**The Bamberg Conference of 1926[[1]](#footnote-1)**

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[Adolf Hitler](https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/adolf_hitler.htm) called for a Nazi Party conference to be held at Bamberg. Hitler was becoming concerned that the[Nazi Party](https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/Nazi%20Germany.htm) was splitting in two ideologically and wanted the issue resolved as soon as possible. Bamberg was not a random choice for this conference. Bamberg is in Bavaria and Hitler was effectively making a statement about where he thought the heart and soul of Nazism lay.

In early 1926, the Nazi Party appeared to Hitler as if it was splitting into two different ideologies. He believed that the party could only go down one road and the conference at Bamberg was called to resolve the issue once and for all. Party ‘Gaufuehrers’ (District Leaders) were called to the meeting. Those district leaders from Northern Germany were at odds with district leaders from the south of Germany as to where the heart of Nazism lay. Those from the north were described as “urban, socialist (with) a revolutionary trend” (Louis Snyder) while those district leaders from the south were described as “rural, racialist (and with) populist ideas.” (Snyder)

The northern side of the party was represented by Gregor Strasser – considered at the time as a rival to Hitler for the future leadership of the party – while the south was best represented by Gottfried Feder.

Hitler chose at Sunday February 14th, for the meeting in the hope that those from the north of Germany would find it more difficult to get to Bamberg than those in the south. In this sense, Hitler was making it clear where his loyalties lay. However, he knew that he had to be careful as he was unsure which group had the most support when the meeting opened. Both Strasser and [Jospeh Goebbels](https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/joseph_goebbels.htm) spoke for the north but were outnumbered by representatives of the party from the south of Germany. Hitler did, however, make himself clear when he told the conference that he would not allow the party to go in the direction of “undiluted socialist principles”.

One of the key topics that highlighted differences within the party was what should be done to the homes and estates of those from noble “princely” background. The more radical northern representatives believed that the estates should be expropriated and put to the greater use of the many. Hitler made a two-hour speech in which he stated where he stood: that expropriation of the estates would push the party along the road of communism and that he could not tolerate anything that would help “communist-inspired movements”.

Hitler knew exactly what he was doing in the speech. He tainted those who stood behind Strasser with the stain of communism – taking land from those who owned it and redistributing it. There was a loathing of communism among the party and Hitler correctly gambled that those who stood behind Strasser would quickly move behind the southern Nazis, who by the end of the congress clearly had the backing of Hitler. One of the main figures who made this move was Joseph Goebbels. He had originally gone to Bamberg to speak on the behalf of the northern ‘urban revolutionaries’ but by the time the conference broke up, he had set himself firmly in the Hitler camp. It was a move of loyalty recognised by Hitler who made the future Head of Propaganda Gauleiter of Berlin. Strasser, for his part, called Goebbels a “scheming dwarf”.

However, Hitler never forgot someone who he believed represented a challenge to his authority. In 1926 Strasser appeared to do just this. He was one of those murdered in the [‘Night of the Long Knives’](https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/night_of_the_long_knives.htm) in 1934. Strasser had nothing to do with the threat posed by [Roehm](https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/ernst_rohm.htm) and the SA and was politically inactive at the time – but the whole episode presented Hitler with the perfect opportunity for revenge.

1. historylearningsite.co.uk. Accessed 21/2/2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)