

# Weimar and Nazi Germany

## Paper 3 Knowledge Toolkit

# Paper 3 1h15: Weimar and Nazi Germany

### End of WW1 and the creation of the Weimar

The First World War end on **11<sup>th</sup> November 1918** and left Germany scarred and crumbling. People were starving. Riots were breaking out. The navy had mutinied. The Kaiser was forced to **abdicate in Oct 1918**. **Fredrich Ebert**, leader of the Social Democratic Party became the **first president and declared Germany a republic**.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Proportional representation made sure that small parties has a fair share of the seats.	Proportional representation made it difficult for one party to win a majority. Coalition governments were unstable and often fell apart
Women able to vote as well as men	Article 40 allowed the president in times of emergency make laws without the consent of the Reichstag
Voting age reduced to 21	German people were not used to democracy and so there was uncertainty about if they would engage with it.
No one person or group could have too much power	
There was an election of the president every 7 years	
Local government retained power in regions	
A poor chancellor or president would only govern for a short time	

The **Armistice** was signed on 11<sup>th</sup> Nov 1918. This ended the war. Many believed Germany had been '**stabbed in the back**' as the Kaiser had previously told them they had been winning the war. The **Treaty of Versailles** would agree the terms of the peace and was very unpopular in Germany.



**Land**-Germany lost 13% of its land. Alsace Lorraine, rich in iron ore, was given back to France. Although Germany didn't lose the Rhineland, it was demilitarized.

**Army**-Germany's **ARMY** was reduced to a maximum of 100,000 soldiers. It wasn't allowed to have an air force, nor any tanks or submarines. The aim was to limit Germany's ability to wage war again.

**Money** -Germany had to pay the Allies £6.6 billion in **REPARATIONS** (compensation). This money would help the Allies repair any damage caused by the war, and stop G from going to war again.

**Blame**-Germany was forced to accept the **War GUILT Clause**. This stated that Germany was to blame for starting the war. Germany was made an outcast in Europe, and denied entry to the League of Nations.

### Extremist threat 1923

The Weimar government faced a lot of opposition from both right wing and left wing extremist groups, who unsuccessfully tried to overthrow the government.

The Spartacists	The Freikorps
✓ Left-wing	✓ Right-wing
✓ Came from the Independent Socialist Party	✓ Made up of ex-soldiers who had kept their weapons
✓ Had soviet backing	✓ Had 250 000 men in March 1919
✓ Led by Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht	✓ Organised by regular army
✓ Based in Berlin	

#### Challenge from the left - the Spartacist Revolt

In January 1919, the Spartacists took over the government's newspaper and telegraph bureau, and tried to organise a general strike in Berlin. The Weimar government sent Freikorps units to put down the revolt.



There was street fighting in Berlin for several days before the revolt ended and Spartacist leaders were shot.

#### Challenge from the right - the Kapp Putsch

In March 1920, Freikorps troops, fearing unemployment, decided to march on Berlin. Ebert asked the head of the army to resist the Freikorps but he refused. A nationalist politician, Dr Wolfgang Kapp, was put in charge by the rebels and the Weimar government fled Berlin seeking safety. In order to put down the rebels, or Kapp Putsch as it became known, the government organised the trade unions to go on strike. This they did and the national strike caused such chaos that Kapp could not rule Germany and was forced to flee. The Weimar ministers returned.

### Invasion of the Ruhr

In 1923, Germany fell behind in its **reparations payments**. Under the Treaty of Versailles, the French were allowed to invade Germany and seize raw materials as payment—if the Germans didn't pay up. In Jan 1923, the **French marched into the Ruhr**, Germany's most important industrial region and occupied it. They wanted to take Germany's coal.

The Germans in the Ruhr responded with **passive resistance (going on strike)**. The idea was that if no coal was being mined, the French couldn't take it. The Weimar Government continued to pay the workers and **printed more bank notes**. This caused **hyperinflation** (value of currency decreases and prices increase).

This led to a huge **depression** in Germany. People lost their jobs, houses, couldn't afford to eat. Most blamed the Weimar government and started to turn to extremist groups like the Nazis.



### Stresemann and the Golden era



In Aug 1923, Stresemann became Chancellor. Between 1924-29 Germany became both economically, politically and internationally more stable. This period is usually called 'The Golden Era'. But, underneath the surface, Germany was still struggling. Many say he simply 'papered over the cracks'.

Some people criticized Stresemann believing he was weak for giving in to the French, that Germany should not have to pay any reparations, and that a new currency still did not bring back savings people had lost.

Rentmark	Dawes Plan 1924	Young Plan 1929
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In November 1923 Stresemann set up a new currency called Rentmark.</li> <li>Supply of these notes was tightly linked to price of gold.</li> <li>Confidence grew and Hyperinflation was over.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charles Dawes an American banker designed a plan so Germany could pay back it's reparations.</li> <li>Installments were reduced temporarily to £50 million a year</li> <li>US banks agreed to loan Germany industry</li> </ul>	<p>The Young Plan reduced the total reparations debt from £6.6 billion to £2 billion.</p> <p>The payments could be made over a longer period up until 1988</p>

Policy	Impact
Locarno Pact 1925 (Germany agreed to its new boarder with France. Allies and Germany agreed to demilitarisation of the Rhineland)	Improved relations with France Increased popularity of Weimar Republic
League of Nations 1926 (set up to discuss world problems and avoid war)	Germany's views counted Boosted confidence in Weimar
Kellogg-Briand Pact 1928 (62 countries agreed not to use war to achieve foreign policy objectives)	Germany was a major power Showed moderate parties could build the countries strength internationally

There were also **cultural changes**.

- ◇ More opportunities for women to work or go to universities
- ◇ More liberal art, music and theatre
- ◇ Women began wearing make up and smoking



Some Germans were worried that traditional German values were being undermined.

## Hitler and the rise of the Nazi party

- Hitler created a 25 point programme which strongly opposed the Weimar government, democracy and Jews.
- Hitler had great personal appeal as a war hero.
- He adopted the swastika and created his SA (private army).

## Munich Putsch and Prison (1923)

Hitler attempted to overthrow the Weimar government in November 1923. This was known as the Munich Putsch.



Hitler and 600 Nazis seized a beer hall in Munich where von Kahr, Lossow and Seisser were holding a political meeting. Hitler held the 3 leaders at gunpoint, forcing them to promise they would support his planned takeover.



The three leaders were then allowed to leave! Behind Hitler's back, they organised troops and police to resist Hitler's planned armed march through Munich.



Hitler made his march through Munich. The Nazis were no match for the police force. They only had 2000 rifles. 16 Nazis were killed, and Hitler was arrested. The Putsch had failed to take over the government.

After this event and up until 1928 the Nazi party struggled to win support because the economy was stable, foreign policy was going well all after Stresemann's work. People weren't look for an extreme party to take over.

## Consequences of the Putsch

- X The Putsch had failed because of lack of support and poor planning
- X 14 Nazi members were killed.
- ⇒ Hitler used the trial to publicise his views
- ⇒ He wrote Mein Kampf in prison which outlined his political ideas.
- ⇒ It forced Hitler to re think his tactics to get into power. He decided to be voted into power.

## Bamberg Conference 1926

The conference sorted out splits in the Nazi party. Hitler's power as leader was secured and his vision for the future taken forward. Strasser who also wanted leadership of the party, pledged his loyalty to Hitler.

## How Hitler became Chancellor (rise to power)

Hitler was shown as the **strong, decisive leader** that Germany needed. German propaganda called Hitler 'our last hope'. Hitler was an excellent orator (speaker) who drew large crowds.

**The SA** were the Nazis private army and thugs. They were used to beat up disrupt other parties like the communists.

Josef Goebbels used **propaganda** such as radios, films, and loudspeakers alongside posters and leaflets. Propaganda targeted specific groups; workers, mothers and businessmen.

The Nazis **promised something to everyone**. In Hitler's speeches he promised: to destroy communism, solve unemployment and economic crisis, make Germany powerful again, restore traditional values. He attacked the Weimar government and blamed Jews for the problems.


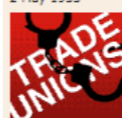




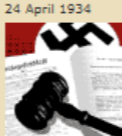

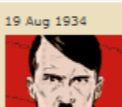
**1929 Wall Street Crash and depression.** Following the crash, Germany were forced to repay loans to America under the Dawes Act. This caused another depression in Germany. Hitler promised he could solve unemployment and hunger.

**Fear of communism**-The Nazis hated communism and vowed to destroy it. They used the SA to fight the communists in the streets and disrupt meetings. This gained the support of the middle class.

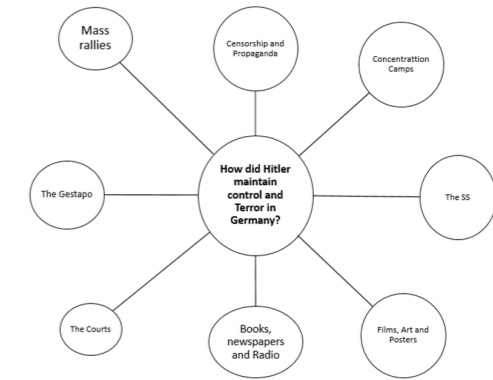
**The Political Deal**- Von Papen and Hitler plotted to get power in the government. Following unsuccessful Chancellors, Hitler suggested himself as Chancellor and Papen as deputy Chancellor. President Hindenburg agreed, believing it would be a way of controlling Hitler and the Nazis.

**Hitler became Chancellor in January 1933 but his position was unsecure.**

## How Hitler became Fuhrer (consolidation of power)

27 Feb 1933  <b>Reichstag Fire</b> - the Reichstag building is set on fire. A Dutch Communist, van der Lubbe, is caught red-handed in the burning building.	2 May 1933  <b>Trade unions</b> are abolished and their leaders arrested.
5 Mar 1933  <b>General Election</b> - only 44 per cent of the population vote for the Nazis, who win 288 seats in the Reichstag.	20 June 1933  <b>Concordat</b> - Hitler makes an agreement with the Pope who sees him as someone who can destroy communism. This agreement allows Hitler to take over political power in Germany as long as he leaves the Catholic Church alone.
23 Mar 1933  <b>Enabling Act</b> - the SA intimidates all the remaining non-Nazi deputies. The Reichstag votes to give Hitler the right to make his own laws.	14 July 1933  <b>Political parties</b> are banned - only the Nazi party is allowed to exist.
24 April 1934  <b>People's Courts</b> - Hitler sets up the Nazi people's courts where judges have to swear an oath of loyalty to the Nazis.	
30 June 1934  <b>Night of the Long Knives</b> - some SA leaders are demanding that the Nazi party carry out its socialist agenda, and that the SA take over the army. Hitler cannot afford to annoy the businessmen or the army, so the SS murders perhaps 400 of the SA members, including its leader Röhm, along with a number of Hitler's other opponents.	
19 Aug 1934  <b>Führer</b> - when Hindenburg dies, Hitler declares himself jointly president, chancellor and head of the army.	

## Control- Terror and Propaganda



Goebbels- Head of Propaganda

Himmler- controlled SS and camps



## Opposition

<p><b>The July 1944 Bomb Plot</b></p> <p>Army generals led a plot called Operation Valkyrie to kill Hitler and take control of Berlin. On 20 July 1944, Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg used a bomb to blow up Hitler but he survived and the plotters were too slow and unorganised so they were caught and executed.</p>	<p><b>The White Rose Movement</b></p> <p>The White Rose Movement was led by Hans and Sophie Scholl. Between 1942-43 they gave out six anti-war/anti-Nazi leaflets and graffiti around Munich. They were arrested by the Gestapo, tortured and hanged.</p>
<p><b>Swing Groups and Edelweiss Pirates</b></p> <p>During WW2 'swing' groups were young people who rejected the Nazis, drank alcohol and danced to jazz.</p> <p>More violent groups were called the Edelweiss Pirates. They put up anti-Nazi graffiti, hid deserters and beat up Nazi officials.</p>	<p><b>Church Opposition</b></p> <p><b>Martin Niemoller</b> opposed the Nazis and set up his own anti-Nazi church, the Confessional Church. He was arrested in 1937 and sent to concentration camp until 1945</p> <p><b>Catholic Bishop Galen</b> opposed the Nazis killing of mentally-disabled people and he successful led to its ending in 1938.</p>

**Non of the opposition groups really damaged the strength of the Nazis.**

## Nazi persecution of the Jews

Once in power, the Nazis began to slowly but increasingly persecute and discriminate against the 550,000 Jews living in Germany in 1933.

<p>1933 - Jews are banned from public places and all government jobs.</p> <p>1935, September The Nuremberg Laws Jews are no longer German citizens and cannot vote.</p> <p>Marriage and sexual relations between Jews and Aryan Germans is punishable by prison</p>	<p>1933 April - Boycott of Jewish businesses. The SA stood outside Jewish businesses to prevent customers from entering. 'Jude' and Star of David are painted on windows</p> <p>1936 Jews banned from working as doctors, dentists and lawyers</p> <p>9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> November, 1938 - Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass) The Nazis destroyed 7,500 Jewish shop windows, burned 400 synagogues and sent 30,000 Jews to concentration camps. Jews forced to pay for all the damage. Turning point in persecution of Jews.</p> <p>1938, December - Jews are banned from owning shops or businesses</p> <p>1941 all German Jews were forced to wear the yellow star of David.</p>	
<p>1939, April- Jews can be evicted from their homes without reason</p> <p>Between 1939-1941, all Jews in Nazi territory are put into Ghettos in Poland.</p> <p>The Germans systematically tried to starve, overwork or just beat Jews to death. In Warsaw, 500,000 Jews die from conditions.</p>	<p>From 1941, Einsatzgruppen (Killing Squads) go into Polish/Russian territory and hunt down Jews. Around 1.5 million Jews were shot between 1941-43. First mass killing of Jews.</p>	
<p>In 1942, the Nazis decide a 'Final Solution' to Jews at the Wannsee Conference. Nazis set up <b>Death Camps</b> where they gas or work Jews to death. By 1945, 6 million Jews dead, 33% of German Jews, 85% of German Gypsies and many German 'undesirables' dead</p>		

## Hitler also

### persecuted:

- Disabled
- Homosexuals
- Gypsies
- Homeless
- Black people
- Communists
- Political opponents