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Hitler Opposition (Fact Sheet)

One of the main oppositions that Hitler faced was the KPD or the communist party. After the failing tactics of the Weimar republic many of the German people went to the extremist groups for solutions. This being the far right or the far left, the far left being the Communist party.

•Catholic resistance to Nazi Germany was a component of German resistance of the Nazis and of resistance during WW2. The role of the Church during the Nazi years was always, and remains however, a matter of much contention. Many writers, echoing Klaus Scholder (a German historian), have concluded, "There was no Catholic resistance in Germany, there were only Catholics who resisted”.

White Rose, German anti-Nazi group formed in Munich in 1942. Unlike the conspirators of the July Plot (1944) or participants in such youth gangs as the Edelweiss Pirates, the members of the White Rose advocated nonviolent resistance as a means of opposing the Nazi regime.

•Many of the soldiers of the army stepped forward as they were not happy with the way in which Hitler was running things. The army after a lot of negotiation and time came around and joined sides with Hitler, Hitler knew that to take control of other countries he would need the army and with the army being independent at the time it was hard to get them on Hitlers side.

•Obscures not every German in the Nazi regime believed in what Hitler was projecting to them. As a result of this many of the German population acted, examples of this include not saluting or attending any rallies that Hitler held.

•The communist party of Germany got many of the votes across Germany, making them a strong opposition for the NSDAP.

•The key posts within the Communist resistance were filled by paid party activists, who were supported by illegal subscriptions collected in factories and working-class areas.

•Efforts to "coordinate" religious life also followed the Nazi rise to power. Although the Concordat between the Vatican and the Third Reich in July 1933 regulated relations between the Reich and the Catholic church.

•The Nazis went on to suppress Catholic groups and sought to defame the church through a series of show trials known as the priest trials.

•The leaders' leaflets got to many of the German university students, turning their opinions into anti Nazi.

•The group expanded into an organization of students in Hamburg, Freiburg, Berlin, and Vienna. At great risk, “White Rose” members transported and mailed mimeographed leaflets that denounced the regime.

•A group that included conservative military officers and diplomats believed that Hitler's violent death should signal a general anti-Nazi revolt. Military officers attempted to assassinate Hitler on July 20, 1944, in his East Prussian headquarters at Rastenburg

•Judges refused to administer 'Nazi' justice, such as the churchman. For example, Bishop Galen and Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer spoke out against Nazi policies.

•Kiesau Circle was a group which met at the home of Helmut Von Moltke. Here, aristocrats, lawyers, SDP politicians discussed ways to remove Hitler from Power.

•They were disbanded by the Gestapo in 1943, they held three meetings from 1942-43

•A secret police force established in April 1933 by Goering. The gestapo relied on spies and informants to collect data

•The gestapo operated without civil restraint. They were not subject to judicial appeal and had rights to subjugate civilians such as Jews, trade unionist, political clergy, left wing opposition to concentration camps and later death camps.

•By the end of 1944 there were 32,000 personnel and departments ran by notorious members such as Heydrich, Himmler subordinates.

•Over 150,000 informants throughout the country would report any anti-Nazi ‘feeling’ to the Gestapo.

•The SS was Hitlers private army that was to control opposition, by infiltrating internal and external threats.

•The SS controlled concentration camps and later death camps in which the people deemed inferior to the Nazi state would serve punishment.

•Knight of the long knives

•Under Ernst Rohm the SA were gaining tremendous power and were seeking to take control of the military. Hitler could not let the military be overtaken by the SA and ordered for the dismantling of the organization.

•On 30 June, the SS assassinated just under 100 of the SA’s leadership, including Röhm. Other opponents such as the ex-Chancellor General von Schleicher, were also murdered.

•Between 1933 and 1939, around 225,000 Germans were convicted of political crimes and a further 162,000 were placed in 'protective custody’.

•In April 1933, the parliaments of the German states (Lander) were replaced by Nazi governors who could appoint and dismiss officials and judges

•On 24 April 1934, People's Courts were established - anyone accused of treason was to be tried by the courts' Nazi judges

•On 2 May 1933 trade unions were abolished and their leaders arrested. The German Labour Front was established in their place. This gave the Nazis control over workers.

•Boys joined the Hitler Youth. From the age of six, boys took part in the Pimpfen. At ten they moved to the Deutsches Jungvolk before joining the Hitler Youth proper at 14. They were trained to become soldiers and indoctrinated with Nazi ideology.

•Hitler believed in the ‘thousand-year Reich’ so in order to prolong their vision they emphasized on influencing and manipulating the youth in order to sustain their goals.

**Hitler Questions**

1. Who was Hitlers main opposition within German society?
2. What did Hitler do to counter this opposition?
3. How did the youth of Germany oppose Hitler?
4. What was the group of youth rebellions called and what did they do to oppose him?
5. How did Hitler treat these younger revolutionaries?

1. The main opposition of Hitler was the Communist party as they proved to be an equal match to the NSDAP in the sense that they had nearly as many votes leading up to Hitler becoming Chancellor so it meant that Hitler could not succeed if they were still in the Reichstag.
2. He countered them by framing a polish Communist for the burning of the Reichstag leaving Hindenburg only one option, to take out the communist party all together.
3. Much like the adults not every single German believed in what Hitler was saying to them, so as a result of this many youth groups were created throughout Germany, to take a stand against the Hitler regime.
4. The most well-known youth anti-nazi group was the Edelweiss Pirates, this was a group of college students that joined together to spread anti-nazi propaganda around there campus.
5. This resulted in them being executed because of the message that they were trying to portray. This showed other groups like the Edelweiss Pirates that they were messing with the state and it stopped many groups like this in the long term.