

THE MONTHS OF OPPORTUNITY

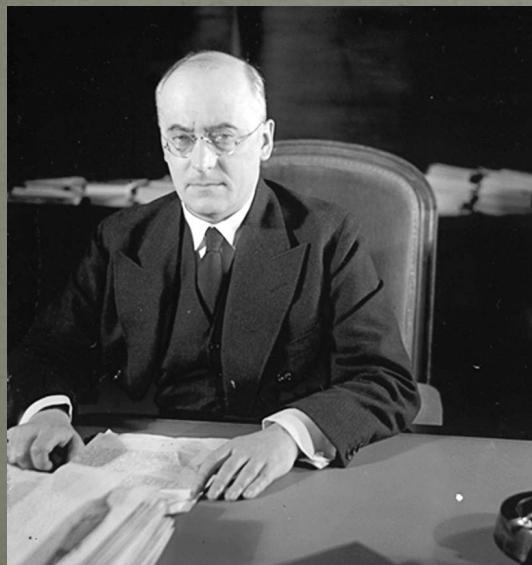
October 1931 - 30 January 1933

15 – 16 MONTHS: NOT THAT LONG



HITLER CAN'T MAKE FRIENDS

- Hitler tries to impress Chancellor Heinrich Brüning » Doesn't work...
- 10/10/1931 – AH unsuccessfully meets with President Paul von Hindenburg » “Hitler was an odd fellow who would never make a Chancellor”



MOVIN' ON UP

- 10/17 – AH goes to Brunswick, presents 24 new standards & has a big parade » Demonstrates popular support
- December, 1931 – Unemployment hits 5M, HB's emergency measures failing, Nazi membership reaches over 800,000
- Kurt von Schleicher (PvH's advisor) notices AH in Nov. & Dec. and wants to “bring Hitler into the game” (98)
- AH writes another letter to HB saying he's coming for him (legally) (98)

ADOLF FOR PRESIDENT!

- HB's plans hinged upon economic recovery & PvH staying in office » HB asks AH to let it happen » AH now has leverage “Now I have them in my pocket” (99)
- 2/22/1932 – Joseph Goebbels announces candidacy in 1932 presidential election



HITLER'S PLATFORM

- Dominant consideration in GER politics should NOT be foreign relations
- Determining factor in national life is inner worth of people & spirit
- Communism = Threat » Unless stopped, it would “gradually shatter the whole world” (102)
- Politics, not economics, formed prime factor in national life (103)

LOSING THE ELECTION (TWICE)

- 3/13/1932 – AH wins nearly 1/3 of national vote, but still a loss...
- *BUT* PvH slightly short of absolute majority required
 - » So reelections are held!
- AH goes ham for second campaign covering GER by plane
- 4/10/1932 – AH gets 2 million more votes but... He still lost



NEW PLAN

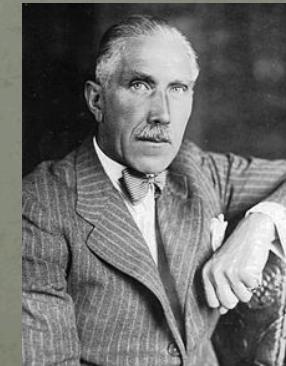
- AH wants Nazi majority in the Reichstag » Starts with Prussia
- Big campaigning again, 4/5 show up to the polls but...
- “Three times the trumpet had sounded and still the walls refused to fall” (108)

KURT VON SCHLEICHER

- Close advisor to PvH and sought to do anything to keep him in power
- Wanted to absorb the S.A. into the republic's military
- Wilhelm Groener (Minister of Defense/Interior) wants to get rid of S.A. » KvS has PvH write a letter denouncing WG » Letter leaked » WG comes under fire and resigns » Point KvS
- Now HB under fire which reflects poorly on PvH so KvS cuts a deal with AH and tells PvH to force HB's resignation (110)

BYE-BYE BRÜNING

- HB resigns at PvH's request » Succeeded by Franz von Papen
- FvP – Catholic family, Westphalian nobility, charm, well-connected, & ambitious
- KvS thinks FvP will be a puppet » Wrong (112)
- FvP's cabinet widely unpopular, $\frac{3}{4}$ of GER major political parties openly opposes him » Leaves GER with no one but the Nazis



NEW NEW PLAN

- AH can't yet win an election alone so he's forced to join forces with FvP
- Both AH and FvP want to run things their way and constantly butt heads
- Finally AH tells FvP he's planning to replace him (113)
- So... FvP decides to DISSOLVE THE PRUSSIAN GOVERNMENT to undermine Nazi successes there
- Ultimately still helps extremist causes because Weimar Republic no longer acting as a legitimate democracy

THE WINNING BEGINS

- July, 1932 – Federal elections held » Nazis now the largest party in the Reichstag by far (not majority)
- AH gains confidence and demands control of entire GER government from KvS
- PvH, KvS, FvP, & AH meets and AH is only offered Vice-chancellorship » AH erupts with rage confirming fears that AH was seeking a dictatorship



NAZI SELF-CONTROL

- AH infuriated by humiliation from PvH » contemplates political assassinations via the S.A. » Shows restraint and sticks to his guns (legality)
- Nazi's need majority in Reichstag » Joined forces with Centre Party
- 9/12/1932 – Reichstag meets and Communists propose to overthrow FvP's government by a vote of 513 – 32, but... FvP dissolved the Reichstag before the vote was cast... » Attempt #4 is another failure
- But AH doesn't give up (124)

“SUCCESS IS STUMBLING FROM
FAILURE TO FAILURE
WITH NO LOSS OF ENTHUSIASM.”
- SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL

PAPEN'S PLOT

- KvS wants FvP to resign so that he may commence negotiations with AH » Papen accepts (11/17/1932) thinking that negotiations will fail and the public will demand his return
- PvH and AH meet again » PvH offers AH chancellorship *IF* he can gain Reichstag majority (not possible) » AH declines » Humiliated again
- PvH, KvS, & FvP meet » PvH wants to give chancellorship back to FvP, but FvP no longer has military's support » PvH gives chancellorship to Schleicher (12/3) with a strong warning (128)

CHANCELLOR SCHLEICHER

- KvS offers Gregor Strasser vice-chancellorship to undermine AH
- 12/5 - GS returns to discuss the offer with his party » AH undermines him by banning him from further meetings with KvS
- 12/7 - GS doesn't have the cojones to stand up to AH so he resigns and takes the family on vacation to Italy
- KvS tries to gain support from other parties, but no one trusts the gov.

PAPEN'S PLOT PART 2

- 1/4/1933 – AH and FvP meet » FvP wants to overthrow KvS's government with AH so the two of them can rule as co-chancellors
- AH wants full control, but FvP and his supporters can have minister positions **AND** all social democrats, communists, & Jews must be removed from office » FvP agreed
- But... the meeting was leaked and made headlines the next day » Awkward... » But they continue with plan anyway

THINGS GO SOUTH...

- 1/20/1932 – It is clear that KvS's plan to gain support has failed
- 1/22/1932 – AH, FvP, Oskar von Hindenburg (PvH's son), and assorted others meet to negotiate » AH bribes and blackmails OvH into supporting him
- Next day, KvS goes to PvH to dissolve the Reichstag » PvH turns him down

HEIL.

- PvH wants to create a new cabinet position for General Field Marshall Werner von Blomberg to head with AH as chancellor
- PvH calls WvB secretly with his offer » WvB accepts
- Papen & Alfred Hugenberg learn of agreement and create Nationalist-Nazi coalition
- January 30th 1933 – Adolf Hitler becomes the Chancellor of Germany

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Who was most responsible for letting the Weimar Republic fail?

1. *Paul von Hindenburg*
2. *Heinrich Brüning*
3. *Fritz von Papen*
4. *Kurt von Schleicher*