We have seen that Hitler’s Rise to Power was genuinely based on a significant level of mass support – they never received the votes of over 50% of the population but certainly became the largest single party in the Weimar Republic. *(Recap here: What were the weaknesses of the Weimar constitution?)*

PR:

ARTICLE 48:

This lesson seeks to explain why so many people would be so attracted to the leadership and ideas of the Nazi movement.

1. **THE ROLE OF THE SA IN GETTING SUPPORT FOR THE NAZIS**

***Getting the Narrative Right****: From the reading, complete the following table:*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Key Point** | **Details** |
| ***Foundation of SA 1920*** |  |
| ***1924 ‘Brownshirts’*** |  |
| ***Role of Ernst Rohm*** |  |
| ***Initial membership*** |  |
| ***Later membership*** |  |
| ***Early work of the SA*** |  |
| ***Role after 1932*** |  |
| ***Ban by Chancellor Bruning 1932*** |  |
| ***Chancellor Papen***  |  |
| ***Importance of ‘Propaganda by Deed’*** |  |

***Analysis:***

|  |
| --- |
| **Who joined the SA and why?** |
| **Why did the SA make a positive impression on some?** *(different reasons for different groups…)* |

1. **WHO VOTED NAZI?**

We need to remember that the charisma of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party was a two-way street. Not only did Hitler and co. have to do a good job with their propaganda etc, the people had to have something that they felt the Nazis could help them with. What this was would depend on their place in society… This thinking led to a traditional assumption among historians that the people who mainly supported the Nazis were the ‘petit-bourgeoisie’ [lower middle classes – shop keepers, tradesman etc.] who had been most affected by the economic downturn after 1929 and who were also very afraid of losing their status if there was a communist revolution. However, as more research and evidence has come to light (the end of communism in East Germany in 1990 released lots of new evidence to scholars) this picture has been challenged somewhat…

***Analysis and Interpretations:*** Download the ‘Who voted Nazi? Sheet. Use the extracts from historians to complete the table below. For each historian, identify which group in society they identify as being the most important supporters of the Nazis and mark it in the appropriate cell with any supporting facts they may use.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **GROUP** | **HISTORIAN** |
| **Noakes** | **Paterson** | **Fischer** | **Falter** | **Geary** |
| **Working Class** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Petite Bourgeoisie [lower middle class]** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Wealthy [upper middle class and beyond]** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Protestants** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **A Wide Range – i.e. a ‘People’s Movement’** |  |  |  |  |  |

***Consider the level of agreement above. How should we interpret it? Can they all be wrong?***

***Read the concluding thoughts in the document – how do we need to amend the traditional interpretation of ‘it was the petit-bourgeoisie’?***

1. **WHY DID DIFFERENT GROUPS SUPPORT THE NAZIS?**

We have identified that support for the Nazis was actually somewhat broader than is often thought.

Read the ‘Why did different groups support the Nazis?’ sheet and complete the table below (remember, we can tell by the message of the Nazi propaganda the concern that each particular group had)

***Analysis:***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Source** | **Group Directed at…** | **Their grievances…** | **What the Nazis offered…** | **Other comments…** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

***What overall conclusions can we draw from this evidence?***

***Are there any problems with using this kind of evidence to explain why people voted Nazis?***

***Additional notes on why different groups supported the Nazis:***