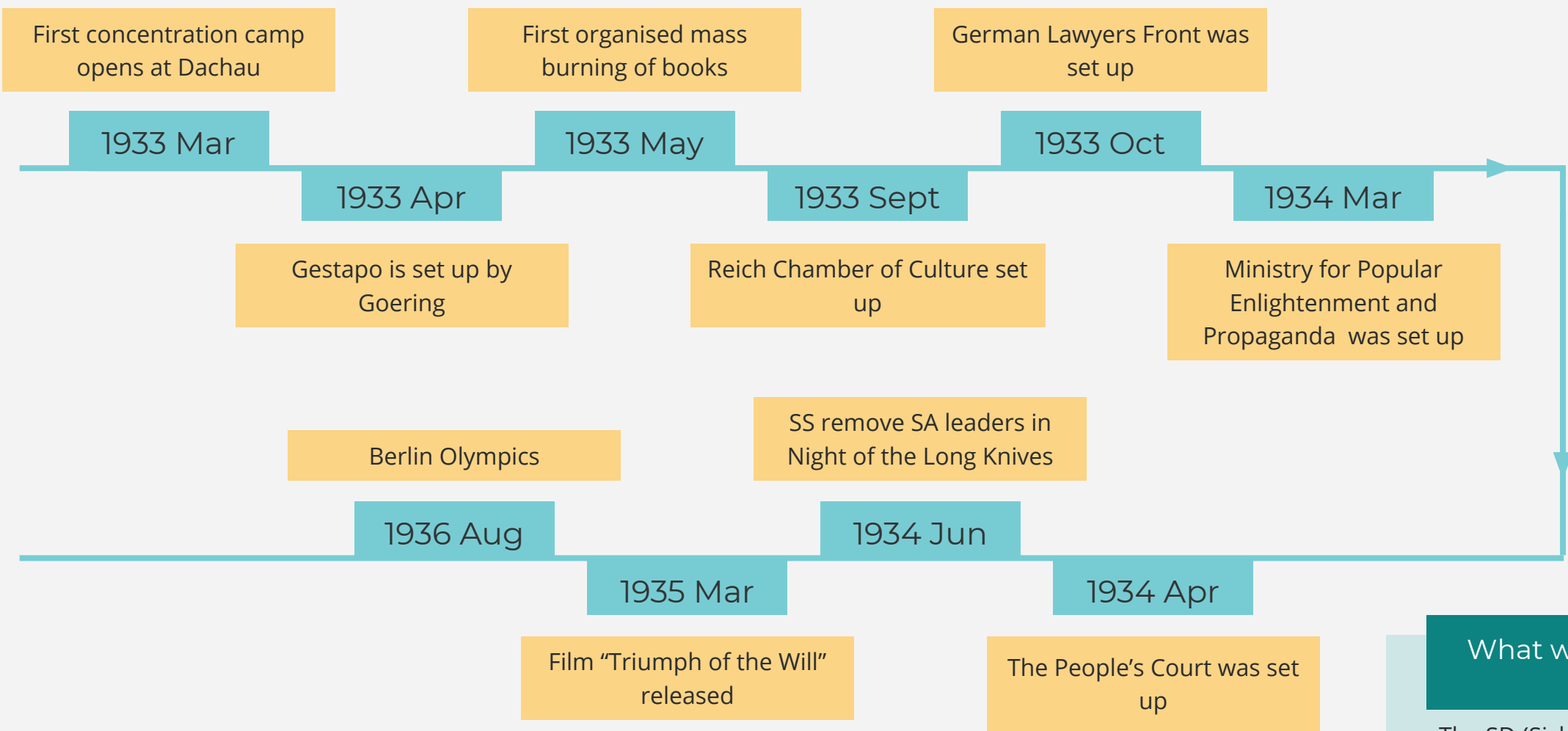


Key Question 6 : What methods did the Nazis use to control Germany?

Timeline of events



“The best propaganda is that which, as it were, works invisibly, penetrates the whole of life without the public having any knowledge of it” Joseph Goebbels

Important concept

Terror and persuasion – “the carrot and the stick” – trying to scare people into doing as they are told at the same time as convincing them they are doing the right thing.

What were the main elements of the Nazi police state?

- The SD (Sicherheitsdienst) was set up in 1931 by Himmler to discover actual and potential enemies of the Nazi Party and remove them.
- The SS (Schutzstaffel) - set up in 1925, in 1934 made responsible for the removal of all opposition to the Nazis within Germany; ran the concentration camps; SS officers had to be pure Aryans.
- The Gestapo (Secret State Police) – set up by Goering in 1933, could arrest and imprison suspected ‘enemies of the state’ without trial; used surveillance, entrapment and informants to catch their victims.
- Political opponents and ‘enemies of the state’ ended up in concentration camps, including religious groups e.g. Jehovah’s Witnesses, Jews; members of rival political parties e.g. the Communists; the ‘work shy’ e.g. gypsies, vagrants, alcoholics; sexual offenders e.g. homosexuals.
- By 1939, 160,000 people were held in these camps.

Key words

Police state	A country where the police are used to ensure obedience to the government
SS	Dealt with ‘enemies of the state’, ran the concentration camps
Gestapo	Secret police who used informants and entrapment to find ‘enemies of the state’
Concentration camp	A prison camp for ‘enemies of the state’ and opponents of the Nazis
Propaganda	Aggressively promoting a particular point of view
Censorship	Controlling information by removing or hiding what you do not want people to know
Degenerate	Word used to describe art, music, film or literature that did not follow Nazi values

Key Question 6 : What methods did the Nazis use to control Germany?

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

Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda was set up by Goebbels to control the thoughts, beliefs and opinions of the German people.

Cinema:

- films had pro-Nazi story lines e.g. "The Eternal Jew" to be approved by Goebbels
- newsreels focusing on Nazi achievements were shown with every film
- films like "Triumph of the Will" by Leni Riefenstahl glorified Hitler.

Rallies:

- the annual mass rally in September at Nuremberg mixed stirring spectacle with a speech by Hitler created an atmosphere of frenzy.

Radio:

- all radio stations were under Nazi control and spread only Nazi messages
- cheap mass-produced radios were sold so 70% of Germans had one by 1939
- radio was played in all public places e.g. bars, factories, even in the street.

Posters:

- seen everywhere with Nazi messages, eg "Ein Reich, Ein Volk, Ein Fuhrer".

1936 Berlin Olympics

- Germany hosted this event to publicise Nazi ideals and success around the world, and to prove Aryan superiority (Germany did win more medals than any other country at the games – 89 in total to USA's 56).

How did the Nazis control the legal system?

- Judges and lawyers had to belong to the National Socialist League for the Maintenance of Law and Order – sacked if they refused.
- The German Lawyers Front was established and its 10,000 members swore an oath of loyalty to the Führer.
- A new People's Court was set up to try enemies of the state; by 1939 it had sentenced over 500 people to death.
- Abolished the right to a trial before prison; by 1939, 162,000 Germans imprisoned without trial, 500 sentenced to death.
- The number of crimes punishable by death rose from 3 in 1933 to 46 in 1943; e.g. for listening to a foreign radio station.

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

Musicians, writers and actors had to join the Reich Chamber of Culture. Anything challenging Nazi ideals was "degenerate".

Newspapers:

- subject to strict censorship; editors were told what to print
- by 1935 the Nazis had closed down thousands of newspapers
- the German Press Agency told editors what foreign stories to print.

Books:

- all were censored and had to put across the Nazi message;
- over 2500 writers were banned
- the burning of banned books through mass bonfires
- authors like Bertolt Brecht and Thomas Mann went into exile.

Music:

- hated modern music, jazz in particular, so it was banned
- preferred German folk music and the classical music of German composers Bach, Beethoven and Wagner.

Theatre:

- focus on German history and political drama;
- cheap tickets encouraged people to see Nazi-inspired plays.

Art:

- hated modern art so it was banned
- preferred more heroic imagery that promoted Nazi ideals for example women as housewives and mothers.