

NAZI PROPAGANDA

HITLER

"Propaganda tries to force a doctrine on the whole people... Propaganda works on the general public from the standpoint of an idea and makes them ripe for the victory of this idea." Adolf Hitler wrote these words in his book *Mein Kampf* in 1926. It is where he first encouraged the use of propaganda to spread the beliefs of National Socialism including: racism, anti-Semitism, and anti-Bolshevism.

REICH PROPAGANDA

After the Nazis took power of Germany in 1933, Hitler established a Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda headed by Joseph Goebbels. The Ministry aimed to guarantee the Nazi message was successfully communicated through art, music, theater, books, radio, educational materials, and the press.



AUDIENCES

There were several audiences for Nazi propaganda. Germans were reminded of the struggle against foreign enemies and Jewish betrayal. Before the laws against Jews, propaganda campaigns created an atmosphere that allowed violence against Jews. This was especially true in 1935, prior to the Nuremberg Race Laws of September, and in 1938, before the anti-Semitic economic laws following Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass). Nazi propaganda encouraged acceptance of the upcoming measures against Jews since they appeared to show the Nazi government as stepping in and "restoring order."

SUBJECTS

The subject of Nazi propaganda included real and perceived discrimination against ethnic Germans in east European nations who gained territory at Germany's expense following World War I, such as Czechoslovakia and Poland. This propaganda hoped to spark political loyalty and so-called race consciousness among ethnic German populations. It was also aimed to mislead foreign governments that Nazi Germany was making understandable and fair demands for concessions and annexations to take over places.

SOVIET COMMUNISM

After the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Nazi propaganda was targeted to civilians at home, soldiers, police officers, and non-Germans serving in occupied territory. Propaganda themes linked Soviet Communism to European Jewry. They presented Germany as the defender of Western culture against the "Judeo-Bolshevik threat." They painted an apocalyptic picture of what would happen if the Soviets won the war. This was particularly the case after the disastrous German defeat at Stalingrad in February 1943. These themes were likely important in encouraging Nazi and non-Nazi Germans to fight until the very end.



FILMS

Films played an important role in spreading racial anti-Semitism, the dominance of German military power, and the evil of the enemies, as defined by Nazi ideology. Nazi films showed Jews as "subhuman" creatures in Aryan society. For example, *The Eternal Jew* (1940) portrayed Jews as wandering cultural parasites, consumed by money. *The Triumph of the Will* (1935) glorified Hitler and the National Socialist movement. *Festival of the Nations and Festivals of Beauty* (1938) showed the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games and promoted national pride in the successes of the Nazi regime at the Olympics.

NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers in Germany, especially *Der Stürmer* (The Attacker), printed cartoons using anti-Semitic caricatures (cartoons) to depict Jews. After the Germans started World War II with the invasion of Poland in September 1939, the Nazi regime used propaganda to show German civilians and soldiers that Jews were not only subhuman, but also dangerous enemies of the German Reich. The regime aimed to gain support, or at least acceptance, for policies aimed at removing Jews permanently from areas of German settlement.



CONCENTRATION CAMPS

The so-called "Final Solution" was the mass murder of European Jews. When SS officials at killing centers carried this out, they forced the victims of the Holocaust to uphold the deception needed to deport Jews from Germany and occupied Europe as smoothly as possible. Concentration camp and killing center officials required prisoners, many of whom would die in the gas chambers, to send postcards home stating they were being treated well and living in good conditions. Camp authorities used propaganda to cover up atrocities and mass murder. The German Security Police allowed an international Red Cross team to inspect the



Theresienstadt camp-ghetto, located in what is today the Czech Republic in 1944. The SS and police established the camp in November of 1941 as an tool of propaganda. The camp-ghetto was used an explanation for Germans who were puzzled by the deportation of Jews. In preparation for the 1944 visit, the camp underwent a "beautification" program. SS officials produced a film using residents as a demonstration of the caring treatment they received. When the film was completed, most of the "cast" was deported to the Auschwitz-Birkenau killing center.

IMPACT

The Nazi regime used propaganda effectively to rally the German population in support of its wars of conquest until the end of the regime. Propaganda was vital in motivating those whom carried out the mass murder of the Jews and others.

Name _____

NAZI PROPAGANDA

IDENTIFY: Use the word bank to identify each description.

art	Mein Kampf	anti-Semitic
subhuman	Final Solution	Reich
beautification	postcards	Red Cross
1.	Book written by Adolf Hitler in 1926 while in prison	
2.	Hitler's regime was known as this	
3.	Nazi films portrayed Jews in this way	
4.	Hatred of Jews	
5.	Camp officials encouraged Jews to send these home	
6.	Visited Theresienstadt camp-ghetto in 1944	
7.	Theresienstadt underwent this type of program	
8.	Nazi plan to exterminate Jews	
9.	Method of communicating Nazi ideals	

MULTIPLE CHOICE: Choose the best answer.

10. "Propaganda tries to force a doctrine on the whole people... Propaganda works on the general public from the standpoint of an idea and makes them ripe for the victory of this idea."

What is the best meaning of *ripe* as used in this quote?

- A. Resembling fruit
- B. Fully grown or developed
- C. Rich or intense smell
- D. Mature judgment

11. Which event occurred first?

- A. Hitler wrote Mein Kampf
- B. Red Cross visited Theresienstadt
- C. Germany invaded the Soviet Union
- D. Nazis created anti-Jewish films

12. What was the main purpose of the film, *Festival of the Nations and Festivals of Beauty*?

- A. To make Soviets look bad
- B. To show Jews in a negative light
- C. To promote national German pride
- D. To advocate for Jews

13. How did the Nazis mainly fool people with the Theresienstadt camp-ghetto?

- A. They made a film that made the camp look nice.
- B. They did not show all the parts of the camps.
- C. They hid the true prisoners of the camp.
- D. They exported most of the prisoners of the camp before a movie was made.



14. How are these German children portrayed in this poster?

- A. Shy
- B. Frightened
- C. Content
- D. Unattractive

15. What is the most likely reason the Nazi flag is displayed in the background?

- A. They are in a concentration camp.
- B. They are strong Nazi soldiers.
- C. They are examples of strong Germans.
- D. They are unwelcome in Germany.



16. The bottom poster reads, "All Ten-Year-Olds For Us."

What is the most likely reason Hitler targeted young children?

- A. They were the most influential.
- B. They made the best soldiers.
- C. He knew their parents were away at war.
- D. He wanted to show his power.