

## The Gestapo and the Security Police Search the Berlin Headquarters of the German Communist Party (February 23, 1933)

### Abstract

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Since its founding in late 1918, the German Communist Party (KPD) had seen itself as a radical leftist alternative to the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and, as such, represented a Marxist-revolutionary perspective. After the start of the depression, the KPD began receiving the support of more and more voters. It attained its highpoint in the last free Reichstag elections in November 1932, securing 16.9 percent of the vote. Many middle-class Germans viewed this development with increasing concern and were thankful when Hitler's new government took merciless action against the Communists. On February 23, 1933, the Gestapo and the Security Police [*Schutzpolizei*] searched the KPD headquarters, looking for some kind of proof of a Communist conspiracy, and then closed it down. A few days later, the wave of Communist arrests that followed the Reichstag fire effectively put an end to the KPD. On March 6, 1933, it was officially prohibited.

### Source

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Source: Gestapo and Security Police occupy and search the Berlin headquarters of the KPD after Hitler's "seizure of power." Berlin, 1933. Photo: Carl Weinrother.

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