

# EDEXCEL GCSE

## HISTORY

**PAPER 3:** Modern depth study

**Option 31:** Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39

**SET 1**

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## Insert

**Sources/interpretations for use with Section B.**

**Source B:** A statement made by Marinus van der Lubbe to the police on 3rd March 1933, following his arrest for starting the Reichstag Fire.

**Source C:** A political cartoon by Bernard Partridge, published in *Punch* magazine on 8th March 1933. In the cartoon, President Hindenburg says to Hitler: “The red peril – This is a heaven-sent opportunity my lad. If you can’t be a dictator now you never will.” In Hitler’s hand he holds a scroll that says “emergency powers”.

**Interpretation 1:** Ian Kershaw, writing in his book *Hitler 1889–1936: Hubris*, published in 1998.

**Interpretation 2:** A.J.P. Taylor, writing in his introduction to Fritz Tobias’s book *The Reichstag Fire: Legend and Truth*, published in 1964.

**Source B:** A statement made by Marinus van der Lubbe to the police on 3rd March 1933, following his arrest for starting the Reichstag Fire.

"I myself am a Leftist, and was a member of the Communist Party until 1929. I had heard that a Communist demonstration was disbanded by the leaders on the approach of the police. In my opinion something absolutely had to be done in protest against this system. Since the workers would do nothing, I had to do something myself. I considered arson a suitable method. I did not wish to harm private people but something belonging to the system itself. I decided on the Reichstag. As to the question of whether I acted alone, I declare emphatically that this was the case."

**Source C:** A political cartoon by Bernard Partridge, published in *Punch* magazine on 8th March 1933. In the cartoon, President Hindenburg says to Hitler: "The red peril – This is a heaven-sent opportunity my lad. If you can't be a dictator now you never will." In Hitler's hand he holds a scroll that says "emergency powers".



**Interpretation 1:** Ian Kershaw, writing in his book *Hitler 1889–1936: Hubris*, published in 1998.

“He [van der Lubbe] was... a solitary individual, unconnected with any political groups, but possessed of a strong sense of injustice at the misery of the working class at the hands of the capitalist system. In particular, he was determined to make a lone and spectacular act of defiant protest at the Government... in order to galvanize the working class into struggle against their repression.”

**Interpretation 2:** A.J.P. Taylor, writing in his introduction to Fritz Tobias’s book *The Reichstag Fire: Legend and Truth*, published in 1964.

“The fire in the Debating Chamber of the Reichstag on 27 February 1933 has a place in all the history books. Historians, who find so much to disagree about, are for once in agreement, or were until the present book was published. National Socialists – Nazis for short – started the fire, we believed, in order to cause an anti-Communist panic in Germany and so to influence the general election, due on 5 March. The trick succeeded. The German electors took alarm. The Nazis got their majority, and Hitler was able to establish his dictatorship. The Reichstag fire not only explained the initial Nazi success. It also set the pattern for explanations of all Hitler’s later acts.”