

“German Day” at Nuremberg (September 2, 1923)

Abstract

This short documentary captured scenes from a two-hour march in Nuremberg on “German Day” [*Deutscher Tag*], September 2, 1923, which drew 100,000 far-right participants from around the country, the largest turnout since the event’s inception in 1920. An early scene shows uniformed members of the ultra-nationalist and antisemitic *Jungdeutscher Orden* [Young German Order], followed by those of the SA [*Sturmabteilung*], the paramilitary shock troops of the Nazi Party. An intertitle pointed out Adolf Hitler’s presence, but the film did not identify some of the other leading extremist figures who appear in various frames and whose stature lent some legitimacy to the proceedings, including General Erich Ludendorff, Prince Ludwig Ferdinand of Bavaria, and Bavarian Minister of Justice Christian Roth. A Nuremberg cinema owner, Philipp Nickel, shot and produced the film at his own movie company, having clearly appreciated its value and newsworthiness.

This “Deutscher Tag” specifically commemorated the anniversary of Germany’s stunning 1870 victory over France in the Battle of Sedan and sought to build on the initiative of the previous year’s October German-Day gathering in Coburg—a violently anti-republican and antisemitic provocation organized by the *Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trutzbund* [German People's Protection and Defense League]. Such gatherings had slowly gained momentum in the aftermath of the failed right-wing Kapp Putsch in March 1920, and the southern state of Bavaria—where both Coburg and Nuremberg are located— provided especially fertile ground for the growth of such extremist bands and organizations. The three-year-old Nazi Party constituted just one of many groups at this particular 1923 gathering, but parade-like marches such as the one here later became one of the party’s signature spectacles.

Source

Source: Interwar Germany, Nuremberg rally 1923. USHMM: RG-60.4222. Accessed at United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Bundesarchiv

USHMM

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