

intelligence is small, but their power of forgetting is enormous. In consequence of these facts, all effective propaganda must be limited to a very few points and must harp on these in slogans until the last member of the public understands what you want him to understand by your slogan. As soon as you sacrifice this slogan and try to be many-sided, the effect will piddle away, for the crowd can neither digest nor retain the material offered. In this way, the result is weakened and in the end entirely cancelled out. . . .

The broad mass of a nation does not consist of diplomats, or even professors of political law, or even individuals capable of forming a rational opinion; it consists of plain mortals, wavering and inclined to doubt and uncertainty. As soon as our own propaganda admits so much as a glimmer of right on the other side, the foundation for doubt in our own right has been laid. . . .

The people in their overwhelming majority are so feminine by nature and attitude that sober reasoning determines their thoughts and actions far less than emotion and feeling. . . . But the most brilliant propagandist technique will yield no success unless one fundamental principle is borne in mind constantly and with unflagging attention. It must confine itself to a few points and repeat them over and over. Here, as so often in this world, persistence is the first and most important requirement for success. . . .

The purpose of propaganda is not to provide interesting distraction for blase young gentlemen, but to convince, and what I mean is to convince the masses. But the masses are slow-moving, and they always require a certain time before they are ready even to notice a thing, and only after the simplest ideas are repeated thousands of times will the masses finally remember them. . . .

[During World War I] at first the claims of the [enemy] propaganda were so impudent that people thought it insane; later, it got on people's nerves; and in the end, it was believed. . . .

READING AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are Hitler's main suggestions for the propagandist who wants to be successful? How does it affect your evaluation of the passage to know that it took him almost ten more years to gain power?
2. What does Hitler's conception of who matters in society reveal about his attitudes toward both the powerful and the average members of society?

DOCUMENT 29-3

The Nuremberg Laws: The Centerpiece of Nazi Racial Legislation

1935

Part of Hitler's vision for Germany was based on a pseudoscientific racist division of the world that was not uncommon at the time. He believed that "Jewishness" was both biological and religious. Two years after the Nazi party took power in Germany, the first legal restrictions on German Jews were announced at a Nazi rally in Nuremberg. Hitler presented the Nuremberg Laws as a means to curb popular violence against Jews, allowing him to present himself as a defender of law and order.

ARTICLE 5

1. A Jew is anyone who descended from at least three grandparents who were racially full Jews. Article 2, par. 2, second sentence will apply.
2. A Jew is also one who descended from two full Jewish parents, if:
 - (a) he belonged to the Jewish religious community at the time this law was issued, or who joined the community later;
 - (b) he was married to a Jewish person, at the time the law was issued, or married one subsequently;
 - (c) he is the offspring from a marriage with a Jew, in the sense of Section 1, which was contracted after the Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor became effective . . . ;
 - (d) he is the offspring of an extramarital relationship, with a Jew, according to Section 1, and will be born out of wedlock after July 31, 1936. . . .

LAW FOR THE PROTECTION OF GERMAN BLOOD AND GERMAN HONOR OF 15 SEPTEMBER 1935

Thoroughly convinced by the knowledge that the purity of German blood is essential for the further existence of the German people and animated by the inflexible will to safe-guard the German nation for the entire future,

the Reichstag² has resolved upon the following law unanimously, which is promulgated herewith:

Section 1

1. Marriages between Jews and nationals of German or kindred blood are forbidden. Marriages concluded in defiance of this law are void, even if, for the purpose of evading this law, they are concluded abroad. . . .

Section 2

Relation[s] outside marriage between Jews and nationals of German or kindred blood are forbidden.

Section 3

Jews will not be permitted to employ female nationals of German or kindred blood in their household.

Section 4

1. Jews are forbidden to hoist the Reich and national flag and to present the colors of the Reich. . . .

Section 5

1. A person who acts contrary to the prohibition of section 1 will be punished with hard labor.
2. A person who acts contrary to the prohibition of section 2 will be punished with imprisonment or with hard labor.
3. A person who acts contrary to the provisions of sections 3 or 4 will be punished with imprisonment up to a year and with a fine or with one of these penalties. . . .

READING AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. From these laws, what can you conclude about Nazi attitudes toward women and marriage?
2. What do these laws suggest about the basis of personal and national identity in the Nazi mind-set?

²Reichstag: The Reichstag was the German legislative assembly, a holdover from Bismarck's Second Empire (1871–1919) that had little real power after it granted Hitler "temporary" dictatorial powers in March 1933.

3. Based on the document, what economic impact could these laws have had on the Jewish community in Germany? Why might the Nazis have wanted that impact?

DOCUMENT 29-4

WINSTON CHURCHILL

Speech Before the House of Commons

June 18, 1940

Once the Second World War began in 1939, much of central and western Europe quickly fell to the German blitzkrieg strategy. After sending troops to aid the French against the Germans in 1940, the British Army lost most of its tanks, trucks, and other heavy equipment while evacuating from Dunkirk following a decisive Nazi victory. Germany held the deep-water ports along the English Channel crucial for an invasion, and had the most feared air force in Europe. Facing these grim prospects, Churchill addressed the House of Commons to rally a nation unenthusiastic about another war.

The military events which have happened during the past fortnight have not come to me with any sense of surprise. Indeed, I indicated a fortnight ago as clearly as I could to the House that the worst possibilities were open, and I made it perfectly clear then that whatever happened in France would make no difference to the resolve of Britain and the British Empire to fight on, "if necessary for years, if necessary alone." During the last few days we have successfully brought off the great majority of the troops we had on the lines of communication in France — a very large number, scores of thousands — and seven-eighths of the troops we have sent to France since the beginning of the war, that is to say, about 350,000 out of 400,000 men, are safely back in this country. Others are still fighting with the French, and fighting with considerable success in their local encounters with the enemy. We have also brought back a great mass of stores,

Winston Churchill, "June 18, 1940, Speech Before House of Commons," in Walter Arnstein, ed., *The Past Speaks*, 2d ed. (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, 1993), 2:376–378.