

Case Study: Nuremberg Rallies

Purpose:

- Emphasise the importance of the people's community and contribution of each person to the national will
- Propaganda
 - Strengthen the personality cult of Hitler
 - Demonstrate dynamism and energy of Nazism
 - Create impression that regime was popular – increase loyalty

Why was Nuremberg chosen?

- First held in Munich, then Weimar
- Nuremberg chosen because:
 - It was in centre of Germany, and had a suitable stadium
 - Well-organised local party, sympathetic local police
 - Historical association with Holy Roman Empire

Escalation of Rallies:

- Once Nazis were in power, the scale increased massively – over 1 million participants
- National Congress of the Party of the German People
- Different title each year:
 - 1935: Rally of Freedom –reintroduction of conscription and breaking free of Treaty of Versailles

Events during the rallies:

- Organisations marched in front of Hitler
- Speech from Hitler
- Parades, meetings
- Review of Hitler Youth, Labour Service etc.
- Sometimes important policy was announced
 - 1935: Nuremberg Laws announced
 - 1938: Hitler used speeches to pressure Czechs over the Sudetenland

The Triumph of the Will:

- Leni Riefenstahl was commissioned by Hitler to make a record of the 1934 rally
- Attempt the previous year had been unsuccessful
- She had a crew of 120, 30 cameras with modern technology and techniques
- No commentary
- It was an incredible and powerful documentary which received international renown
- Controversy:
 - Propaganda or excellent cinema?