

# The So-Called Coordination: First Meeting of the Coordinated Hamburg Citizenry under SA Supervision (May 10, 1933)

## Abstract

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Hitler's new political order was based on the elimination of the party pluralism and federalism of the Weimar Republic. Starting in February 1933, Nazi leaders sought the so-called coordination [*Gleichschaltung*] of all public and private authorities under Nazi auspices. This involved, among other things, the neutralization or integration of competing political organizations, such as parties, labor unions, and other interest groups. Taking control of state, city, and municipal governments and administrations was one key step toward centralizing all state authority. The "Reichstag Fire Decree" had broadened the regime's powers of intervention, allowing it to abolish state governments and put them under the control of Reich commissioners named by the central government. Intimidation, violence, and arrest were used to drive "unreliable" state and municipal politicians and officials out of office; they were then replaced by deputies loyal to the Nazi regime. By the end of May 1933, some 500 high-ranking community officials and 70 mayors had already been dismissed. The "Preliminary Law Coordinating the States with the Reich" of March 31, 1933, called for the membership of state parliaments to reflect the distribution of parties in the Reichstag. The "Law on the Reconstruction of the Reich" of January 30, 1934 decreed the final dissolution of all state parliaments.

The Nazi takeover in Hamburg took place on March 5, 1933, and set the precedent for many similar actions throughout the country. Like Hamburg, numerous other cities saw political "coordination" imposed from below by brute force and from above by legislative decrees. For example, the Hamburg City Hall was occupied by members of the SA and the SS on the evening of the last Reichstag election. At the same time, the Reich Ministry of the Interior decided that the Hamburg senate had to follow Nazi guidelines. The Social Democratic mayor of the city resigned under protest. The new, "coordinated" city senate was composed of 6 members of the NSDAP, 2 members of the DNVP, and 2 members of the *Stahlhelm*. Photo by Joseph Schorer.

## Source

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Source: First session of the “gleichgeschaltet” Hamburg citizenry under the “Saalschutz” of the SA. Hamburg, May 10, 1933. Photo: Joseph Schorer.

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