

NAZI GERMANY

- Wife 1 ... changing the subject, I was an article over the weekend which said that the Germans welcomed Nazism ... 'willingly embraced' it, it said
- Wife 2 Really?
- Wife 1 Can't remember the author – somebody Evans – but his argument was that there've been these studies of local regions in Germany, and they show that the Germans really liked being Nazis.
- Husband 2 Well for most people, of course, Nazi Germany was a great time – you could leave your door open and nobody stole anything. And there was all that *Strength through Joy* stuff – free holidays ... the Volkswagen!
- Wife 2 I thought it was all 'guns not butter' – was nobody fed up that they didn't have any 'butter'?
- Husband 1 I think that most Germans had guns AND butter before the war. Hitler's foreign policy was kicking ass, there was full employment. Morale was really high – *Beauty of Work* and all that.
- Husband 2 And the Nazis invented all kinds of amazing things, you know – computers, jet planes, synthetic fuels, the electron microscope, nuclear fission ...
- Husband 1 ... nerve gas, guided missiles, the world's first mass-murder gas-chambers ...
- Husband 2 [laughs ironically] ... yeah, but you know what I mean. I read it on the internet. Much of our modern technology is based on Nazi developments: motorways, the tape recorder, the microwave – they were all invented by Nazi scientists – the first TV broadcast ...
- Wife 1 I read this newspaper article which said that they built the first Butlins – this huge holiday camp at a place called Prora. Never got finished...
- Wife 2 But surely the Nazi government was the most repressive regime in history. Surely people HATED it. Didn't the Germans have a saying; 'Speak through a flower?' Perhaps they just liked the government *officially*, because they daren't say anything else?
- Husband 2 I think that's true. As soon as he became Chancellor Hitler got the Enabling Act letting him pass any law he wanted, and within a year he'd abolished all the opposition parties, imprisoned the Communists, set up the Nazi 'People's Courts', abolished the Trade Unions, sacked teachers who weren't Nazis ... even massacred the SA. Even if someone DID disagree, what could they do? All they'd get would be a visit from the Gestapo.
- Wife 1 In the article I was reading there was a suggestion that the Gestapo didn't do much investigating because they didn't need to – ordinary Germans just phoned up and told them everything they needed to know ... it shows how genuinely popular the Nazis were.

- Wife 2 But what about those Christians – Niemöller, and Bonhoeffer? They opposed Hitler, didn't they? Didn't Bonhoeffer try to kill Hitler?
- Husband 2 True, but the Churches generally supported the Nazis because they thought he'd stop the Communists. The Pope even made a deal with Hitler – the Concordat ...
- Wife 2 Who carried that bomb that nearly killed Hitler? What was his name ...
- Husband 2 ... Stauffenberg ...
- Wife 1 ... and have you seen that film on *Sophie Scholl* and the White Rose – and what about those Eidelweiss Pirates?
- Husband 1 Most of that kind of opposition to the Nazis came *during* the war, when people could see where Nazism was leading them ...
- Wife 2 ... but what about what they did to the Jews, and the gypsies, and deaf people and all the rest? Surely ordinary Germans didn't advocate that kind of thing?
- Husband 1 Well ... I think many Germans thought they'd had it coming to them. It's a bit sensitive politically, I suppose, but as far as I can see there were plenty people who ... Can you remember in the film *Schindler's List* where the Jews are going to the ghetto, and there's that little Polish girl shouting: [mimics] 'Goodbye Jews, Goodbye Jews' ... I think people generally were more racist in those days, and there were plenty of people prepared to look the other way. Remember *Kristallnacht* – everybody knew about it, but nobody said anything.
- Husband 2 Are you saying that all the people of Germany were in on the holocaust? I can't go with that. I've seen films from after the war where the Allies made them go and see the concentration camps, and they're all coming out TOTALLY devastated ... they hadn't had a clue what was going on ...