

ACTIVITY

Below are some statements that might have been made by members of the elite and other influential groups in 1928. Match each one up with the person most likely to have made that statement. (This exercise illustrates some of the attitudes amongst these groups; these were probably the predominant attitudes, but remember that there would be a considerable variety of opinion within each group.)



a) General



b) Teacher



c) Industrialist



d) Junker



e) Judge



f) Protestant pastor



g) Newspaper editor

h) Economic growth is not sufficient to finance welfare reforms as well as maintain the profitability of our businesses. We must follow the example of employers in the Ruhr lockout and regain our proper control over the workers.

k) Even though we don't like this new democratic system, at least we've kept our jobs. We will have to enforce laws we dislike, but we should take every opportunity to let good German nationalists not be harshly penalised for trying to save their country.

i) Our traditionally dominant political and social position has been undermined by the establishment of democracy. What's worse, our economic position has been weakened by the fall in world prices. I know our party, the DNVP, has recently joined the government, but I trust this is to try to secure government subsidies, not to bolster the regime!

l) We have lost the special position we had under the Second Reich, but at least the regime allows free religious activities. I and many of my colleagues, though, are concerned about the decline in moral standards and behaviour. Some people seem to want to break with tradition just for the sake of it; and there's still the danger of atheistic communism.

j) Our priority is to maintain our beloved Reichswehr, and not let it be contaminated by democracy. We must, of course, defend the government against communist subversives, and it would be unwise to assist some of these harebrained conservative plotters. For the moment, we should concentrate on developing Germany's military position, and exploit our links with Russia. There's something to be said for strengthening the position of the President compared to the Reichstag, but let's bide our time for the moment.

m) I, and most of my rivals, can't develop any enthusiasm for this new democracy. When you compare Germany now with what it was like under the Kaiser, it's hard to fathom. For the moment there seems no alternative, but I don't see it as my job to try to explain to our readers how the system works or to rally support for the present drab state of affairs.

n) At least this new regime has not yet interfered too much, but I am concerned that the spirit of democracy if taken too far could undermine discipline and respect for authority amongst youth. We must uphold traditional German values. We must foster pride in our country, though not in our current weak government.