The Nazi Rise To Power Essay, Research Paper

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The National Socialist German Workers’ Party almost died one morning in 1919. It numbered only a few dozen grumblers’ it had no organization and no political ideas. But many among the middle class admired the Nazis’ muscular opposition to the Social Democrats. And the Nazis themes of patriotism and militarism drew highly emotional responses from people who could not forget Germany’s pre-war imperial grandeur.

In the national elections of September 1930, the Nazis garnered nearly 6.5 million votes and became second only to the Social Democrats as the most popular party in Germany. In Northeim, where in 1928 Nazi candidates had received 123 votes, they now polled 1,742, a respectable 28 percent of the total. The nationwide success drew even faster… in just three years, party membership would rise from about 100,000 to almost a million, and the number of local branches would increase tenfold. The new

members included working-class people, farmers, and middle-class professionals. They were both better educated and younger then the Old Fighters, who had been the backbone of the party during its first decade. The Nazis now presented themselves as the party of the young, the strong, and the pure, in opposition to an establishment populated by the elderly, the weak, and the dissolute.

The swing of voters to support of the Nazi Party was due to many factors. These included economic and political instability, increasing violence, and a need for an authoritarian figurehead aided Hitler’s rise to power, hence the rise of Germany towards existence as a fascist state. More specifically, the Great Depression, faulty political procedure, the weakness of the Weimar government, Nazi tactics and Hitler’s excellent leadership skills also played a large part in the shaping of Germany as a fascist nation. Once in power, Hitler was able to manipulate the minds and hearts of this disenchanted nation towards anything, once trust was gained.

On the evening of November 8, 1923, Wyuke Vavaruab State Cinnussuiber Gustav Rutter von Kahr was making a political speech in Munich’s sprawling B rgerbr ukeller, some 600 Nazis and right-wing sympathizers surrounded the beer hall. Hitler burst into the building and leaped onto a table, brandishing a revolver and firing a shot into the ceiling. “The National Revolution, has begun!” he cried. in an attempt to stage a National revolution, and seize power to rule the nation. At that point, informed that fighting had broken out in another part of the city, Hitler rushed to that scene. His prisoners were allowed to leave, and they talked about organizing defenses against the Nazi coup. Hitler was furious. And he was far from finished. At about 11 o’clock on the morning of November 9–the anniversary of the

founding of the German Republic in 1919–3,000 Hitler partisans again gathered outside the B rgerbr ukeller.

To this day, no one knows who fired the first shot. But a shot rang out, and it was followed by fusillades from both sides. Hermann G ring fell wounded in the thigh and both legs. Hitler flattened himself against the pavement; he was unhurt. General Ludenorff continued to march stolidly toward the police line, which parted to let him pass through (he was later arrested, tried and acquitted). Behind him, 16 Nazis and three policemen lay sprawled dead among the many wounded.

The next year, R hm and his band joined forces with the fledgling National Socialist Party in Adolf Hitler’s Munich Beer Hall Putsch. Himmler took part in that uprising, but he played such a minor role that he escaped arrest. The R hm-Hitler alliance survived the Putsch, and R hm’s 1,500-man band grew into the Sturmabteilung, the SA, Hitler’s brown-shirted private army, that bullied the Communists and Democrats. Hitler recruited a handful of men to act as his bodyguards and protect him from Communist toughs, other rivals, and even the S.A. if it got out of hand. This tiny group was the newly formed SS.

In 1933, after the Nazi Party had taken power in Germany, increasing trouble with the SA made a showdown inevitable. As German Chancellor, the F hrer could no longer afford to tolerate the disruptive SA; under the ambitious R hm, the SA had grown to be an organization of three million men, and its unpredictable activities prevented Hitler from consolidating his shaky control of the Reich. He had to dispose of the SA to hold the support of his industrial backers, to satisfy party leaders jealous of the SA’s power, and most important, to win the allegiance of the conservative Army generals. In April 1934 Hitler met with the army commanders on board the cruiser Deutschland during military manoeuvres and arranged a deal. The army would support Hitler s succession to the presidency in return for the suppression of R hm s plans and the acceptance of the army s position as the sole armed force in the state.

Until 1933 R hm and the SA had been useful allies for Hitler, but they had become a liability. As well as alienating the army and big business, who did not like the SA s socialist ideas, the SA were seen by many respectable middle and upper-class German citizens as thugs and criminals. They had become an obstacle for winning the confidence and support of these groups. Hitler turned the SS loose to purge its parent organization, as they were too uncontrollable even for Hitler. They went about their business of terrorizing Jews with no mercy. But that is not what bothered Hitler, since the SA was so big, (3 million in 1933) and so out of control, Hitler sent his trusty comrade Josef Dietrich, commander of a SS bodyguard regiment to murder the leaders of the SA, in what would later be called the night of the long knives .

The killings went on for two days and nights and killed up to 200 “enemies of the state.” It was quite enough to reduce the SA to impotence, and it brought the F hrer immediate returns. The dying President of the Reich, Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg, congratulated Hitler on crushing the troublesome SA, and the Army generals concluding that Hitler was now their pawn, swore a personal loyalty oath to him.

With Hitler holding the positions of President and Chancellor, he now held ultimate power in Germany, controlling:

+ The Nazi Party

+ The Government

+ The Police

+ The Armed Forces

+ The Church

+ The Media

+ Law

+ Education

+ Finance

+ Labour

+ Industry