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... At the Reichstag's special session held later that day at 8 p.m., Hitler delivered a short speech in which he characterized the new laws as an attempt to "achieve the legislative regulation of a problem which, if it breaks down again will then have to be transferred by law to the National Socialist Party for final solution."

The laws were then read by Reichstag President Hermann Göring as follows:

**Reich Citizenship Law of September 15, 1935**

I. 1. A subject of the State is a person who belongs to the protective union of the German Reich, and who therefore has particular obligations towards the Reich. 2. The status of subject is acquired in accordance with the provisions of the Reich and State Law of Citizenship.

II. 1. A citizen of the Reich is that subject only who is of German or kindred blood and who, through his conduct, shows that he is both desirous and fit to serve the German people and Reich faithfully.

**Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor, September 15, 1935**

Entirely convinced that the purity of German blood is essential to the further existence of the German people, and inspired by the uncompromising determination to safeguard the future of the German nation, the Reichstag has unanimously adopted the following law, which is promulgated herewith:

I. 1. Marriages between Jews and citizens of German or kindred blood are forbidden. Marriages concluded in defiance of this law are void, even if, for the purpose of evading this law, they were concluded abroad.

2. Proceedings for annulment may be initiated only by the Public Prosecutor.

II. Sexual relations outside marriage between Jews and nationals of German of kindred blood are forbidden.

III. Jews will not be permitted to employ female citizens of German or kindred blood under 45 years of age as domestic servants.

IV. 1. Jews are forbidden to display the Reich and national flag or the national colors.

2. On the other hand they are permitted to display the Jewish colors. The exercise of this right is protected by the State.

V. 1. A person who acts contrary to the prohibition of Section I will be punished with hard labor.

2. A person who acts contrary to the prohibition of Section II will be punished with imprisonment or with hard labor.

3. A person who acts contrary to the provisions of Sections III or IV will be punished with imprisonment up to a year and with a fine, or with one of these penalties.

VI. The Reich Minister of the Interior in agreement with the Deputy Führer and the Reich Minister of Justice will issue the legal and administrative regulations required for the enforcement and supplementing of this law.

VII. The law will become effective on the day after its promulgation; Section III, however, not until January 1, 1936.

The announcement of the Nuremberg Laws had the unexpected result of generating a lot of confusion and heated debate among Nazi bureaucrats as to how one should define a Jew, given that there had been widespread intermarriage up to this point.

As a result, two months later a supplemental Nazi decree was issued which defined a "full Jew" as a person with at least three Jewish grandparents. Those with fewer than three grandparents were designated as Mischlinge (half-breeds), of which there were two degrees: First Degree Mischlinge – a person with two Jewish grandparents; Second Degree Mischlinge – a person with one Jewish grandparent.

The Nazis also issued somewhat complicated instructional charts to help bureaucrats distinguish the various degrees of Jewishness. Generally, the more "full-blooded" a Jew was, the greater the level of discrimination. But much of the confusion remained. In many cases, the necessary genealogical evidence concerning Jewish family backgrounds was simply not available.

As it turned out, about 350,000 Germans could be classified as Mischlinge; with 50,000 having converted to Christianity from Judaism; 210,000 being half-Jews; and 80,000 considered quarter-Jews.

Nazi bureaucrats also disagreed on how strictly the Nuremberg Laws should be enforced. Moderate anti-Semites wanted to protect "that part which is German" concerning valuable civil servants in the government. Radicals, on the other hand, viewed all Mischlinge as carriers of "Jewish influence" and wanted them all dismissed. Much to their dismay, the moderates prevailed, and Mischlinge civil servants and others were allowed to keep their positions for the time being.

Surprisingly, many German Jews reacted to the Nuremberg Laws with a sense of relief, thinking the worst was now over – at least they finally knew where they stood and could get on with their lives even if they had diminished rights. And to some degree they were correct. Over the next few years, the Nazis moved slowly in regard to the Jews. This was the quiet time for Jews in the Third Reich, as Hitler began to focus his attention entirely on diplomatic affairs and military re-armament.

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1. After reading the passage through once, what is the main idea or “gist” of this passage? What words or phrases made an impression?
2. Read through the article a second time, annotating with the following symbols.

! : Something I already know

? : Something I don’t understand or have a question about

\* : Something that might be important

∞ : Connection to something I know or the content

1. Summarize the intended purpose of the *Reich Citizenship Law*. How do you know this?
2. What about the wording of the laws caused “confusion and heated debate among Nazi bureaucrats”? What unintended effects did this law have on the German population? Why?
3. Explain how the *Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor* supported the *Reich Citizenship Law*. How did the language of this law further segregate the Jews?