

If you had lived in Germany in 1914, what would it be like ?

In 1914, Germany was a **'new' country**, it was created in **1871** out of many German speaking states (or **'Lander'**). In 1914, Germany was a **large country**, with a population of **68 million** importantly placed in the **centre of Europe**. It sits between **Russia in the East and France in the West**.



Germany had many raw materials such as **coal, iron ore** etc and industries such as **steel** and **mining**.



It had many **factories**

Many of its mines and raw materials were found in an area Germany called the **Ruhr**, near the border, with France. Both Germany and France had tried to control this valuable land.

Both Britain and France thought this 'new' country Germany was a **threat** because of its size and power.

France in particular didn't trust Germany. **France had fought a war** against the largest German state **Prussia** in **1870** and **lost**.



The capital of Germany in 1914 was **Berlin** it was a large, modern city with both **areas of great wealth and areas of real poverty** and some **workers were demanding change, more rights and freedom**.



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The country areas were very **traditional**. Many women were not expected to work outside the home and in Germany as a whole, the **positions of power were held by men**.



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Germany was ruled by a **Kaiser** (or Emperor). His name was **Wilhelm II**.



He was a **nephew of Queen Victoria**.

Germany was **not a democracy** like Britain.

The Kaiser had the ruled with the help of upper class landowners. There was a **Parliament** called the **Reichstag** but it had **little power**.

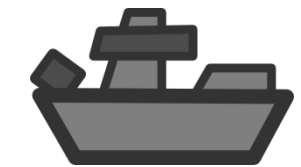
Many German people were not interested in the vote as long as their leaders kept the country strong and rich.



Germany was **militaristic** it believed a strong military was more important than freedom and democracy.

Germany was therefore proud of its **large army and navy**

Germany quickly tried to catch up countries like Britain in creating a large navy. This led to an **'arms race'**.



Germany also wanted an **Empire** like Britain and France. Both these countries saw Germany as a threat. These were the main reasons that Britain and France fought against Germany in **World War One 1914 – 18**.

What happened to Germany at the end of World War One?

In 1916 Germany had nearly won World War One but in 1917 their position was getting worse, in part because the USA joined the war on the side of Britain and France.

1917 – 1918 **Increasing unrest in Germany** due to food shortages and losses in the war

March 1918 Germany attempted a last major attack led by General Ludendorff. Early on it was a success but could not be sustained

Aug 1918 The **British, French and Americans counter-attacked** and began to push German forces back.

Sept 1918 **Demonstrations take place in Germany over food and the war.** These became so serious that they were damaging the ability of the German army to carry on fighting. More and more German soldiers also wanted an end to the war.

By **November 1918, the Germany was in such crisis that the army refused to follow the orders of Kaiser Wilhelm**, he was therefore **forced to retire (abdicate)** and leave Germany.

This left no leadership in charge and anti-war demonstrations in Germany were now so serious there was the **danger of revolution.**

Nov 1918 **Germany asked for an Armistice (ceasefire).** A **new government was formed** to lead Germany until elections could be held to decide on a leader.

What did most German people think had happened at the end of World War One ?

They believed:

The **German army did not actually lose the war** because their army was **not beaten**.

What had led Germany to stop fighting was **unrest blamed on troublemakers (political agitators)** which had forced the army to stop because they were needed to keep the peace at home.

Groups blamed for causing unrest in Germany included **Communists, Socialists** and **some people blamed the Jewish Community** in Germany. **Jews** were used as **scapegoats** for Germany's defeat.

Some Germans later argued that these troublemakers were **traitors** and had **'stabbed Germany in the Back'** by taking away the chance of victory with the trouble they caused within Germany.

One soldier who came to believe this idea was in hospital at the end of the war, having been the injured in a gas attack in 1918. He was just an ordinary soldier at that time, one of millions who had fought for Germany, but he would become very famous after the war.

His name was **Adolf Hitler...**



Source A

Adolf Hitler was in hospital recovering from a chlorine gas attack when he heard that the German government had surrendered. This extract comes from Mein Kampf' ('My Struggle') a book he wrote in 1924.

'Everything went black before my eyes; I tottered and groped my way back to the ward, threw myself on my bunk, and dug my burning head into my blanket and pillow. So it had all been in vain. In vain all the sacrifices and privations; in vain the hours in which, with mortal fear clutching at our hearts, we nevertheless did our duty; in vain the death of two million who died. Had they died for this? Did all this happen only so that a gang of wretched criminals could lay hands on the Fatherland.

I knew that all was lost. Only fools, liars and criminals could hope for mercy from the enemy. In these nights hatred grew in me, hatred for those responsible for this deed. Miserable and degenerate criminals! The more I tried to achieve clarity on the monstrous events in this hour, the more the shame of indignation and disgrace burned my brow'.

Question: How far does source A explain the reactions of German people to defeat in World War One ? (7 marks)

The Treaty of Versailles June 1919

The peace treaty at the end of World War One was called **The 'Treaty of Versailles'**. The main countries involved in making it were **Britain, France and the USA**. The Treaty of Versailles was signed by the new Government in Germany in June 1919. It was thought, even then, to **be very harsh on Germany**.

Key words - **Treaty**: *meaning 'an agreement reached by negotiation and setting out of specific terms in writing'*

Versailles -*the palace where the meeting took place on the outskirts of Paris.*
(sometimes called the Paris Peace Treaty)

SIX TERMS OF THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

memory word:

GARGLE

The decisions made at Versailles:

Guilt

clause 231: Germany accepted **blame** for 'causing all the loss and damage' of the war.

Armey

army: 100,000/no submarines/no aeroplanes/6 battleships/No military allowed in Rhineland

Reparations

£6,600 million – in yearly payments as compensation, they were meant to finish in 1984

Germany lost land

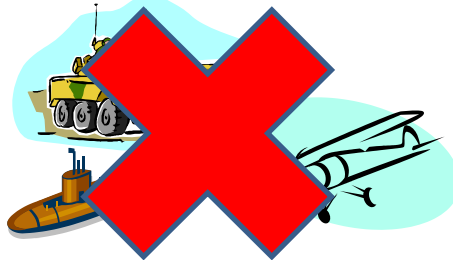
Alsace-Lorraine to France/Saar to France (15 years)/West Prussia and Upper Silesia to Poland/Danzig a 'free city'/German colonies became 'mandates' of the League of Nations.

League of Nations

set up.

Extra points

forbidden to unite with Austria. Estonia/Latvia and Lithuania to be independent states.



Germany lost all her colonies.

North Schleswig given to Denmark.

Danzig - a free city run by the League of Nations.

Eupen and Malmedy given to Belgium

Poland was given a 'corridor' to the Baltic Sea, cutting off East Prussia from Germany.

Posen - rich farmland given to Poland.

New government met here - so Germany was called the Weimar Republic.

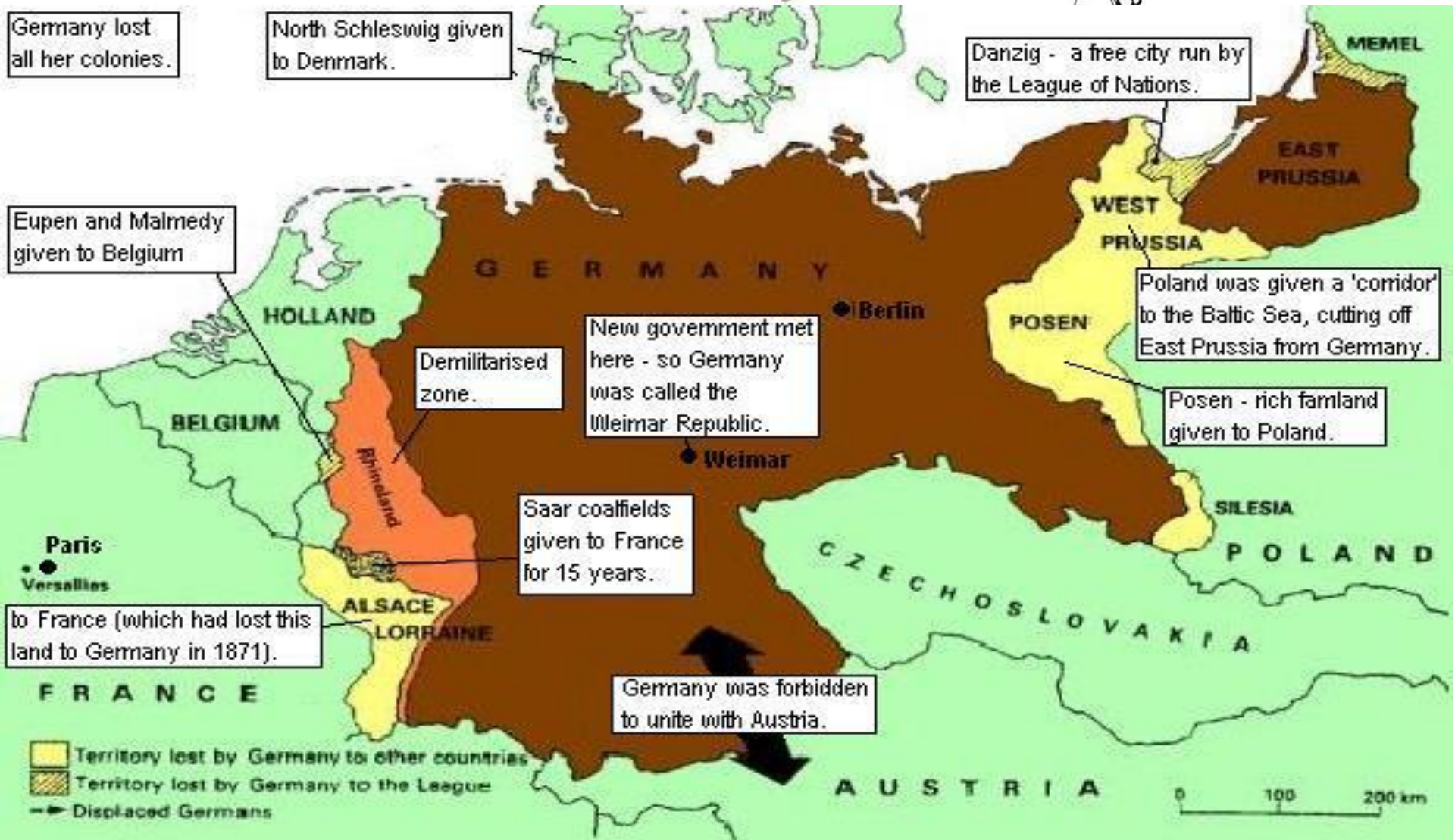
Demilitarised zone.

Saar coalfields given to France for 15 years.

to France (which had lost this land to Germany in 1871).

Germany was forbidden to unite with Austria.

- Territory lost by Germany to other countries
- Territory lost by Germany to the League
- Displaced Germans



German reaction to the Treaty of Versailles

Germany was **not allowed** to take part in the peace talks and was **made to accept and sign** the treaty in June 1919.

DIKTAT - The terms were **dictated** - Germany had no choice/say about it.

Unrepresented
Not allowed to join League of Nations
Forced to accept terms - diktat
Angry with armed forces reductions
Injustice - War guilt, loss of land etc
Reparations - set to high



Was the Treaty fair?

Fair

- The war had caused so much death and damage
- Germany had to be stopped from doing it again
- People in France and Britain wanted revenge

Harsh

- The punishment was too severe towards Germany
- Germany was left weak and resentful - this could lead to anger and a revenge war
- The Treaty wouldn't help rebuild European trade and wealth
- The peacemakers had made the Treaty under pressure from home

How did Germany react to the Treaty of Versailles?

German people were **very angry** at the way they were treated during the Treaty of Versailles.

They were **not allowed to argue their case** in any of the talks which were held.

The **terms of the Treaty of Versailles** were, they believed, **very harsh**.

They believed it was part of a plan of **revenge**, to keep Germany permanently weak.

Land given to other countries meant that **some German families were separated** because they lived on different sides of the new borders.

The financial penalties or **Reparations** taken from Germany and given to Britain and France made it **very difficult for German businesses to recover** after World War One.

The **proud military tradition** in Germany was **attacked by the huge cuts in the armed forces**. It also **increased unemployment** with millions of demobbed soldiers without work.

Many ex-soldiers **did not support the new German government** and this caused political instability.

The part uniting **ALL** Germans in anger at the Treaty of Versailles was the **WAR GUILT CLAUSE**, this blamed Germany for starting WWI & was used to justify the other punishments

a comment from the 'Deutsche Zeitung' written in June 1919, on the day the Treaty was signed.

Today in the Hall of Mirrors [at Versailles] the disgraceful treaty is being signed. Do not forget it! The German people will, with unceasing labour, press forward to reconquer the place among the nations to which they are entitled.

How did Germany react to the Treaty of Versailles?



A German cartoon published in 1919.
The German mother is saying to her starving child: 'When we have paid one hundred billion marks then I can give you something to eat.'



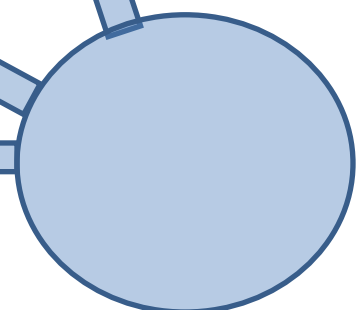
The cartoon says 'You've got to swallow it, whether you like it or not ! The pill has the words 'Peace Terms' written on it.

**'You must carve in your heart
These words, as in stone -
What we have lost
Will be regained!'**
A poem written after they Versailles

Reparations would
cause starvation

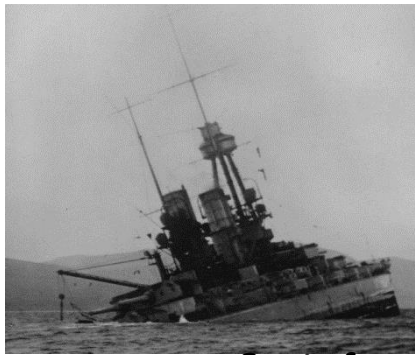
Germany had no
choice or face being
invaded

Many Germans
demanded revenge
for land lost and
War Guilt





Food shortages



Army, navy & air force
much weaker



Political Crisis and violence

What state was
Germany in after
World War One?

Factories closed /
production fell



poverty



Germany humiliated



Question: Who were Germany's leaders after World War One?

Answer: NO!.....not him!

The right answer is:



From 1919 until 1933 the Germany's leader were part of The Weimar Republic

This is a picture of its first President

Friedrich Ebert



What was the Weimar Republic?

The **Weimar Republic** was the name given to Germany from 1919 – 1933.

It was a new political system for Germany, it was a democracy.

'Weimar' was the town in Germany where they held a meeting to set up this new system.

'Republic' is a country that does not have a monarchy (King or Queen) but instead chooses a President by voting.

Under the Weimar Republic **all men and most women could vote** for their leaders. This was completely different to being ruled by the old Kaiser. Most people had never had the freedom to do this.

Voters had a **choice of political parties** who they could vote for.

They elected a **President**, a figurehead for people to serve as a **focus of loyalty**

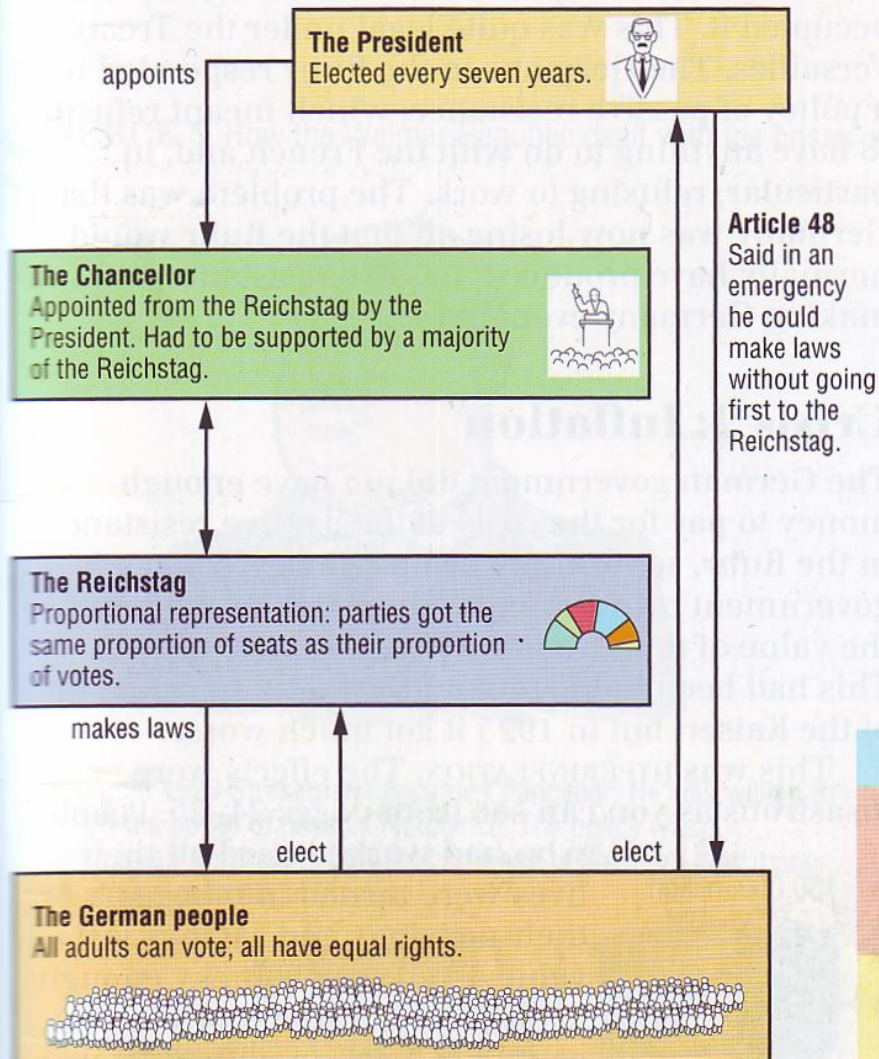
a **Chancellor** (like our Prime Minister) to **run the country**.

a **Parliament**, called the **Reichstag** which voted to **make laws**.

The Parliament was a **multi-party system**, there were many different political parties represented in the Reichstag.

The new system was protected by a set of basic laws called the **Weimar Constitution**.

◀ SOURCE 1 The main features of the Weimar Constitution which was agreed by the National Assembly, July 1919



Article 48
Said in an emergency he could make laws without going first to the Reichstag.

The states kept their own governments, but with reduced powers.
National laws could overrule state laws.

Strengths	Weaknesses
All Germans had equal rights, including the right to vote.	In 1919 the Republic had many enemies. It was not sensible to give equal rights to those who wished to destroy it.
Proportional representation made sure that political parties were allocated seats in Parliament in proportion to the number of votes they got. This was fair.	Proportional representation encouraged lots of small parties which each got a small number of MPs. No one party could get a majority, so governments had to be coalitions. There could never be a strong government.
A strong president was necessary to keep control over the government and to protect the country in a crisis.	The president had too much power. It was possible he could turn himself into a dictator.
Each state had its own traditions. It was right they should keep some control over their own affairs.	The states could be hostile to the national government, and even try to overthrow it.

GERMANY 1919 – 23: THE CRISIS YEARS

PROBLEMS

- **Violent challenges to the Weimar Republic**

Spartacist Uprising 1919 – an attempt by a Communist group to take power

Kapp Putsch 1920 – an attempt by a Nationalist group to take power

Munich Putsch 1923 – the first attempt by the Nazi Party to take power

- **Weaknesses of new political system / government**

Coalition government - different political parties had to share power, it led to huge arguments between them

Article 48: power of the President – The President had strong powers to shut down the Parliament and rule instead but only at a time of emergency. This power had the potential to be misused.

- **Effects of the Treaty of Versailles**

Ruhr Crisis 1923 - when Germany couldn't keep up with reparations payments demanded under the Treaty of Versailles, France occupied the Ruhr area of Germany which contained factories and mines.

Hyperinflation - very high inflation levels caused by the Ruhr Crisis and by printing too much money.

Violent challenges to the Weimar Republic

3 political ideas affected Germany after 1918

COMMUNISM

DEMOCRACY

NATIONALISM

Communism believed that councils of workers should control businesses and government and do this using violence and revolution if necessary. Communist groups had different names in different countries in Russia, they were called Bolsheviks.

The Communist group in Germany was called the **Spartacists**. There was a Communist (Bolshevik) revolution in Russia in 1917. It was **very popular with workers, in cities and trade unions** but, the middle class were terrified of 'Bolshevism'

The Weimar Republic was a **Democracy** which included the **German people voting for their leaders** eg President, Chancellor and Reichstag.

Political Parties which supported democracy included the **Liberals, Social Democrats and most Conservatives**

Nationalists believed that Germany needed a strong leader to return Germany to the powerful position it had before world War One.

They hated Democracy and the Weimar Republic, they believed it made Germany weak.

Nationalist groups in Germany included the Freikorps. Later many Nationalists became supporters of Adolf Hitler.

Weakness of new political system/ government

Why was the Weimar Republic weak from the start?

The Weimar Republic had replaced the Kaiser – powerful groups still loyal to him did not accept that the Weimar Republic had a right to run the country, so they tried to weaken and undermine it. These included the Army, Judges and landowners

*The most important figure was the President – he was meant to be a focus of loyalty for the people and help bring stability to the new system – **Article 48** gave the President the power to rule without the Reichstag (Parliament) and postpone elections.*

This power could be abused to create a dictatorship

Proportional Representation or 'One person one vote' meant that all Germans could vote in elections for their leaders. The country was so divided that this led to many small parties getting support, some had to try and work together in a coalition government to run the country- this led to arguments and slow decisions.

German voters began to think their new leaders were weak and not able to make strong decisions unlike the leaders they had before WWI

The Weimar Republic gave much freedom to individual states to run their own affairs – this led some like the state of Bavaria in the south of Germany to challenge the power of Germany itself

Violent challenges to the Weimar Republic

Left Wing



COMMUNISM

SPARTACIST UPRISING 1919

- In Jan 1919, 50,000 Spartacists rebelled in Berlin, led by the Communists Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Leibknecht and tried to set up a soviet form of government.
- The rebellion was put down by the army and the Freikorps in bitter street fighting and both sides suffered losses.

BAVARIA

- In 1919, communist workers' councils seized power all over Germany, and a Communist People's Government took power in Bavaria by murdering the state leader Kurt Eisner.
- The Freikorps were called in by Ebert and 600 communists were killed and von Kahr was placed as head of state.
- The communists were brutally crushed and were very bitter towards Ebert and his government. They remained a powerful anti-government force in Germany throughout the 1920s.



Violent challenges to the Weimar Republic

Right Wing

KAPP PUTSCH 1920

- March 1920, the right-wing nationalist Dr Wolfgang Kapp took over Berlin. The army refused to attack him; he was only defeated when the workers of Berlin went on strike.
- Nationalist terrorists assassinated 356 government politicians, including Walter Rathenau, the foreign minister, and Matthias Erzberger who had been finance minister. The judges, many of whom preferred the Kaiser's government, consistently gave these terrorists light sentences, or let them go free

MUNICH (BEER HALL) PUTSCH 1923

- Angered at the government for calling off the strike in the Ruhr in September in November 1923, Hitler and 600 storm troopers burst into a meeting that Kahr and Lossow (nationalist politicians) were holding at the local Beer Hall. Waving a gun at them, Hitler forced them to agree to rebel - and then let them go home. The SA took over the army headquarters and the offices of the local newspaper.
- The next day, 9 November 1923, Hitler and his 3,000 troops went into Munich on what they thought would be a triumphal march to take power.
- However, Kahr had called in police and army reinforcements. There was a short scuffle in which the police killed 16 Nazis.
- Hitler fled, but was arrested two days later.

NATIONALISM



Effects of the Treaty of Versailles

Invasion of the Ruhr 1922 / 23

France **invaded** the industrial area of the Germany called the Ruhr in **retaliation** for the **inability of Germany to pay the reparations** in 1922 as they had missed a payment.

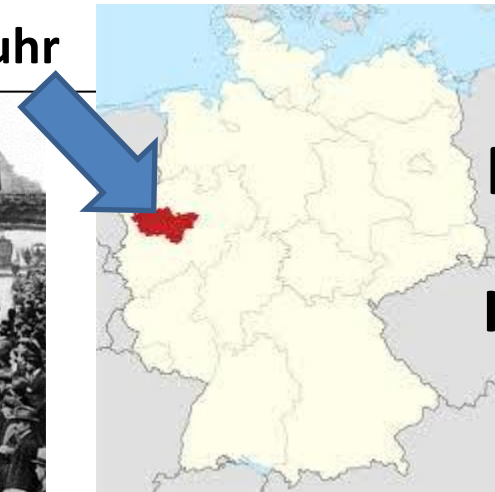
They would seize the money in terms of goods, resources and machinery instead.

The Weimar Government ordered **passive resistance** and the **German workers went on strike**. This meant that the French could not gain any raw materials as payment for the reparations but also that the Germans lost a huge amount of their profits as the area did not make a goods to sell.

The French killed over 100 passive resisters and expelled 100,000 protestors out of the Ruhr region.



The Ruhr



Ruhr Crisis

made

Hyperinflation

worse

There was a need to give **striking workers** some money to live on The Weimar Government **printed money** which made inflation worse.

Effects of the Treaty of Versailles

Hyperinflation 1919 - 23

The sudden **flood of paper money** into the economy combined with a **weak economy** ruined by the war resulted in **hyperinflation**

Prices ran out of control - eg **a loaf of bread, which cost 250 marks in January 1923 had risen to 200,000 million marks in November 1923**. German's currency became **worthless**.

- Some people used **money as fuel**
- People collected their **wages in suitcases**.
- One father set out for Berlin to buy a pair of shoes. When he got there, he could only afford a cup of coffee and the bus fare home.
- Pensioners on fixed incomes and people with savings were the most badly hit**. One woman sold her house with the intention of using the money to live on. A few weeks later, the money wasn't even enough to buy a loaf of bread.

But remember:

- Some people made fortunes during the crisis**. One man borrowed money to buy a herd of cattle, but soon after paid back his loan by selling one cow.
- There was a thriving **black market** during this period for products in **foreign currencies** such as US Dollars which were not affected by inflation.

NEED TO PAY
REPARATIONS

+

NO MONEY TO
PAY WITH

=

PRINT MONEY
MONEY LOSES
VALUE

=

HYPERINFLATION



The Munich Putsch 1923 – what you need to know!



1. It was in Munich ! (major city in South of Germany – state of Bavaria)
2. It was in 1923 – Hitler thought that Hyperinflation + Ruhr Crisis = right time for revolt!
3. After an evening meeting in a Beerhall in Munich, Hitler and his supporters called ‘Nazis’ or ‘Brownshirts’ or ‘stormtroopers’ or S.A.), decided to march into the centre of Munich the next day to take control of the city.
4. They hoped this would start a more general rebellion or revolution in the rest of Germany to get rid of the Weimar Republic .
5. To do this they enlisted the help of the leading politician in Munich , a man called von Kahr, who had been at the meeting.
6. After speaking to Hitler at the meeting von Kahr promised to help Hitler and the Nazis with the rebellion.
7. However, when Hitler was briefly distracted von Kahr ran away and went to report the plan of rebellion to the police.
8. The next morning Hitler and approx. 2,000 Nazis began the march on Munich. They were reluctant, they were poorly equipped and many were hungover !
9. They were stopped by police in the centre of Munich, shots were fired, 16 Nazis and 3 police officers were killed. Hitler dislocated his shoulder.
10. Hitler was arrested, put on trial and given a 9 month prison sentence by a sympathetic judge (most people doing what Hitler did get shot !)
11. Hitler only served 5 months in prison. During this time he wrote a book called ‘Mein Kampf’ – ‘My Struggle’ which set out his ideas and beliefs.

What did the Nazi Party do after the Munich Putsch failed?

The Nazis tried to build closer relations with big companies like IG Farben, To raise money for elections.

Hitler wrote 'Mein Kampf' in prison. In 1924 it was published and it became a 'bible' of the main Nazi beliefs.

The Nazis decided to become a 'respectable' political party. They start to contest elections

The Nazis claimed they had given up violence, although the 'Brownshirts' or SA continued to cause trouble on the streete.

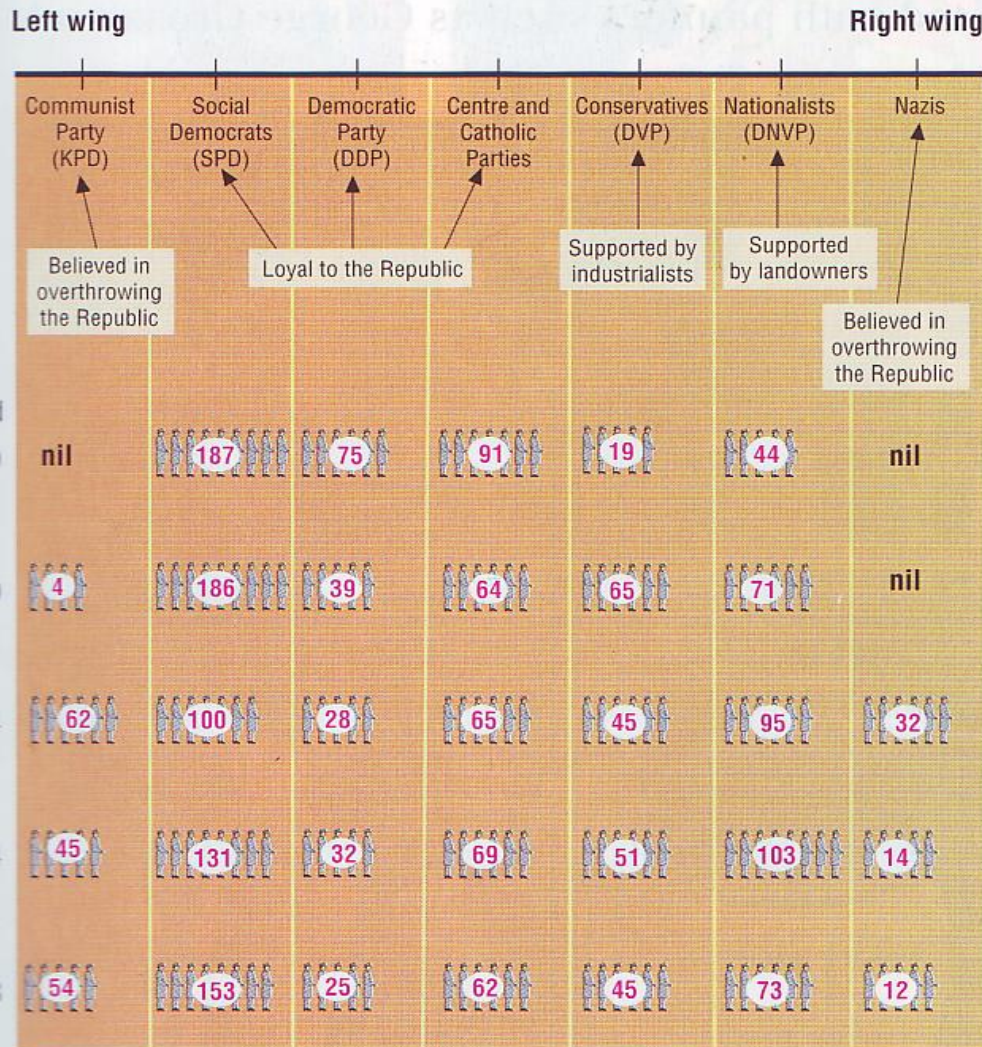
The Nazis started to build up a national 'grassroots' network of supporters. Before they had been too heavily based in the South.

The Nazis kept their policies deliberately vague. This meant they could promise to do different things for different groups.

The Nazis used 'new' ways of advertising the party. These included innovative posters, films and radio.



How successful were the Nazis between 1924 – 30?



Hitler became a much more effective speaker.

Hitler changed the way he was dressed and began to wear uniform.

He wanted the Nazis to be a party of order and discipline, in contrast to the chaos and disorder on the streets of Germany.

The Nazi Party did increase its membership all over the country.

They became much better at producing propaganda eg posters

The Nazis started to raise more money through their links with businesses in Germany

BUT

Hitler was still not trusted by most German people or other politicians

The Nazis did NOT do well in elections between 1924 & 1928

How successful was the Weimar Republic between 1924 – 30?

SUCCESSSES

Hyperinflation solved with the introduction of a new currency – the Rentenmark

The **French left the Ruhr** after agreement was reached about repayment

Dawes Plan was introduced in 1924 to make repayments Germany had to make more manageable

Economy improved with **falling unemployment, rising factory production and more confidence**

Locarno Treaty 1926 limited the weapons other European powers had compared to Germany

Rise in number of votes for political parties supporting democracy and the Weimar Republic

Communists and Nazis did not do well in elections compared to the parties supporting the Weimar Republic

Germany joined the League of Nations in 1927, a symbolic act which showed Germany was accepted internationally

FAILURES

Treaty of Versailles was still in place and very harsh on Germany

The **Locarno Treaty made permanent the land that was lost under the Treaty of Versailles Treaty**

Germany still had to pay reparations Economy did improve but **only returned to the level it had been before World War I**

Communists were still a potential threat Nazis were rebuilding party organisation

Number of troops still limited, therefore **Germany still weak and defenceless**

Voters still suspicious of Democracy

Important organisations like the **army and judges not convinced** about supporting Democracy / Weimar Republic

The politician responsible for Germany's relative improvement, **Gustav Stresemann died in 1929.**

GERMANY'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY DEPENDED ON LOANS FROM UNITED STATES UNDER THE DAWES PLAN

How did the Wall Street Crash help the Nazis get into power?

In October 1929 the **WALL STREET CRASH** happened in the United States. This plunged the US into an economic depression. Unemployment went up to 25%, factories shut and millions starved.

Ques. What has this got to do with Germany?

Ans. **TRADE** and **LOANS!**

The United States traded with many European countries eg Britain, France, and Germany. Therefore, if American businesses were in trouble this affected businesses in Europe too.

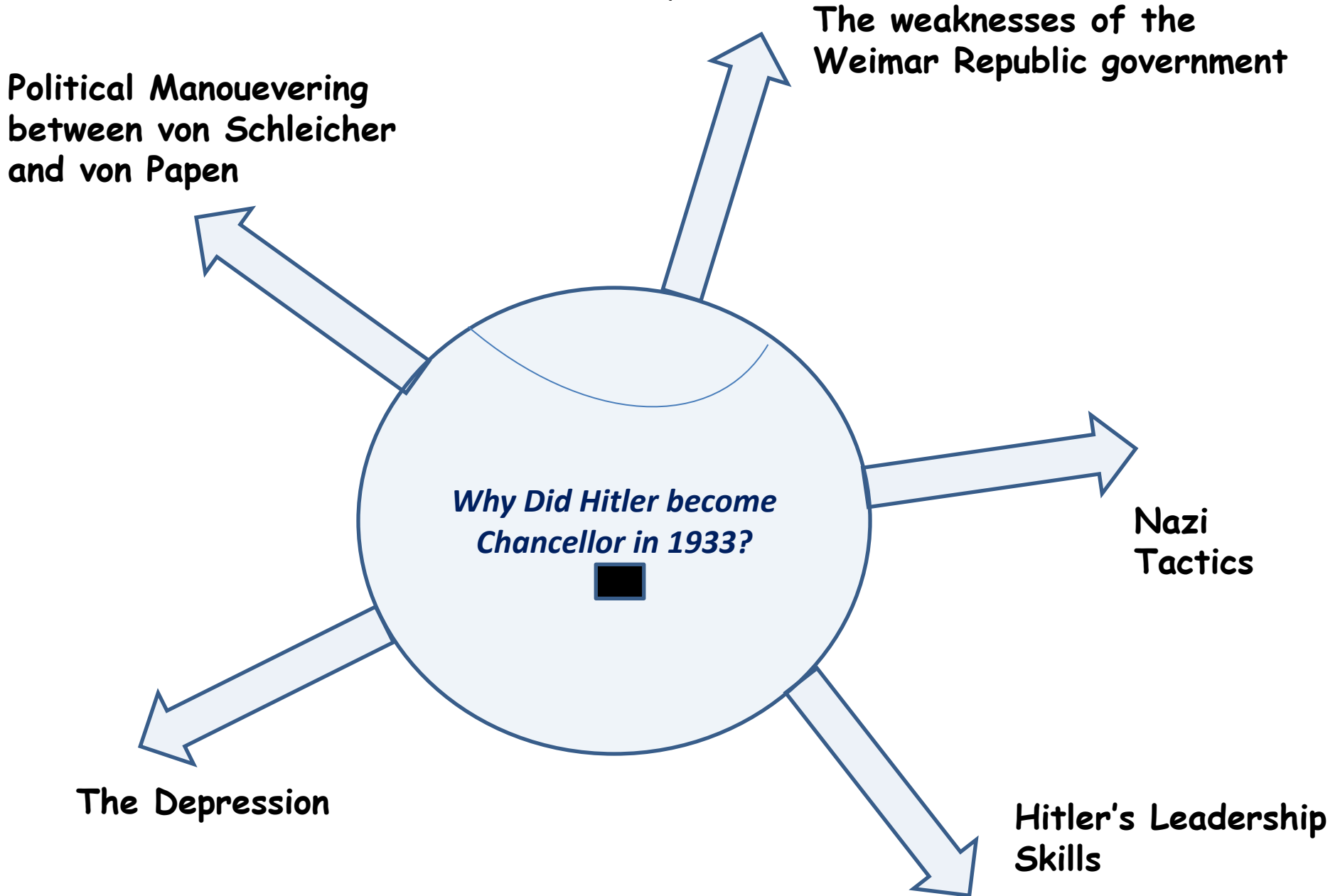
'If America sneezes Europe catches a cold!'

Why was Germany hit worse than others?

Germany had **borrowed money** from the United States to prop up its economy and pay back reparations. This was the **Dawes Plan**. However, when the US had **economic problems after 1929** they **withdrew the loans** they were making to Germany in order to support their own businesses.

It was the beginning of a worldwide slide into the **Great Depression**. The effects were felt everywhere but **Germany was hit particularly badly** because American banks recalled the loans which were the lifeblood of German industry. Businesses had to close. As world trade declined, **German exports slumped. Millions of people lost their jobs.**

Summary: How and Why did Hitler get appointed Chancellor in January 1933?



Details: How and Why did Hitler get appointed Chancellor in January 1933?: The Effect of the Depression

German Parliament (Reichstag) election results, 1928-33, and unemployment figures 1925-33

	Party							Unemployment figures
Number of MPs elected in	Communist Party	Social Democrats	Democratic Party	Centre Party	Conservatives	Nationalists	Nazis	
1928	54	153	25	61	45	73	12 (2.6%)	1,391,000
1930	77	143	20	68	30	41	107 (18.3%)	3,076,000
Jul 1932	89	133	4	75	7	37	230 (37.3%)	5,603,000
Nov 1932	100	121	2	70	11	52	196 (33.1%)	
1933	81	120	5	74	2	52	288 (43.9%)	4,804,000

By 1932 the Nazis had 12 million votes and in 5 years went from 12 MPs to 288. Their percentage of support from those voting increased from 2.6% to 43.9% in the same period. Nazi support increased as unemployment increased

From a school History textbook:

'The Depression was a **gift to Hitler and the Nazis**.

For every problem **the Nazis had an explanation or a promise**:

The Weimar government is weak: you need strong leadership. Hitler is your man.

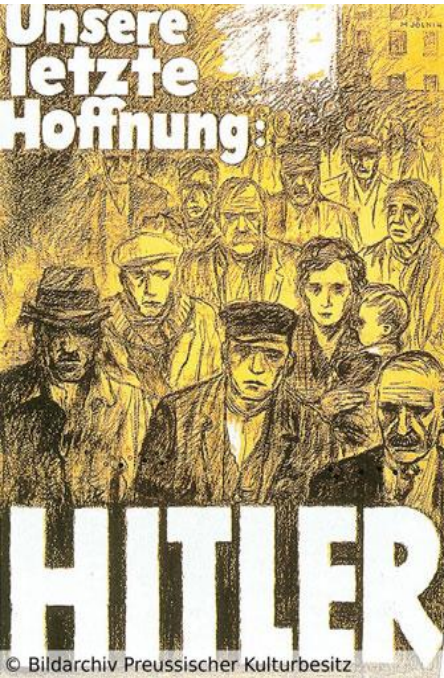
Unemployment? The Nazis will get people back to work on road-building and public works.

Worried about the Communists? Look at the Nazis' SA – we are the only ones who really know how to deal with the Communists.

Most importantly, Hitler, standing before a crowd delivering his powerful and moving speeches, **seemed to represent strong, decisive leadership in the great German tradition going back to the Kaiser and beyond**.

While the **Weimar Republic appeared simply to be muddling through indecisively**, Hitler's strong personality and powerful ideas seemed to be just what Germany needed'.

Details: How and Why did Hitler get appointed Chancellor in January 1933?: Nazi Tactics



Propaganda

The Nazis were **masters of propaganda** and **trained their local groups** in propaganda skills. They were very successful in using posters and films to **'change the message'** for each group they wanted support from.

Their **anti-Communist posters and views were popular with the middle class**. They whipped up fear and hatred of the Communists. They **stirred up violence at election meetings so that the SA could crush it and be seen 'dealing with the Communist threat'**.

Posters aimed at the **working class** spoke about how they **would protect jobs and workers rights** in the workplace and set wages so they would be fair to all.

Posters aimed at **rural and farming communities** spoke about the **importance of tradition and farming** to Germany

Posters aimed at **young people** spoke of a **'new Germany'** which they could help build

Hitler the 'superman'

Many examples of propaganda focused on **Hitler, as the strong leader** whom Germany needed and wanted. Posters and rallies built him up into a superman.. Other parties had no one to match him. **Election campaigns focused around his personality and his skills**. The Nazis **wanted German people to think that Hitler was the only leader who could save the country and make Germany great again**. This is called a **'Cult of Personality'**.



Popular policies

Summary: How did the Nazis consolidate power between January 1933 & August 1934?

1933

30 January

17 February

27 February

28 February

5 March

13 March

24 March

7 April

1 May

2 May

9 June

14 July

20 July

1934

January

30 June

August

August

Hitler appointed Chancellor; Goering Minister of Interior.

Goering ordered local police forces to co-operate with the SA and SS.

Reichstag fire. Arrest of 4000 Communists after being blamed.

Emergency Decree issued by Hindenburg at Hitler's request. The decree allowed

– police to arrest suspects and hold them without trial

– Hitler to take over regional governments (most were taken over by mid March).

Reichstag elections: government used control of radio and police to intimidate opponents. Nazis attracted many new voters and won 52 per cent of vote.

Goebbels appointed head of new Ministry for Propaganda. Took control of all media.

The Enabling Act – allowed Hitler to pass laws without agreement of the Parliament (Reichstag) or the President.

This made Hitler a legal dictator.

Civil Service, courts, and education purged of 'alien elements', i.e. Jews and others against the Nazis.

Workers granted May Day holiday.

Trade unions banned; all workers to belong to new German Labour Front (DAF).

Employment Law: major programme of public works (e.g. road building) to create jobs.

Law against the Formation of New Parties: Germany became a one-party state.

Concordat (agreement) between the state and the Roman Catholic Church: government protected religious freedom; Church banned from political activity.

All state governments taken over.

Night of the Long Knives.

On death of Hindenburg, Hitler became Führer.

German armed forces swore oath of loyalty to him.

Summary: How did the Nazis consolidate power between January 1933 & August 1934?

The Reichstag Fire

On **27th February 1933** the Reichstag (German Parliament) building was set on fire. Inside the burning building the police found a Dutch Communist, Marius van der Lubbe, who was arrested and charged with starting the fire.

Hitler used this as evidence that the Communists were plotting against his government.

That night police under the orders of leading Nazi Hermann **Goering arrested and imprisoned 4000 Communist leaders.**

Hitler persuaded President Hindenburg passed an **emergency decree** suspending the constitution of the Weimar Republic, which guaranteed personal liberty, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly.

The decree gave the police **emergency powers** to search houses, confiscate property, and detain people indefinitely without trial. The death penalty was applied for a wide range of crimes.

The police could ban meetings, close newspapers, round up political opponents and send them to the new concentration camps and detention centres, which were used at this stage to house political opponents of the Nazis.

Goering's police also seized control of the state radio station.

The emergency decree which was only meant to be a temporary measure, stayed in place for twelve years, throughout the period of Nazi rule. It formed the legal base for much of the Nazis' twelve-year terror against their opponents in Germany.

Details: How did the Nazis consolidate power between January 1933 & August 1934?



Workers were no longer allowed to join trade unions



Opposition politicians were arrested and imprisoned



Enemies of the Nazis, especially Communists, could be executed



The SA could search and ransack the homes of suspected opponents



Many opponents were driven into exile



The Nazis intimidated voters by watching over them as they crossed ballot papers

The Night of the Long Knives: June 1934

Hitler's power was still **not entirely secure**.

He faced threats to his power from **within the Nazi Party**

The S.A. was led by Ernst Röhm. It was a badly disciplined force

Röhm had talked of making the SA into a second German army.

Hitler himself was also suspicious of Röhm.

Hitler feared that Röhm's control over the 4 million SA men made him a potentially dangerous rival.

Hitler also faced threats from important **officers in the German Army** (the Wehrmacht).

Many were not Nazis and some disliked and didn't trust Hitler.

The army were very suspicious of the S.A. and its leader Ernst Röhm.

They knew of Röhm's idea to replace the German Army with the S.A.

Finally, the third group involved were **the SS, led by Heinrich Himmler**. They were formed as Hitler's personal bodyguard, a small but very loyal group of Nazis.

Hitler and Röhm also had an increasingly difficult working relationship. Hitler wanted the pace of change to slow down after taking power – Hitler wanted to **consolidate power** and reassure big business that he would not be too radical.

Röhm wanted change to happen more quickly after the Nazis assumed power because he **wanted more policies which would help working class Germans**.

Röhm made the fatal mistake of **publicly criticising Hitler** on this issue.

SOURCE B: Comments made by [Ernst Rohm](#) to [Kurt Ludecke](#) (January, 1934)

‘Hitler can't walk over me as he might have done a year ago; I've seen to that. Don't forget that I have three million men, with every key position in the hands of my own people, Hitler knows that I have friends in the Reichswehr (Home Guard), you know! If Hitler is reasonable I shall settle the matter quietly; if he isn't I must be prepared to use force - not for my sake but for the sake of our revolution’.

The source above explains the clear difference of opinion between Hitler and Röhm over the future direction of the Nazi Party and the very real threat that Hitler believed Röhm possessed.

On the weekend of 29–30 June squads of SS men under the command of Heinrich Himmler arrested and other leading figures in the SA . Hitler accused Röhm of plotting to overthrow and murder him. Röhm and about 400 others were executed.

These included the former Chancellor von Schleicher, a fierce critic of Hitler and others who actually had no connection with Röhm.

This purge came to be known as the **Night of the Long Knives.**

The Night of the Long Knives: Winners/losers - June 1934



Hitler gained in power and removed not just Röhm, a major threat to his power but also 'rewarded' Himmler for helping to put the Night of the Long Knives into practice. Hitler also used the opportunity to settle old scores eg he had von Schleicher shot for opposing Hitler's rise to power in 1932.



Röhm was, of course, a big loser – he was shot! The 3 million or so of his men in **the SA** were absorbed into the army and some went into the SS. This broke up the potential threat they posed.



Himmler and **the SS** were expanded in size and they remained the dominant Nazi group. By killing Röhm, Himmler had got rid of a fierce rival within the Nazi Party and gained more power and influence.



Hindenburg believed that Hitler had stopped a real revolt and thanked Hitler for his 'determined action which has nipped treason in the bud'.



The army also survived intact and because they were relieved and not to have been broken up, rewarded Hitler by offering a **personal oath of loyalty to Hitler** himself in **Aug 1934**. This acted as a major barrier to any later attempts by the army to remove Hitler from power.



grateful

Nazi party policies

Nazi policies towards women.

Women were expected to play a supporting role within a family unit.

They were thought by the Nazis and wives and mothers of the 'political soldiers' the Nazis were training.

They were expected to dress traditionally – long hair, traditional clothing styles and no make up. Nazi women's organisations rewarded women with medals for having large families of 4 or more and the government gave women tax breaks.

Education other than that which supported a domestic role was not encouraged beyond 16.

Many intelligent, educated, urban living women found this new situation stifling and lacking in opportunities.

Nazi policies towards the family

The family was meant to be at the heart of the Nazism. Propaganda encouraged men and women to believe they had separate roles within the family unit and children to be respectful to their parents and loyal to Hitler. There were very strict rules about marriage based on Nazi laws of racial purity. This happened due to the Nuremburg laws of 1935.

The family was thought of as less important than the 'Volksgemeinschaft', or the 'People's Community' – this was the racially 'pure', German speaking peoples who the Nazis believed were united by their loyalty to Hitler.

Nazi policies towards young people

Young people were indoctrinated (brainwashed) at school from an early age. They were encouraged to tell authority figures such as teachers etc, if any members of their families had made anti – Nazi comments.

However, activities continued in the Hitler Youth for boys, and the League of German Maidens for girls. There were other organisations for younger children. The activities they did were similar to those of scouts and guides but the aims were to train boys to become soldiers and girls as mothers. After 1936, it was compulsory by law to join the Hitler Youth and League of German Maidens.

At meetings young people were taught about Nazi beliefs, boys were given basic military training and girls training in domestic duties. They went on marches, parades and the highlight for many was the annual summer camps, this was popular with young people from the cities.

This did lead some boys to become fanatical Nazis but many were more interested in the possibilities for adventure which came from being a member. Approximately 10% of young people refused to join and were often punished with imprisonment.

Nazi policies toward the church

Nazism was not a Christian belief and was actively anti – semitic (anti Jewish). However, the Nazis knew that they had to try and keep or gain the support of religious Germans. Therefore they tried reach accommodation with the both Catholics and Protestants. Most protestants in Germany were Lutherans and the Nazis sought to get the support of the Lutheran church. They appointed Lutheran bishops sympathetic to the Nazis.

This led some anti-Nazi Lutheran priests to split from their church and set up a dissenting Lutheran church. Many members of this smaller group publicly criticised the Nazis in sermons, resulting in their arrest.

The Catholic church was very concerned that they would be suppressed by the Nazis, so in 1935 the Pope (the Head of the Catholic Church) signed a Concordat (or agreement) with the Nazis, the Nazis agreed to allow the catholic church in Germany to continue with interference, as long as the church did not intervene or publicly criticise Nazi racial policies, especially those against Jewish people.

One religious group which never compromised in their opposition to the Nazis were Jehovah's Witnesses. This led to many being sent to concentration camps.

Nazi economic policy

The Nazis were successful in transforming the weak German economy in the 1930s. It gave many Germans a new sense of national pride, even though it was done at a cost of long hours, pay levels which increased little over 10 years and few rights for workers.

Economic policy was the responsibility of Hjalmar Schacht and Hermann Goering and was done through a series of 4 year plans, which aimed to transform the economy. Some historians have argued that the aim of this 'transformation' was to create a 'war economy' (plan the economy to prepare for war).

Programmes included job creation schemes (similar to the New Deal in the USA). These programmes included building the first motorways (or autobahns), many of which were deliberately built towards the borders of France, Belgium and Poland and used by tanks at the start of WW2.

These programmes included conservation, house building, railway extensions and the building of the Reich Chancellery in Berlin. Conscription into the army and public works programmes was introduced.

After 1936, the second 4 year Plan was overseen by Goering, it emphasised manufacturing weapons and heavy industry, which many historians have argued was a preparation for war.

Economic policy was so successful that from 1932 – 1938 unemployment went from 5 ½ million to a situation where Germany was short of workers.

Nazi social policy

As unemployment fell, the Nazis became popular with sections of industrial workers, but many still held Communist ideas. It was, however, impossible to voice this in public for fear of arrest and imprisonment.

The Nazis believed that workers were a vital element in rebuilding Germany and were a key part of the 'People's Community'

The created many incentives to encourage workers to be productive (as well as the threat of arrest etc).

Propaganda praised workers and linked their achievement to the success of Hitler.

Strength Through joy (KdF) gave incentives such as cheap theatre tickets, cut price cruises attendance at sports events.

WHY DID THE NAZIS TREAT JEWISH PEOPLE SO BADLY ?

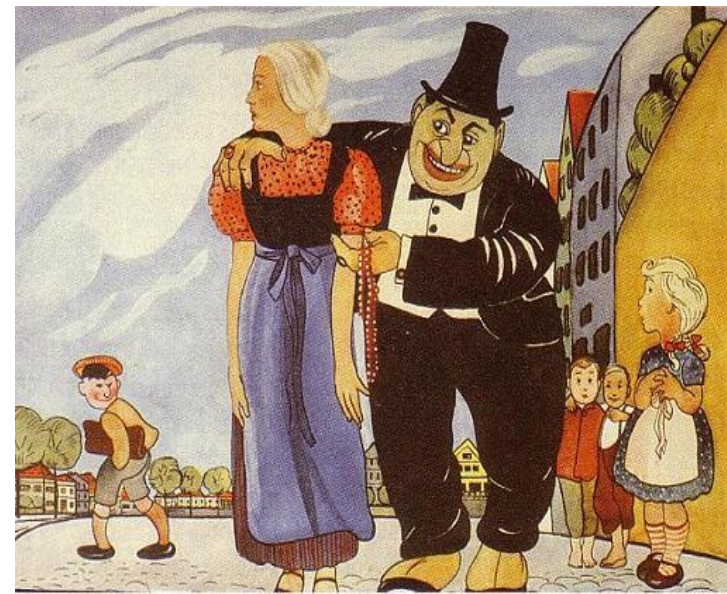
4 STAGES

Stage 1:	1933 – 35	'Piecemeal' Discrimination
Stage 2:	1935 – 39	Systematic Discrimination
Stage 3:	1939 – 41	Ghettos
Stage 4:	1941 – 45	The Holocaust (called the 'Final Solution' by the Nazis).

Stage 1: 1933 – 35 'Piecemeal' Discrimination

School books included anti – Jewish information and images

Jewish people could not continue in some professions eg the law



Stage 2:

1935 – 39

Systematic Discrimination

In 1935 the 'Nuremburg Laws' were passed which had important effects.

- 1) Jewish people could not marry non-Jewish children their children lost inheritance rights
- 2) Jewish people could not be citizens of Germany – they couldn't hold passports and became people without rights under the law in their own country
- 3) Some saw the future danger and left the country or got their children out on 'Kinder transport'
- 4) The stage ended with 'Kristallnacht' (Night of Broken Glass)
After the assassination of a Nazi diplomat in Paris revenge was taken on Jewish businesses and houses



Stage 3:

1939 – 41

Ghettos

When World War Two started Jewish people in land taken over by the Nazis became targets. They were put in Ghettos – small areas of towns and cities.

All Jewish people from that town and the surrounding countryside were forced to live there in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions.

Conditions became so bad that disease and epidemics spread quickly.

Nazis then used these conditions as propaganda by filming them to show that Jewish people were in the eyes of the Nazis 'untermensch' (sub-human)



Stage 4: 1941 – 45

The Holocaust (called the 'Final Solution' by the Nazis).

In Dec. 1941 there was a meeting at Wannsee in Germany between senior SS officers. Little evidence of the discussions they had there survive, but the decision was taken to carry out the 'Holocaust' or 'Final Solution to the Jewish Question' as the Nazis put it.

This led to the killing of 6 million Jewish people by 1945 and approximately 1 million others – political opponents, Prisoners of War, Roma people, homosexuals and religious opponents, such as Jehovah's Witnesses.

Concentration camps had existed since 1933, but only after 1941 were they used to murder systematically Jewish people.

After experiments with several methods, gassing was the system adopted.

The Holocaust ended when invading Russian soldiers from the East and American / British soldiers from the West discovered the camps which had been abandoned as they advanced with many inmates alive or dead left behind.



From the testimony of SS-Unterscharfuehrer Wilhelm Bahr in his trial at Hamburg (Quoted in *Truth Prevails*. ISBN 1-879437-00-7, p. 99):

Q: Is it correct that you have gassed 200 Russian POW's with Zyklon-B?

Q: Where did you do that?

Q: On whose order?

Q: With what gas?

Q: How long did the Russians take to die?

**Q: How long did it take to gas the Russians?
were all dead.**

Q: For what purpose did you go away?

Q: You left for your lunch and came back afterwards?

Q: Were they dead when you came back?

Q: Did you look at their bodies?

Q: Why did you apply the gas to the Russians?

A: Yes, on orders.

A: In Neuengamme [concentration camp].

A: The local doctor, Dr. Von Bergmann.

A: With Prussic acid [another name for Zyklon-B].

A: I do not know. I only obeyed orders.

A: I returned after two hours and they

A: That was during lunch hour.

A: Yes.

A: Yes.

A: Yes, because I had to load them.

**A: I only had orders to pour in the gas and I do not
know anything about it.**

How much opposition was there to the Nazis ?

There were **2 different levels of opposition: Passive** and **Active**.

Passive opposition: not getting involved eg refusal to join groups such as the Hitler Youth and League of German Maidens, low level grumbling and complaining, jokes about the Nazis.

Active opposition: included public criticism, leaflets attacking the Nazis, assassination attempts against Nazis including Hitler and attempted revolts.

As the years of Nazi rule progressed the nature and amount of opposition increased. The best example of active opposition was the **July 1944 bomb** plot involving young officers in German Army.

Groups known for opposition included **young people ('Swing Youth' eg Edelweiss Pirates, The White Rose group)**, **religious opponents (Dissenting Lutheran Church, Dietrich Bonhoeffer)**, Some **anti nazi politicians** and members of the **German Army (Bomb Plot 1944, Claus von Stauffenberg)**.

Sometimes these groups worked together eg the **Kriesau Circle**.

Many groups of people did not oppose the Nazis because they gained from Nazi rule, were members of the Nazi party, feared arrest and imprisonment for speaking out, or simply took no interest in the political life of the country and became 'fellow travellers'.

Opposition by Young People

The 'Swing' movement



This was made up mainly of middle-class teenagers. They went to parties where they listened to English and American jazz music. They accepted Jews at their clubs. They were deliberately 'slovenly'. The Nazis issued a handbook helping the authorities to identify these **degenerate** types. Some were shown with unkempt, long hair; others with exaggeratedly English clothes.

The Edelweiss Pirates

The Edelweiss Pirates were working-class teenagers. They were not an organised movement, and groups in various cities took different names: The Nazis however, called all the groups 'Edelweiss Pirates' and the groups did have a lot in common.



The public hanging of twelve Edelweiss Pirates in Cologne in 1944

The Pirates were mainly aged between 14 and 17. At the weekends, the Pirates went camping. They sang songs, just like the Hitler Youth, but they changed the lyrics of songs to mock Germany and when they spotted bands of Hitler Youth they taunted and sometimes attacked them. In contrast with the Hitler Youth, the Pirates included boys and girls. The Pirates' activities caused serious worries to the Nazi authorities in some cities. In December 1942 the Gestapo broke up 28 groups containing 739 adolescents. They therefore responded uncertainly – sometimes arresting the Pirates, sometimes ignoring them.

In 1944 in Cologne, Pirate activities increased. They helped to shelter army deserters and escaped prisoners. They stole weapons and took part in an attack on the Gestapo during which its chief was killed.

The Nazis arrested their leaders. Twelve were publicly hanged in November 1944.

Neither of the groups described above had strong political views. They were not political opponents of the Nazis. But they resented and resisted Nazi control of their lives.

The 'White Rose' Group

This group was led by Munich students. The leaders were Hans and **Sophie Scholl**. During the war they distributed leaflets attacking the Nazis' slaughter of the Jews and Poles, and urged Germans not to help the war effort. In 1943 most of the leaders were captured and executed.



Opposition by Churches

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

At a time when many Church leaders in Germany actively supported or at best failed to oppose the Nazis, Bonhoeffer's Christian faith led him to act against the Nazis, resulting in his death in a concentration camp a few days before the defeat of Germany.

Bonhoeffer believed that Christianity could not accept Nazi racist views; that churchmen had to be free to preach against the Nazis; and that Christians had a duty to resist Hitler and help victims of Nazi persecution.

Bonhoeffer and his brother Klaus were arrested.

Bonhoeffer was placed in solitary confinement, given stinking blankets and denied soap and water or clean clothes. The guards were forbidden to talk to him and he was fed on dry bread thrown onto the cell floor through a slit in the door.

In 1944 Bonhoeffer was transferred to a concentration camp. He continued to write letters, poems and essays. Fellow prisoners wrote remarkable descriptions of how, even in the camp, Bonhoeffer preached the word of God and resistance to the Nazis.

On 8 April 1945 Bonhoeffer was put on trial in Flossenburg concentration camp. The trial lasted half an hour. The sentence was death by hanging.



The July 1944 Bomb Plot

In 1944 opposition centred on a group led by General Ludwig Beck and a civilian conservative politician, Dr Carl Goerdeler. They backed plans by Claus von Stauffenberg to assassinate Hitler.

Operation Valkyrie

Von Stauffenberg prepared 'Operation Valkyrie'. The plan was to use two bombs in a briefcase to kill Hitler and then seize control of Berlin using the army.

By this stage of the war, many army officers were sure that the war was lost and that Hitler was leading Germany into ruin. On 20 July Stauffenberg left a bomb in Hitler's conference room. The plan was to kill Hitler, close down the radio stations, round up the other leading Nazis and take over Germany. Hitler survived the blast

Historians are not sure what happened next. Von Stauffenberg's fellow plotters in Berlin failed to act quickly and seize Berlin. Whether they were informed that Hitler was dead or still alive is not known for certain. When von Stauffenberg arrived in Berlin very little had been done to put Operation Valkyrie into effect; troops had not been mobilised, and radio, telephone and telegraph networks had not been seized, army leaders would not co-operate, but by 9 p.m. the plot had failed. (due to the Oath of Loyalty made in Aug 1934).

Von Stauffenberg and some of the other leading plotters were quickly executed. Hitler had his revenge – nearly 5000 of his opponents were killed by shooting, hanging, or torture.

