FOCUS ROUTE
As you read this chapter, note down points to help you with the following structured essay.

a) What were the aims of Nazi youth and education policy?

b) What methods did they use?

c) How successful were they in achieving their aims?

SEMINAR
You may like to study the topics in Chapters 14 and 15 in a rather different manner.

Divide into groups of three or four. Each group should choose to study either Youth or Women in Nazi Germany.

Read the appropriate chapter, making notes on:

a) Aims of Nazi policy

b) Nazi methods

c) The effectiveness of Nazi policy.

Discuss your findings with your group. Then one group on each topic can report its findings to the rest of the class.

 SOURCE 14.5 Robert Ley, leader of the Labour Front (DAF)

We start our work when the child is three. As soon as it begins to think, a little flag is put into its hand. Then comes school, the Hitler Youth Movement, the Storm Troop... We never let a single soul go, and when they have gone through all that, there is the Labour Front, which takes them when they are grown up and never lets hold of them... whether they like it or not.

The progress of German youth through Nazi organisations

![Diagram of Nazi youth organisations]

**Nazi aims for both boys and girls**

- Be obedient
- Idolise the Führer
- Be physically fit
- Sacrifice self for the national good
- Do everything possible to strengthen the health and racial purity of the German nation

**Boy**
- Be a strong fighter

**Girl**
- Bear many children

**Influences on German youth under the Third Reich**

![Diagram showing Nazi influences]

**NSF**
- Faith and Beauty
- BDM (League of German Girls)
- Jung Mädel

**NSDAP**
- DAF
- Media
- Schools

**Wehrmacht (army)**
- RAD
- German Students’ League
- Hitler Youth
- Deutsches Jungvolk
- Pimpfen

**Key**

- Nazi influences
- Possibly non-Nazi influences

**Talking Point**

What kinds of sources do you think historians use in investigating the impact of the Nazis on young people?
How did the Nazis use youth movements to inculcate their values?

The Nazis used two major institutions to achieve their aims: the school system and, in particular, youth groups. Furthermore, once youngsters left education and youth movements, they would join other Nazi organisations, such as RAD and DAF (see page 252), to ensure they did not escape control. The Nazis hoped that the influence of such an array of institutions would predominate over the traditional, and possibly hostile, influences of parents and the Church.

Converting any group in society to a way of thinking has long exercised the minds of politicians and advertisers. If you can offer exciting activities, people may become more receptive to your broader aims. Thus the Hitler Youth focused on offering fun and action to the young, but this was backed up by intimidation to persuade members to conform to all the state’s demands. The Hitler Youth, created in 1926, expanded rapidly after 1935 with the support of the government. It organised a variety of activities, such as camps, sport and military training.

In 1935 all other youth organisations, except Catholic ones protected by the Concordat (see pages 508–9), were taken over by the Hitler Youth. After 1936 all other youth organisations were banned. Although membership of the Hitler Youth became compulsory, many managed to avoid it, especially after they left school, which many did at fourteen. In addition, some rival groups were set up, which the authorities failed to suppress. As membership became more widespread, the Hitler Youth arguably became less successful, because it included less committed youngsters and because there developed an increasing stress on military preparation at the expense of other, more popular, activities.

SOURCE 14.8 Marianne Gartner joined the Hitler Youth at the age of twelve in 1938. In her memoirs The Naked Years: Growing up in Nazi Germany she recalls the change from ‘exciting activities’ to ‘indoctrination’ (instruction).

One day, fittingly enough on Hitler’s birthday, my age group was called up and took the oath: ‘I promise always to do my duty in the Hitler Youth, in love and loyalty to the Führer.’ Service in the Hitler Youth, we were told, was an honourable service to the German people. I was, however, not thinking of the Führer, nor of serving the German people, when I raised my right hand, but of the attractive prospect of participating in games, sports, hiking, singing, camping and other exciting activities away from school and the home. A uniform, a badge, an oath, a salute. There seemed to be nothing to it . . . Thus, unquestioningly, I acquired membership, and forthwith attended meetings, joined ball games and competitions, and took part in weekend hikes . . .

It was not long, however, before plain-faced leaders taught us marching drill and marching songs. I hated marching . . . There were now lectures on National Socialism, stories about modern heroes and about Hitler . . . while extracts from Mein Kampf were used to expound [put forward] the new racial doctrines.

SOURCE 14.9 A German describes her experience in the BDM, the League of German Girls.

I and all the other girls of my age had to attend evening classes twice weekly. We had to be present at every public meeting and at youth rallies and sports. The weekends were crammed full with outings, campaigns and marches, when we carried heavy packs on our backs. It was all fun in a way, and we certainly got plenty of exercise, but it had a bad effect on our school reports. We had no time for homework. The young BDM leaders taught us songs and tried desperately to maintain a certain amount of discipline . . . We were marched up and down as though we were soldiers on the barrack square . . . We were of course lectured a lot on National Socialist ideology, at most of this went over our heads . . . We were told to prepare for motherhood, as the mother of our beloved leader and the National Socialist government was the most important person in the nation. We were Germany’s hope and Germany’s future.
DID THE NAZIS SUCCEED IN WINNING THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF GERMAN YOUTH?

SOURCE 14.10 Membership of the Hitler Youth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>107,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>3,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>6,000,000+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE 14.11 Numbers attending camps

- 1935–7: 973,803 HJ members attended camps
- 1937: 96,699 BDM members attended camps

In 1935, during a rally of 100,000 members of the Hitler Youth and League of German Girls in Nuremberg, 900 fifteen- to eighteen-year-old girls became pregnant.

SOURCE 14.12 The numbers of participants in nationwide sporting competitions for young people

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>3.4 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>7 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE 14.13 A. Klonne, Youth in the Third Reich, 1982

What I liked about the Hitler Youth was the comradeship. I was full of enthusiasm ... what boy isn't fired by high ideals such as comradeship, loyalty, honour ... The trips ... off into the countryside ... I was pleased that sport had its place...

Later when I became a leader the negative aspects became obvious. I found the compulsion and the requirement of absolute obedience unpleasant. It was preferred that people should not have a will of their own ... The Hitler Youth was interfering everywhere in people's private lives...

In our troop the activities consisted almost entirely of stolid [boring] military drill ... Why didn't we complain to parents and teachers? The explanation I can find is that we were all in the grip of ambition; we wanted to impress our sub-leaders with exemplary [perfect] discipline, with our powers of endurance, with our military bearing.

SOURCE 14.14 Melita Maschmann, former leader in the BDM, Account Rendered, 1964

Whenever I probe the reasons which drew me to join the Hitler Youth, I always come up against this one: I wanted to escape from a childish narrow life and I wanted to attach myself to something that was great and fundamental. This longing I shared with countless others of my contemporaries.

Our camp community was a reduced model of that which I imagined our national community to be. It was a completely successful model. Never before or since have I had the experience of such a good community. Among us were peasant girls, students, workers, shop assistants, hairdressers, pupils, clerks, and so forth. The camp was led by an East Prussian farmer's daughter ... She managed us in such a way that, after we had recognised one another's strengths and weaknesses, she led us to accept one another as we were, with everyone endeavouring to be helpful and reliable. The fact that I had experienced this model of a national community intensely created in me an optimism which I held on to stubbornly until 1945. Supported by this experience I believed in the face of all evidence to the contrary that this model could be extended infinitely.

Baldur von Schirach (1907–74): Hitler Youth Leader

Schirach was the son of an aristocratic German father and an American mother. He studied art history and developed anti-Semitic and anti-Christian views. In 1925 he joined the Nazi Party. A great admirer of Hitler, he was appointed head of the German Students' League in 1929 and Nazi Youth Leader in 1931. At the age of 26 he became Youth Leader of the German Reich, a post he held until 1940. Photographs of him were much displayed, and he was presented to the Germans as a demigod [outstanding, almost divine person], embodying all that was fine and noble in German youth. Enemies made jokes about his effeminate (feminine-like) behaviour. In 1941 he was made Gauleiter of Vienna, where he supervised the deportation of Jews, though at the Nuremberg trials in 1945–6 he denied knowledge of the Holocaust. He was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment. Released in 1966, he wrote a book which, in an attempt to prevent any rebirth of Nazism, explained the fatal fascination of Hitler.

ACTIVITY

1. Write a report by a sympathetic journalist in 1939 about the role of the Hitler Youth in Nazi Germany.

or:

2. After reading the rest of this chapter, write a report as a German opponent of Nazism in 1942 for the Social Democratic Party in exile (SOPADE), assessing the extent of the effectiveness of the Hitler Youth.
B In what ways was education used as propaganda?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Route</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Identify three important changes made by the Nazis to the education system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Explain the purpose of each change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Copy and complete the table below. In column 2, give specific examples of how the Nazis tried in schools to develop the spirit of Volksgemeinschaft.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anti-intellectualism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-semitism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifference to the weak</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Militarism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obedience and discipline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hitler worship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Nazis' approach stemmed from their anti-intellectual prejudices and the importance they placed on healthy bodies and National Socialist character, as part of a racially pure Volksgemeinschaft. Bernhard Rust, the Nazi Education Minister, stated in 'Education and Instruction', the official manual for teachers, 'The chief purpose of the school is to train human beings to realise that the State is more important than the individual, that individuals must be willing and ready to sacrifice themselves for Nation and Führer.'

The Nazi strategy on education had a number of strands. They were initially concerned to exercise greater control over the schools. Regulations were issued, co-ordinating teachers and encouraging local Nazi officials to interfere in schools. Many teachers were already sympathetic to the Nazis and by 1936 over 50 per cent of teachers had voluntarily joined the Nazi Party. To ensure that all teachers followed the party line, they were pressurised into joining the National Socialist Teachers' League (NSLB). By 1937, 97 per cent had done so. Members had to attend one-month training courses, stressing Nazi ideology and physical education. By 1938, two-thirds had attended. Local Nazi officials kept records on individual teachers, and those who were insufficiently committed to National Socialism could be dismissed.

The other major strategy the Nazis used was to change the curriculum. Greater stress was put on physical exercise which, by 1936, took up at least two hours a day. Nazi ideas were incorporated into subjects, particularly biology and history. Religious education was downgraded and eventually replaced. From 1935, all textbooks had to be approved. New textbooks were produced, reflecting Nazi values.

There was also a move away from co-educational schools to ensure the different sexes received their appropriate education. Girls took needlework and music, not Latin; then language and home crafts, to become good homemakers and mothers. Local plebiscites were held, which due to government pressure led to parents voting to end denominational (religious) schools. By 1939 all the denominational schools had been abolished.

As in other areas, the Nazis did not initiate major structural reorganisation. They used the school system they inherited, and supplemented it with new Nazi institutions. Thus some new schools to train the future Nazi elite were created. In 1933 Education Minister Rust announced the formation of National Political Institutes of Education (NAPOLAs) for boys aged 10-18 to develop future leaders. In 1936 the NAPOLAs were taken over by the SS. There were 21 by 1938 and 39 by 1943. They provided a military-style boarding education, with classes called 'platoons' and with the atmosphere of a military camp.
even more stress on physical education, compulsory manual labour and further political training replaced religious education.

In 1937 Youth Leader Schirach and DAP Leader Ley set up new special leadership schools, the Adolf Hitler Schools. They were intended partly to rival the SS's NAPOLAs and to avoid Rust's interference. Only eleven were created. They were free boarding schools for 12- to 18-year-olds, selected mainly on grounds of physical appearance and leadership potential. In the curriculum physical, political and military training were even more dominant. Many features of normal schools were abandoned. Significantly, Nazi leaders did not send their own children there.

Worthy Nazi youths could finally progress to three new Ordensburgen (Castles of Order), partly modelled on medieval chivalric orders, where their training as future political and military leaders was completed. They were housed in vast castles, which held 1,000 students (called Ordensjunkers) aged 25–50, plus 500 staff. Hitler told Rauschning, ‘My Ordensburgen will mould a youth from which the world will shrink in terror.'

There were fewer changes in the nature of higher education. Most significant was a considerable contraction in numbers of students, from 113,000 in 1935 to 57,000 in 1939, reflecting the Nazi downgrading of academic education. Thereafter numbers rose to 82,000 by 1944, mainly due to a large increase in female students (11 per cent of students in 1939 were female; in 1944, 49 per cent) and to a growing realisation of the value of specialist education. In general, the government did not intervene very much in the universities, though some Gauleiter interfered more.

As with schools, the government tried to ensure the political compliance of the educators. In April 1933 the Law for the Restoration of the Civil Service led to about 1,200 university teachers (about 10 per cent) being dismissed (55 per cent for racial and 56 per cent for political reasons). There was little reaction to this purge in which the universities lost some of their greatest thinkers. In November 1933 all university teachers were made to sign a ‘Declaration in Support of Hitler and the National Socialist State' and join the Nazi Lecturers' Association. New appointees had to attend a six-week ideological and physical training camp.

Students were forced to join the Nazi-controlled German Students' League, but 25 per cent seem to have avoided this. Students had to attend twice weekly sessions for ideological and fitness training. They had to score points in sporting activities (unless given medical exemption). University curricula were modified in some areas, for example, with racial and eugenic ideas in medicine, law, politics. However, there was a growing perception that standards were falling. Indeed, by the 1940s some Nazi leaders realised the adverse effects of their education policy and wanted to reverse its anti-intellectual stress, arguing that they needed to train more scientists to compete with other countries in research.
**ACTIVITY**

Study Sources 14.15–28.

1. What methods did the Nazis use to try to ensure schools were teaching correctly?
2. Schools/colleges today have a statement at the beginning of their prospectuses explaining the main educational aims of the institution. Using the sources, write one for a school in Nazi Germany.

**SOURCE 14.15** A National Socialist Teachers’ League (NSLB) official explains its role in 1937.

Naturally, the German teacher must first be converted to this completely new task of German youth education. The real task of the NSLB is to create the new German educator in the spirit of National Socialism. It is being carried out with the same methods with which the movement has conquered the whole nation: indoctrination and propaganda.

**SOURCE 14.16** Dr Schuster, a geography teacher, describes the problems he faced, in an interview in 1938: quoted in E. Amy Buller’s Darkness over Germany, 1945 (see also page 317)

There is no longer any intellectual freedom . . . and education is being degraded by political interference . . . Political agents, often ignorant and stupid men . . . interfere with my teaching of geography. Some of them don’t seem to realise that any countries exist except Germany . . .

My headmaster, who is new and young and a very keen Nazi – in fact he would not have the post if he were not a Party man – greatly hopes that I will leave. That is obvious, for he will get high praise if he can quickly establish an all-Nazi staff.

**SOURCE 14.17** A British teacher in Germany describes the situation in schools in 1933. Nazis were sent to schools, where they walked into the classes and cross-examined the teacher in front of his pupils. If they thought it necessary they arrested him at once.

**SOURCE 14.18** From a newspaper report in Oldenburg.

The State Ministry has ordered: the Hitler Greeting is also to be used in conversation between teachers and pupils . . . Every day at the beginning of the first lesson the pupils will get up from their places as soon as the teacher enters the class, stand to attention and raise their outstretched arm level with their eyes. The teacher will go to the front of the class and offer the same greeting accompanied by the words ‘Heil Hitler!’ The pupils will reply ‘Heil Hitler!’

**SOURCE 14.19** Teenage girls salute the flag at the start of the school day in 1933.

**SOURCE 14.20** Der Angriff, 27 October 1939

All subjects, German Language, History, Geography, Chemistry and Mathematics must concentrate on military subjects – the glorification of military service and of German heroes and leaders and the strength of a regenerated Germany. Chemistry will inculcate a knowledge of chemical warfare, explosives, Buna [artificial rubber], etc. while mathematics will help the young to understand artillery calculations, ballistics etc.
SOURCE 14.21  Extracts from a Nazi mathematics textbook

Question 95  The construction of a lunatic asylum costs 6 million RM. How many houses at 15,000 RM each could have been built for that amount?
Question 97  To keep a mentally ill person costs approx. 4 RM per day, a cripple 5.5 RM, a criminal 3.50 RM. Many civil servants receive only 4 RM per day, white collar employees barely 3.50 RM, unskilled workers not even 2 RM per head for their families.

(a) Illustrate these figures with a diagram.

According to conservative estimates, there are 300,000 mentally ill, epileptics, etc. in care.

(b) How much do these people cost to keep in total, at a cost of 4 RM per head?

(c) How many marriage loans at 1,000 RM each . . . could be granted from this money?

SOURCE 14.22  From official instructions on the teaching of history, issued by the German Central Institute of Education, 1938

The German nation in its essence and greatness, in its fateful struggle for internal and external identity is the subject of the teaching of history. It is based on the natural bond of the child with his nation and, by interpreting history as the fateful struggle for existence between the nations, has the particular task of educating young people to respect the great German past and to have faith in the mission and future of their own nation and to respect the right of existence of other nations . . . It must always show greatness . . . the powerless and insignificant have no history.

SOURCE 14.23  History curriculum recommended by the National Socialist Educator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weeks</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Relations to Jews</th>
<th>Reading material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>Pre-war Germany. The class war. Profits, strikes</td>
<td>The Jew at large!</td>
<td>Hauptmann: The Weavers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>From agrarian to industrial state. Colonies</td>
<td>The peasant in the claws of the Jews</td>
<td>Descriptions of the colonies from Hermann Lors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>Conspiracy against Germany</td>
<td>The Jew reigns. War plots</td>
<td>Beumelburg: Barrage. Life of Hindenburg Wartime letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-16</td>
<td>German struggle. German want. Blockade! Starvation!</td>
<td>The Jew becomes prosperous! Profit from German want</td>
<td>Manke: Espionage at the Front War reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-20</td>
<td>The stab in the back. Collapse</td>
<td>Jews as leaders of the November insurrection</td>
<td>Secret Service in Enemy Country Bruno Brehm: That was the End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-28</td>
<td>Adolf Hitler National Socialism</td>
<td>Judah's foe!</td>
<td>Mein Kampf Dietrich Eckart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-32</td>
<td>The Bleeding Frontiers. Enslavement of Germany. The Volunteer Corps. Schlageter [a young German killed by invading French troops in 1923]</td>
<td>The Jew profits by Germany's misfortunes. Loans (Dawes, Young)</td>
<td>Beumelburg: Germany in Chains Wehner: Pilgrimage to Paris Schlageter - a German hero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33-36</td>
<td>National Socialism at grips with crime and the underworld</td>
<td>Jewish instigators of murder. The Jewish press</td>
<td>Horst Wessel [a young Nazi killed in a brawl in 1930 and turned into a hero]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37-40</td>
<td>Germany's youth at the helm! The victory of faith</td>
<td>The last fight against Judah</td>
<td>The Reich Party Congress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The growing political and ideological bias of the Hitler Youth diminished its attraction for many young people. The Edelweiss Pirates was the name for a loose collection of subgroups. These bands were mainly of boys aged 14–17 but also included a few girls. They could be recognised by their badges, for example the edelweiss or skull and crossbones; and some wore check shirts, dark short trousers, and white socks. They were largely localised groups with their own names, such as the Roving Dudes, Kittelbach Pirates, the Navajos. Membership was mainly rooted in the working class. The earliest recorded groups existed in 1934 and membership has been estimated at 2,000 by 1939. Numbers grew most rapidly during the war years. In 1945, for instance, the Cologne authorities reported twenty groups of around 100 members.

Their aims are not easy to identify. They were partly just rebellious youth trying to escape the intrusive Nazi system, joining in popular pastimes such as weekend camps, hikes and singing songs about sex and food (not Hitler Youth songs!). However, some groups were highly politicised, establishing links with the KPD and beating up Hitler Youth patrols with the slogan ‘Eternal War on the Hitler Youth!’ In 1942 the Düsseldorf Hitler Youth complained of ‘no go’ areas. During the Second World War some groups helped escaped prisoners of war and distributed Allied and communist leaflets. Thus their actions ranged from socially nonconformist behaviour to political resistance.

The response of the authorities became harsher over time. They initially issued warnings with some raids and arrests, but in March 1940 150 Navajos in Cologne were arrested. Later, in December 1942, the Gestapo arrested 739 Edelweiss Pirates in Düsseldorf. They had their heads shaven, were detained, sent for corrective education or to labour camps. Some were tried and executed. In November 1944 the leaders of the Cologne Edelweiss Pirates were hanged.

**Swing**

These groups of mainly upper-middle-class youths, unlike the Edelweiss Pirates, had the wealth to frequent night-clubs. Many were nominally members of the Hitler Youth. Swing groups mainly developed in large cities, such as Hamburg, Berlin, Frankfurt and Dresden, during the late 1950s. They rejected Hitler Youth
ideals, but were generally anti-politics. Their approach was to develop a counter identity, expressed through forbidden music. They met in bars, night-clubs and houses and played American Black and Jewish jazz and swing, not the officially sanctioned German folk music. The Nazis felt undermined by their activities and closed the bars and made some arrests. Although only a tiny minority of German youths were connected with the Swing groups, they do illustrate, as with the Pirates, the failure of the regime to dominate youth; and for many they were a heartening illustration of non-conformity.

**SOURCE 14.31** A newspaper report in the Rheinische Landeszeitung, February 1936

**Dangerous Pirate Games**

On 6 October of last year the police authorities ... staged a mass raid on the so-called Wolfsberg near Huelis. It had become known that a great number of 'Kittelbach pirates' had undertaken a social trip to the Wolfsberg ... In order to put a stop to their games once and for all, the police patrol of 6 October was made ready. The 80 or so young chaps aged from 16 to 25 who were on the journey were dressed in the typical 'uniform' of the Kittelbach pirates (short summer trousers, white shirt, belt with death's head, death's head ring, lump of porcelain on the trouser buckle, tin whistle in the leg of the boot). They had taken along with them strips of canvas for spending a night in the open, alcohol galore and ... girls ... 

When the police arrived, they found most of the 'pirates' completely drunk, and the girls in an indescribable state. The whole group (apparently overcome by a false romantic idea of what it is to be an outlaw) was picked up by the police. Perhaps 70 of these wayward young chaps were taken to the law court in Krefeld where they were found guilty of offences against Section 4 of the ORDINANCE of 28 February 1933, wearing a banned uniform. Ten additional ones ... had to appear before the Düsseldorf special court today ...

In the main trial, which was conducted 'in camera' (in private), all of the accused (who used nicknames like 'Bobby', 'Jumbo', 'Sonny Boy', 'Black Hand' and the like) admitted their guilt ... 'Black Hand' was sentenced to two months in prison, 'Bobby' to one month. The other pirates each got a 75 Mark fine ... The chairman of the court explained that ... if the accused had been older and had displayed activity which amounted to subversion ... the death penalty, life imprisonment or a long prison sentence would have been expected. The chairman of the special court concluded that this may serve as warning to any other 'members of other special groups'.

**SOURCE 14.32** In 1942 the Reich youth leadership was driven to declare

The formation of cliques, i.e. groupings of young people outside the Hitler Youth, was on the increase a few years before the war, and has particularly increased during the war, to such a degree that a serious risk of the political, moral and criminal breakdown of youth must be said to exist.

**SOURCE 14.33** The hanging of Edelweiss Pirates in 1944

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**CALMING POINT**

Is total youth conformity an impossible task for any regime?

**CALMING POINT**

Some German historians have been accused of exaggerating the significance of the Edelweiss Pirates. Why might they have done so?