



Rise of Authoritarian States

Hitler & Nazi Germany

Rise of Authoritarian States

Hitler and Nazi Germany (Paper I &II)

- Key Questions
 - How did political and economic conditions in Germany after 1918 contribute to the emergence of a Nazi state?
 - How did the aims and ideology of the Nazi Party develop between 1919-1929?
 - Where did the support for National Socialism come from?
 - How far did the conditions of 1929-33 contribute to the establishment of the Nazi State?

How did political conditions in Germany after 1918 contribute to the emergence of a Nazi state?

- WWI – Germany led by authoritarian **Kaiser Wilhelm II**
 - Limited power of Reichstag created by constitution of 1871
 - Kaiser abdicated on Nov. 9 1918, republic declared – forced by Wilson
 - Socialist government led by **Friedrich Ebert** – signs armistice, new constitution created in town of Weimar
 - German people shocked by defeat, deceived by Kaiser they would win
 - “Stab in the back” myth – army could have fought on
- **Treaty of Versailles – June 1919**
 - Caused anger; Germany lost 13% of its land in Europe and all of its colonies
 - Left with very restricted armed forces
 - Forced to accept war guilt and pay **reparations**
 - Self-determination was applied to rest of Europe, but for Germans **Anschluss** was forbidden



“Germans remember!”



Weimar Republic

- **Political Conditions**

- **Weimar Republic – 1919** was politically weak

- **Proportional Representation** – very democratic but chaotic – coalitions difficult to form – up to 28 different parties
- **Coalition** based government led to constant government changes (14 coalitions between 1919 and 1928)
- Constitution gave a lot of power to the president – elected every 7 years; appointed the chancellor, and could rule by decree in emergencies

- **Military** – did not support the republic – tried to overthrow it in 1920

- Not supported by radical conservatives or liberals

- Faced left wing communist rebellion in 1919 – **Spartacist Uprising**
- **Right winged conservative/nationalist** also opposed the Weimar republic / favored development of right-wing nationalism – resentment of parliamentary democracy
 - Focused on humiliation of Treaty of Versailles (TOV)

- Social Democrats maintain control under Pres. Frederick Ebert

- Perpetuated stab in the back myth



Communist defending a street in Berlin against Freikorps - 1919

Kapp Putsch - 1920

- **Wolfgang Kapp** – Nationalist leader supported by right winged paramilitary **Freikorps** and police, military – showed contempt for the republic
- Takes over Ebert Gov't. for less than 100 hours before – workers strike encourages civil service to remain loyal to Weimar
- Polarized politics, example of success for Weimar?

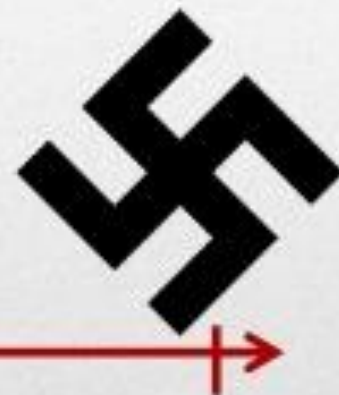
Weaknesses of Weimar Govt

Opposition from the Political 'Left' and 'Right'



Weimar Government

- Democracy and open elections
- Balance between rights and national stability



The 'Left'

- Pro-Communist
- Influenced by the Russian Bolsheviks
- Demanded for workers' rights
- Example: **Spartacist Rebellion***



The 'Right'

- Desired military rule
- Wanted strong dictatorial rule
- Demanded the restoration of German power
- Example: **Kapp Putsch***



Extreme Left

Communist Party (*KPD*)

Centre

Centre Party (*ZP*)

Democratic Party (*DDP*)

Extreme Right

Right

Nazi Party (*NSDAP*)

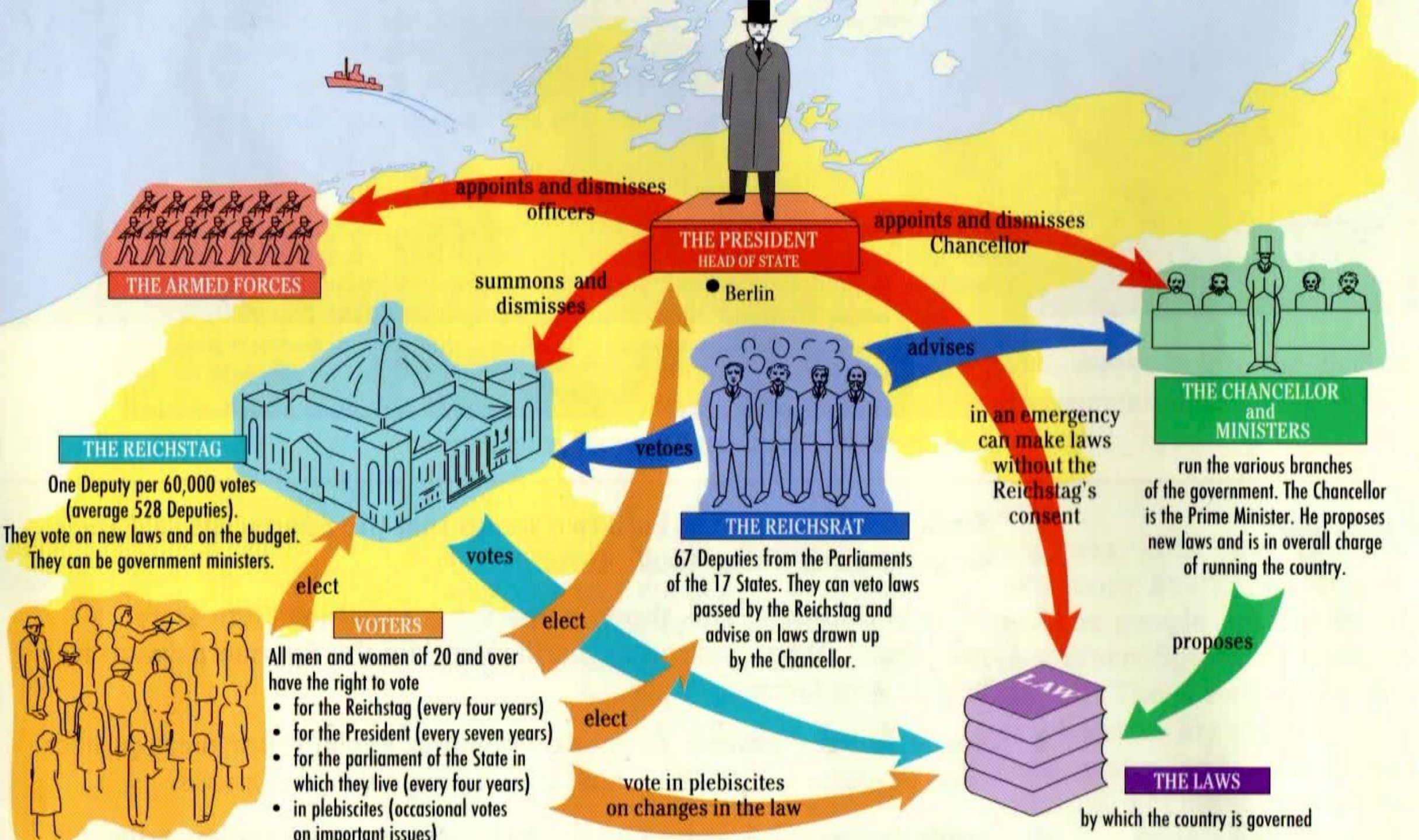
Left

Social Democrats (*SDP*)

Right

Peoples Party (*DVP*)

Nationalists (*DNVP*)



THE PRESIDENT
HEAD OF STATE

● Berlin

THE ARMED FORCES

THE CHANCELLOR and MINISTERS

THE REICHSRAT

67 Deputies from the Parliaments of the 17 States. They can veto laws passed by the Reichstag and advise on laws drawn up by the Chancellor.

THE REICHSTAG

One Deputy per 60,000 votes (average 528 Deputies). They vote on new laws and on the budget. They can be government ministers.

VOTERS

All men and women of 20 and over have the right to vote

- for the Reichstag (every four years)
- for the President (every seven years)
- for the parliament of the State in which they live (every four years)
- in plebiscites (occasional votes on important issues)

THE LAWS

by which the country is governed

THE LAWS

appoints and dismisses officers

appoints and dismisses Chancellor

summons and dismisses

advises

in an emergency can make laws without the Reichstag's consent

run the various branches of the government. The Chancellor is the Prime Minister. He proposes new laws and is in overall charge of running the country.

vetoes

votes

elect

VOTERS

elect

elect

vote in plebiscites on changes in the law

proposes

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.

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

Posen - rich farmland given to Poland.

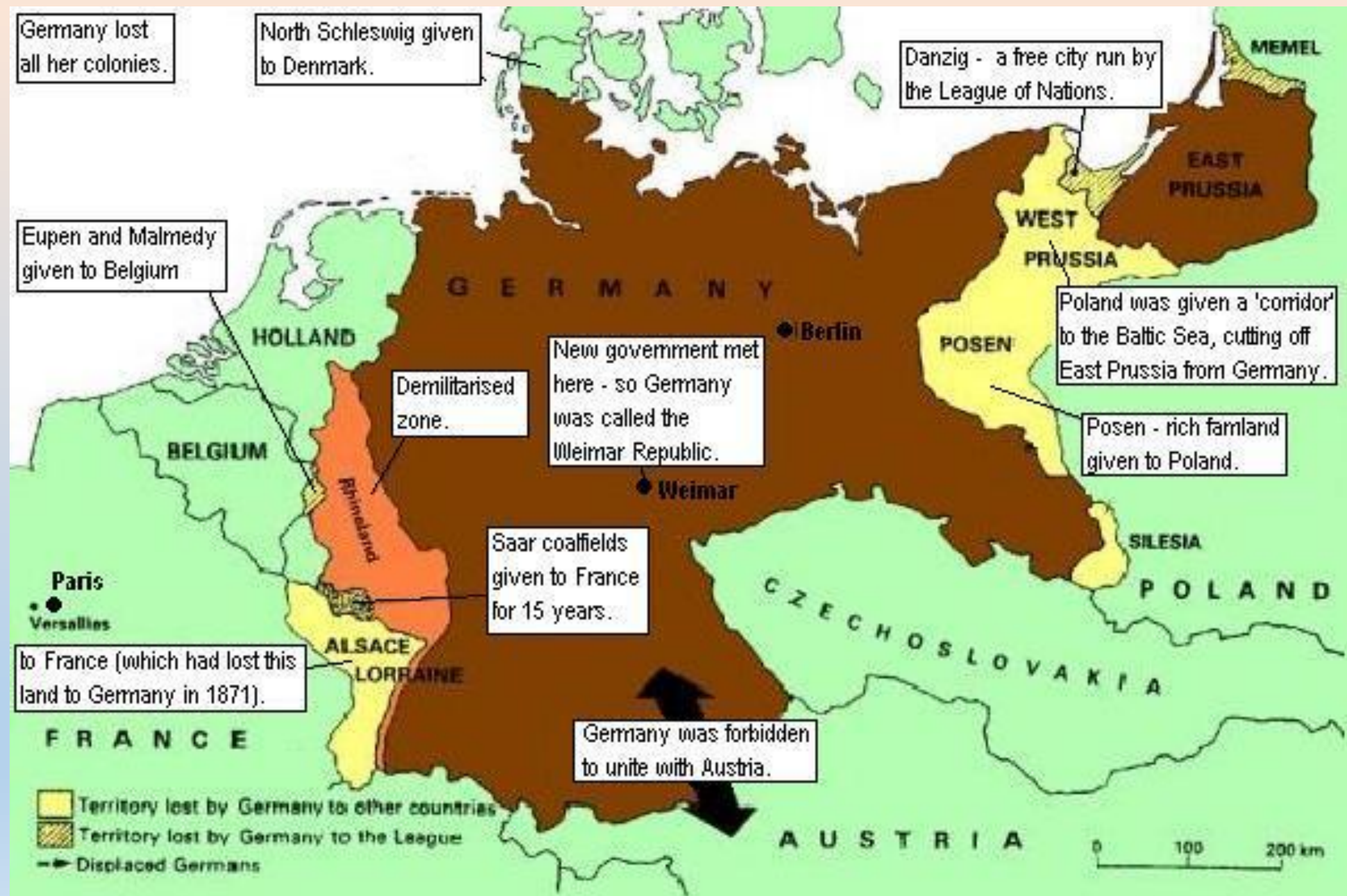
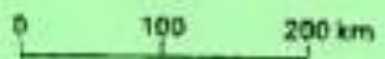
Demilitarised zone.

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



Source A

Key articles of the Treaty of Versailles, 1919.

Article number	Description
1–26	The Covenant of the League of Nations was established; Germany was not allowed to join.
42	The Rhineland was demilitarized; the German army was not allowed to go there. The Allies were to keep an army of occupation in the Rhineland for 15 years.
45	The Saar, with its rich coalfields, was given to France for 15 years.
51	Alsace–Lorraine was returned to France.
80	Germany was forbidden to unite with Austria.
87	Lands in eastern Germany, the rich farmlands of Posen and the Polish Corridor between Germany and East Prussia, were given to Poland.
100	Danzig was made a Free City under League of Nations control.
119	All Germany's colonies were taken and given to France and Britain as "mandates".
160	The German army was restricted to 100,000 men.
181	The German navy was restricted to six battleships and no submarines.
198	Germany was not allowed to have an air force (though the military inspectorate that oversaw the military clauses was withdrawn in 1927).
231	Germany was responsible for causing all the loss and damage caused by the war. This was known as the War Guilt Clause.
232	Germany would have to pay reparations, to be decided later. It was eventually set at 132 billion gold marks in 1921. (However, in reality, only a trivial amount of this sum was actually paid.)

How did the economic conditions in Germany in the years 1919-1929 contribute to the emergence of a Nazi state?

• Economic Conditions

- The cost of war hurt German economy – returning soldiers could not find work
- 1923 - Germany could not meet the heavy demands of reparations so French and Belgians occupy industrial Ruhr valley in 1923
- Invasion was met by passive resistance by Germans refusing to work for French and Belgian occupiers
 - Government prints money to pay welfare to resisting workers
 - Combined with loss of industry results in **hyperinflation**
 - Problem cured after 1924, but middle class savings vanished
 - German stability now dependent on US loans under the Dawes repayment plan
- Economy improved from 1925-1929
- Except farmers who faced competition from US/Canada
- After Wall St. Crash of '29 US recalls its loans, democracy breaks down in Ger.



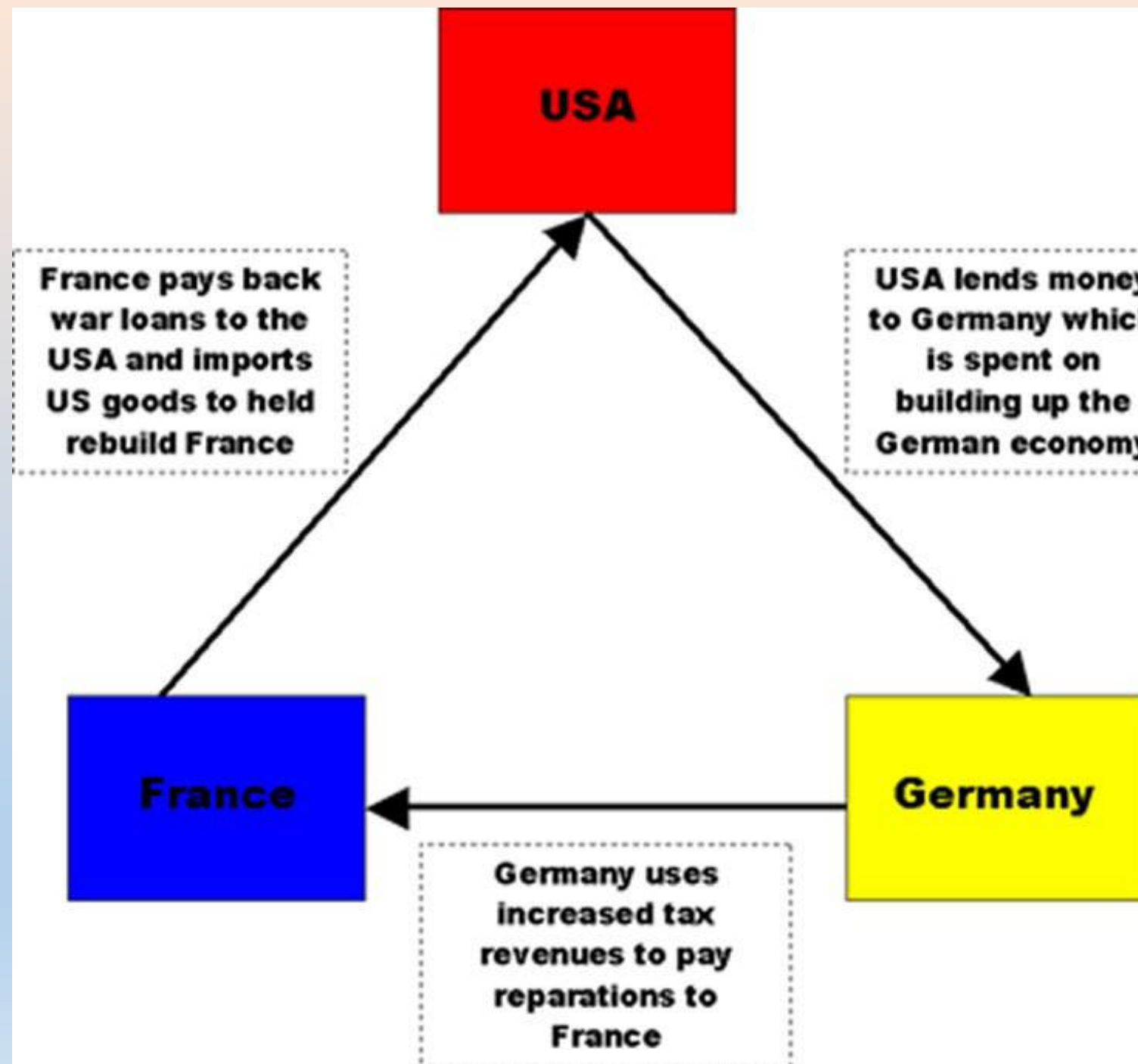
How did the economic conditions in Germany in the years 1919-1929 contribute to the emergence of a Nazi state?

- 1923 – Germany could not meet the heavy demands of reparations imposed by the TOV
 - French and Belgians occupy the Ruhr to take industry



• Dawes Plan

- Named after US banker
- Lowered total reparations, shrunk annual payments on reparations, created new currency in Germany, loaned millions \$ to Germany
 - Allowing Britain and France to pay back loans it owed to U.S.



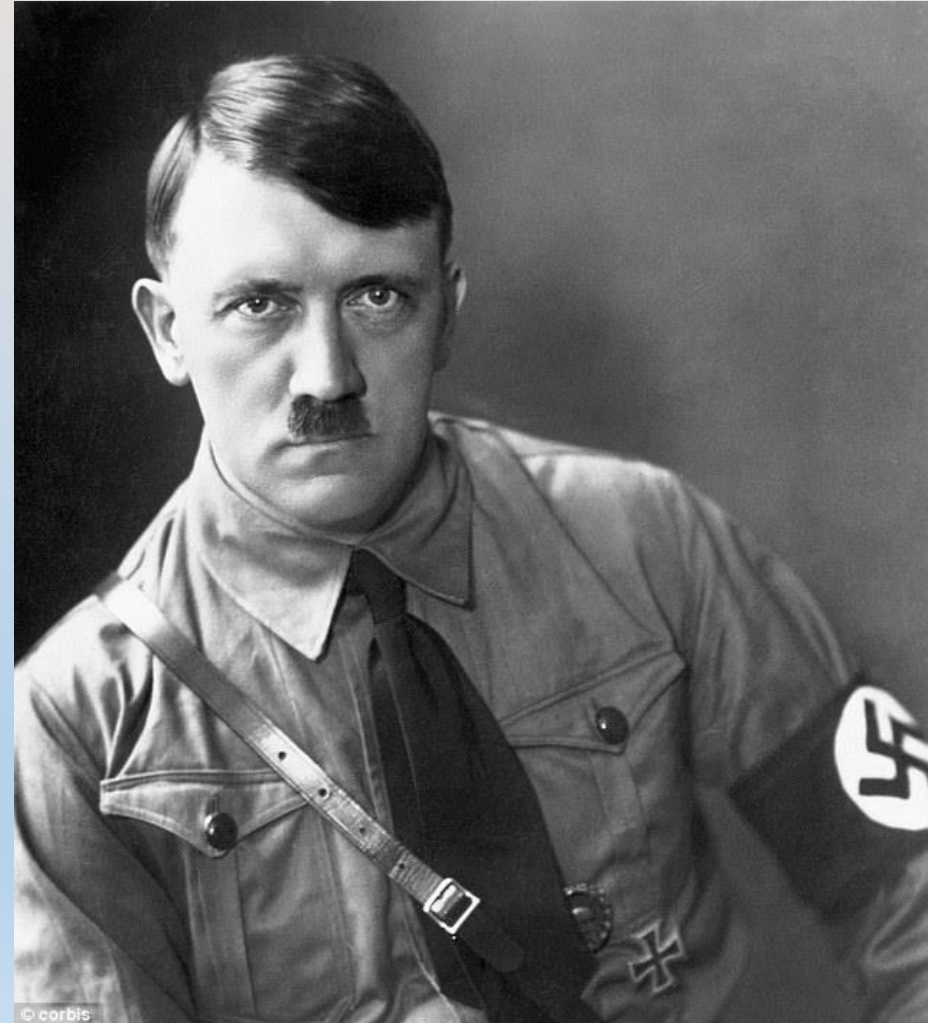
THE YOUNG PLAN (1929)

- ✓ This plan made further changes to the reparations plan, which helped Germany
- Germany's reparation payments were **reduced to 2,000,000 marks a year**
- The plan extended the time Germany had to pay (**58 years**)
- The French agreed to withdraw from the demilitarised Rhineland 5 years before the Treaty of Versailles said they should



How did the aims and ideology of the Nazi Party develop between 1919-1929?

- **Adolf Hitler(b. 1889)** – Austrian, refused admission into Viennese Academy of Arts in 1907 and 1908
 - Lived rough life, painted postcards for a living
 - Moved to Bavaria, Germany in 1913
 - Dispatch runner in WWI for Germany, rose to Corporal
 - 1918 – recovering from gas attack as he hears of armistice
 - 1919 – served in the army after the war to investigate new political groups

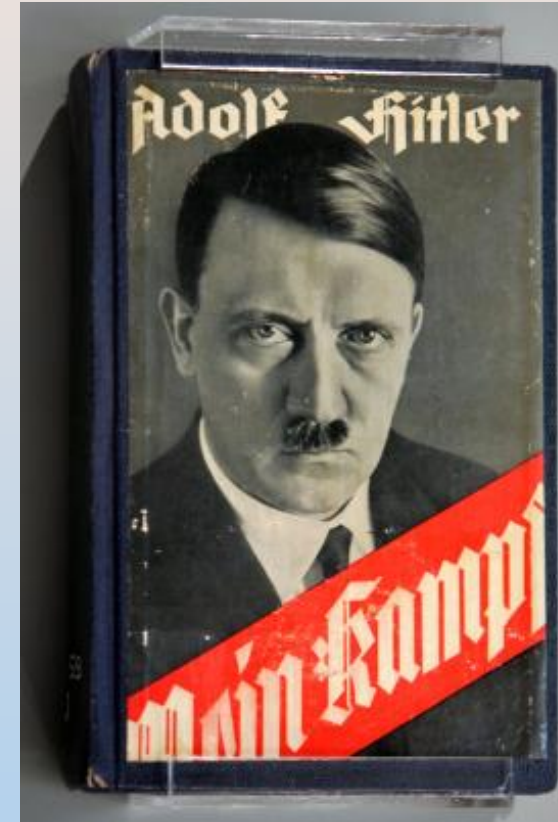


How did the aims and ideology of the Nazi Party develop between 1919-1929?

- **German Workers Party(DAP)** – developed in 1919
 - Spied on by Hitler, instead decides to join
 - Hitler leaves army, becomes full time political agitator
 - DAP falls under his spell, renamed **NSDAP – Nationalist Socialist Germany Workers Party** – abbreviated as Nazi
 - Believes in
 - Superiority of German race and survival of the fittest
 - Cult of the leader
 - Associated democracy with weakness
 - Germany “stabbed in the back” by “November Criminals” - Communist and Jews
 - Since Nazis refused to recognize Weimar, no candidates were put up for election before 1924
 - 1921 – SA – **Sturmabteilung** (paramilitary force), **and Volkischer Beobachter** (Nazi Newspaper) were established
 - By 1923 Nazi party had 55,000 members (still a tiny number)

Munich Beer Hall Putsch

- Nazi's attracted rightest/nationalist ex-soldiers (**Freikorps**)
 - Also conservative lower class workers
- Hitler became known nationally in Nov. 1923 – **Munich Beer Hall Putsch**
 - Nov. 8 1923 Nazi's interrupted political meeting in Munich Beer Hall
 - Right winged Bavarian leaders persuaded under threat to support Hitler's plan to march on Berlin
 - One of them **Gustav von Kahr** contacts army and police
 - **Hitler and G. Erich Ludendorff** led a column of supporters through Munich, army steps in and fire fight breaks out
 - Ludendorff and Hitler arrested
- How successful was the Beer Hall Putsch
 - Failed in its objectives but...
 - Made Hitler famous, given platform at his trial
 - Given light sentence by sympathetic right winged judiciary
 - Writes **Mein Kampf** while in prison
 - Served 9 months – **Historian Ian Kershaw** – “Landsberg fortress more akin to a hotel”





ZELLE
ADOLF HITLERS
IN DER
FESTUNGSHAFT-
ANSTALT
LANDSBERG a. L.

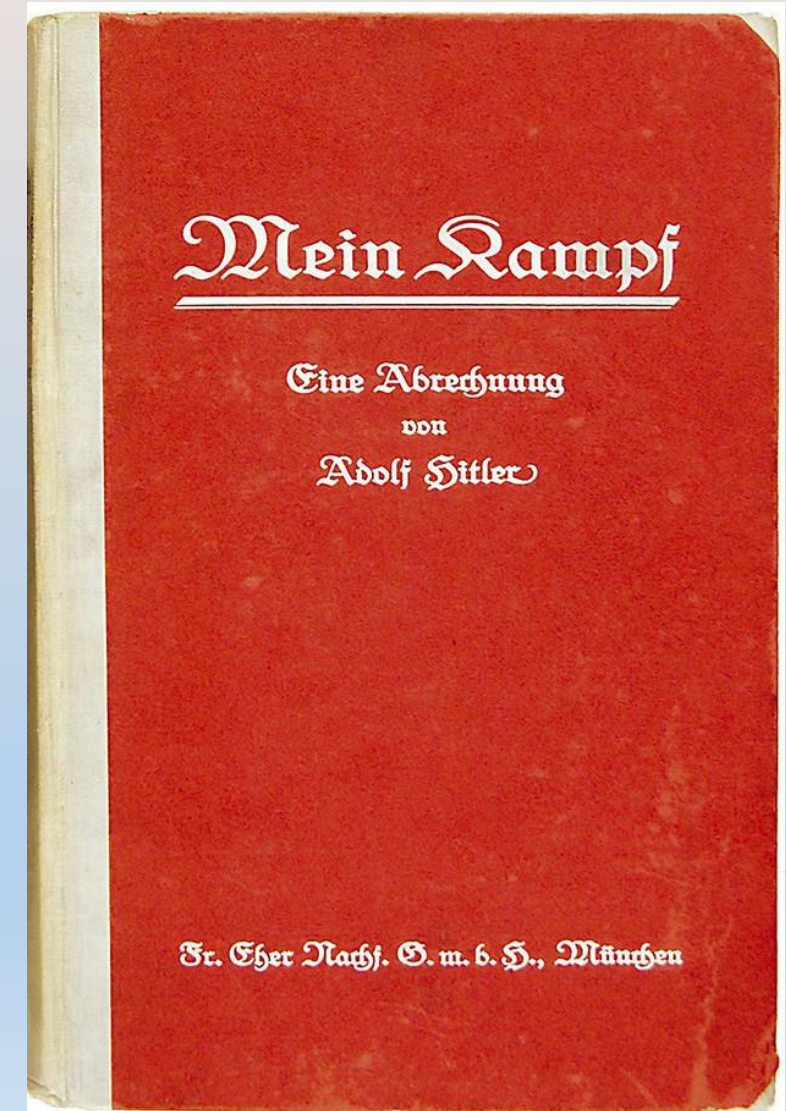
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Mein Kampf

- Main messages in the book:
 - Germany had to fight **international Marxism** to regain its status as a world power
 - **Communism was invention of Jews** intent on Jewish world domination
 - Nazism was only way of fighting Communism
 - Liberal “bourgeois or middle class” democracy was first stage towards communism”
 - Must prepare nation for war in order to obtain **Lebensraum** in the east
 - For this to be done there must be **racial unity, elimination of Jews, no tolerance of diversity/dissent**

Fuhrerprinzip – Principles of the leader

- After 1924 demanded obedience because “he knew best”
- Set up **Shutzstaffel (SS)** – personal bodyguards
- Creates party organization for women, students, children, and teachers
- Struggled during the period of ‘25-29 due to Weimar’s economic “Golden years”
- Nazi’s win 2.6% of seats in 1928
- Hitler will be chancellor in 5 years





How far did the conditions of 1929 – 1933 contribute to establishment of the Nazi State?

- 1929 – 30 **withdrawal of US loans** and collapse in the export market had drastic effects for Germany
- 1/3 of Germans were without jobs
- **Communist and right wing extremist** mocked the government inaction and promised they held the key to future prosperity
- Nazis claimed to be a '**national party**' that would keep out communism, uphold law and order, return to traditional middle class values – but no specific plans as to how
- From 1930 – there were **5 Reichstag Elections in 3 years** – 3 Chancellors (Bruning 1930-32, von Papen (1932), von Schleicher (1932-33) – struggle to rule w/o parliamentary majority

Nazis Gain Power

- In 1930 → Nazis vote went from 3% to 18%
- In 1932 → Hitler ran for president and won 30% of the vote (Nazis held 107 seats)
- Hitler lost the presidential election to **Paul von Hindenburg**
 - Hitler offered Vice-Chancellor (rejects it)
 - Franz von Papen named chancellor—has major problems
 - Kurt von Schleicher replaced von Papen
- Convinced of Nazi decline von Schleicher and von Papen tried to harness their energy (July Reichstag election the Nazis won 230 seats – November election down 196 seats)

Lebensraum
the need for 'living space' for the German nation to expand.

A strong Germany
the Treaty of Versailles should be abolished and all German-speaking people united in one country.

Führer the idea that there should be a single leader with complete power rather than a democracy.

Social Darwinism
the idea that the Aryan race was superior and Jews were 'subhuman'.

Autarky the idea that Germany should be economically self-sufficient.

Germany was in danger
from Communists and Jews, who had to be destroyed

How far did the conditions of 1929 – 1933 contribute to establishment of the Nazi State?

- Jan. 1933 Hindenburg fires ineffectual von Schleicher and ask Franz von Papen to help form a new gov't.
 - Knows he must include Nazi Party, SA is becoming a threat to stability, have much popular support
 - Von Papen and Hindenburg feel Nazi Party is in decline
 - Want to “harness their energy” to strengthen own position
 - Offer Hitler chancellorship, and Nazi party two cabinet positions versus 9 Nationalist ministers
 - Believe in 2 months they can push Hitler “into a corner”
- Hitler as Chancellor immediately calls an election
- Begins a massive propaganda campaign
- Reichstag fire in Feb. 1933 gives him excuse to blame Communist
 - Ask Hindenburg to make emergency decree
 - Nazis able to remove opponents before election



Reichstag Fire Decree

- Suspends habeas corpus
- Freedom of expression, press, free association and public assembly
- Allows tapping of phones
- Communist Party effectively eliminated as political force (all communists were expelled from Reichstag)

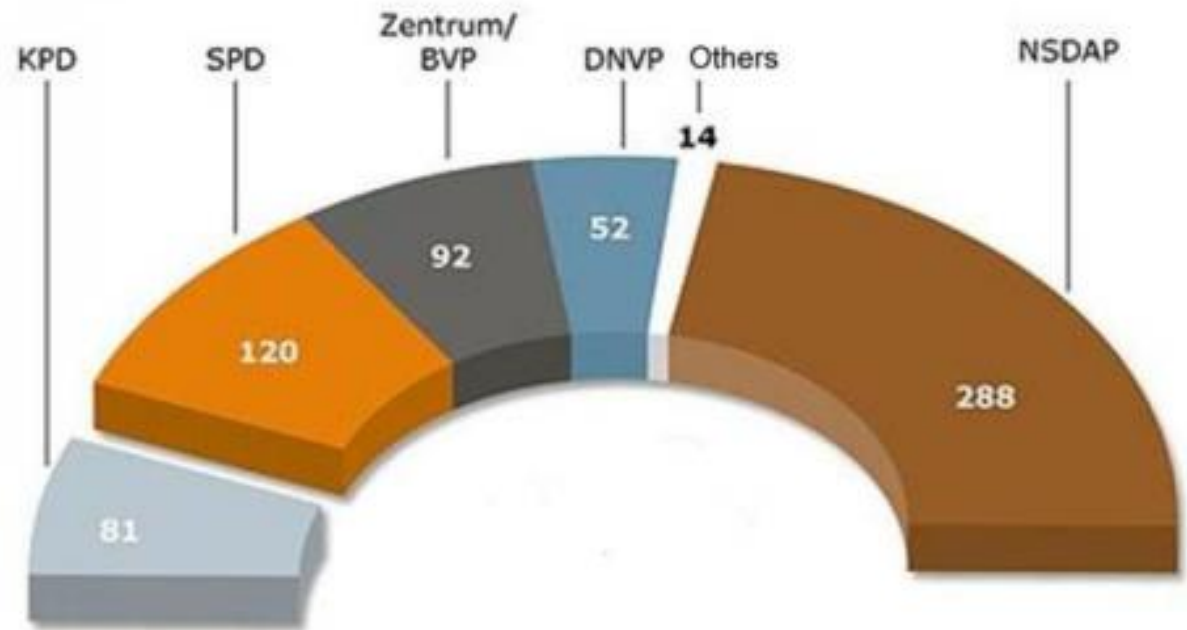


How far did the conditions of 1929 – 1933 contribute to establishment of the Nazi State?

- March 1933 – Nazis gain 43.9% of vote
 - Far short of a 2/3rds majority required to change const.
 - Had to work with conservative Nationalist party, Catholic Centre Party to gain a majority

Reichstag Elections 5 March 1933

647 seats in total



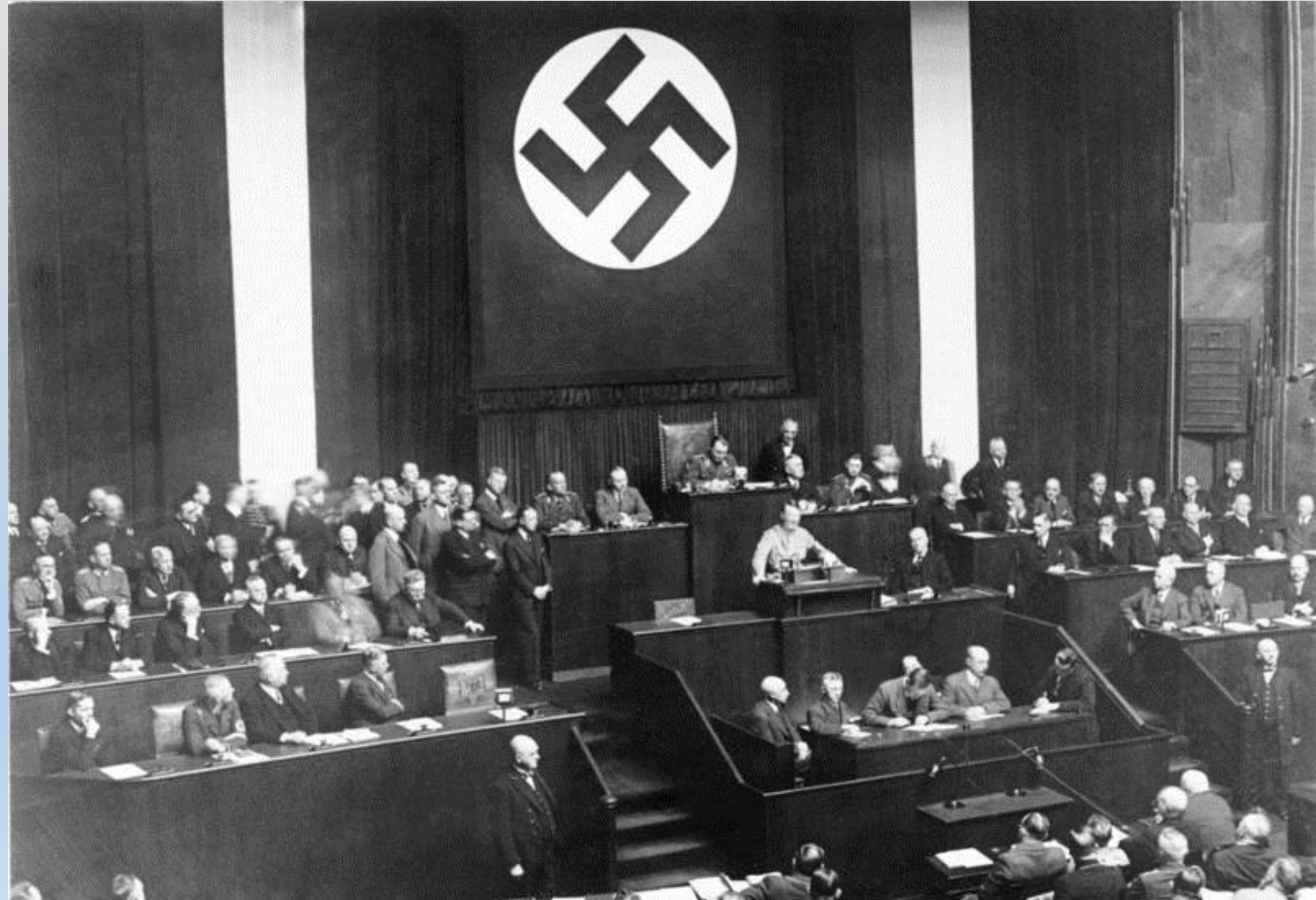
How far did the conditions of 1929 – 1933 contribute to establishment of the Nazi State?

- SA and SS drum up support in localities for an **enabling act** – giving Hitler power over the Reichstag
- Hindenburg persuaded to stand beside Hitler in full military dress at a ceremony for national reconciliation
 - 2 days later Reichstag passes Enabling Act
 - Chancellor Hitler can pass laws without consultation for 4 years
 - 1919 constitution never formally abandoned, Reichstag survives but power greatly diminished



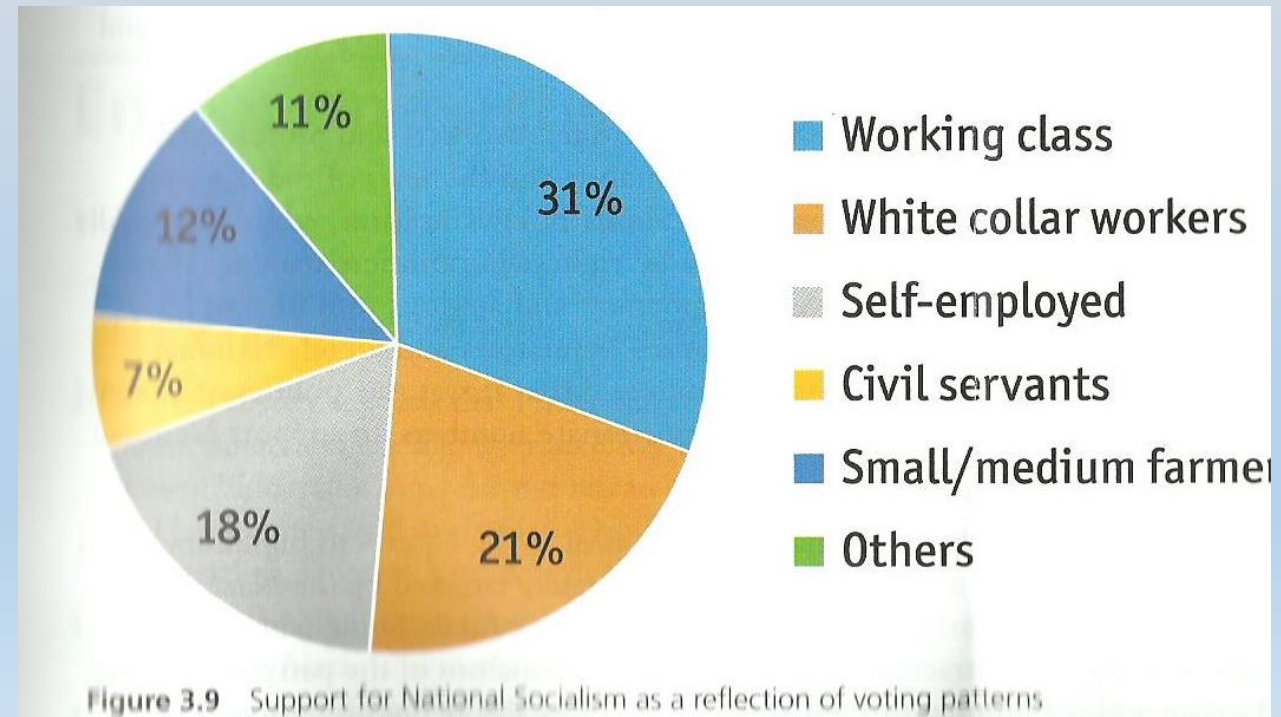
• Political Conditions

- 1933 – passes **Enabling Act**
 - Chancellor can issue decrees without involvement of Reichstag – basis for dictatorship; allowing chancellor to issue laws without consultation for 4 years
- After Enabling Act was passed, it took Hitler only 4 months to set up a single party authoritarian state
- Done through **Gleichschaltung** – process through which all German institutions were to conform to Nazi ideals



Where did the support for National Socialism come from?

- Old Historiography says – middle class (Mittelstand)
 - Frightened by communism, hyperinflation crisis,
- Newer opinion – wide spectrum of support
 - All walks of life, some swayed by propaganda
 - Genuine belief Nazism would solve problems

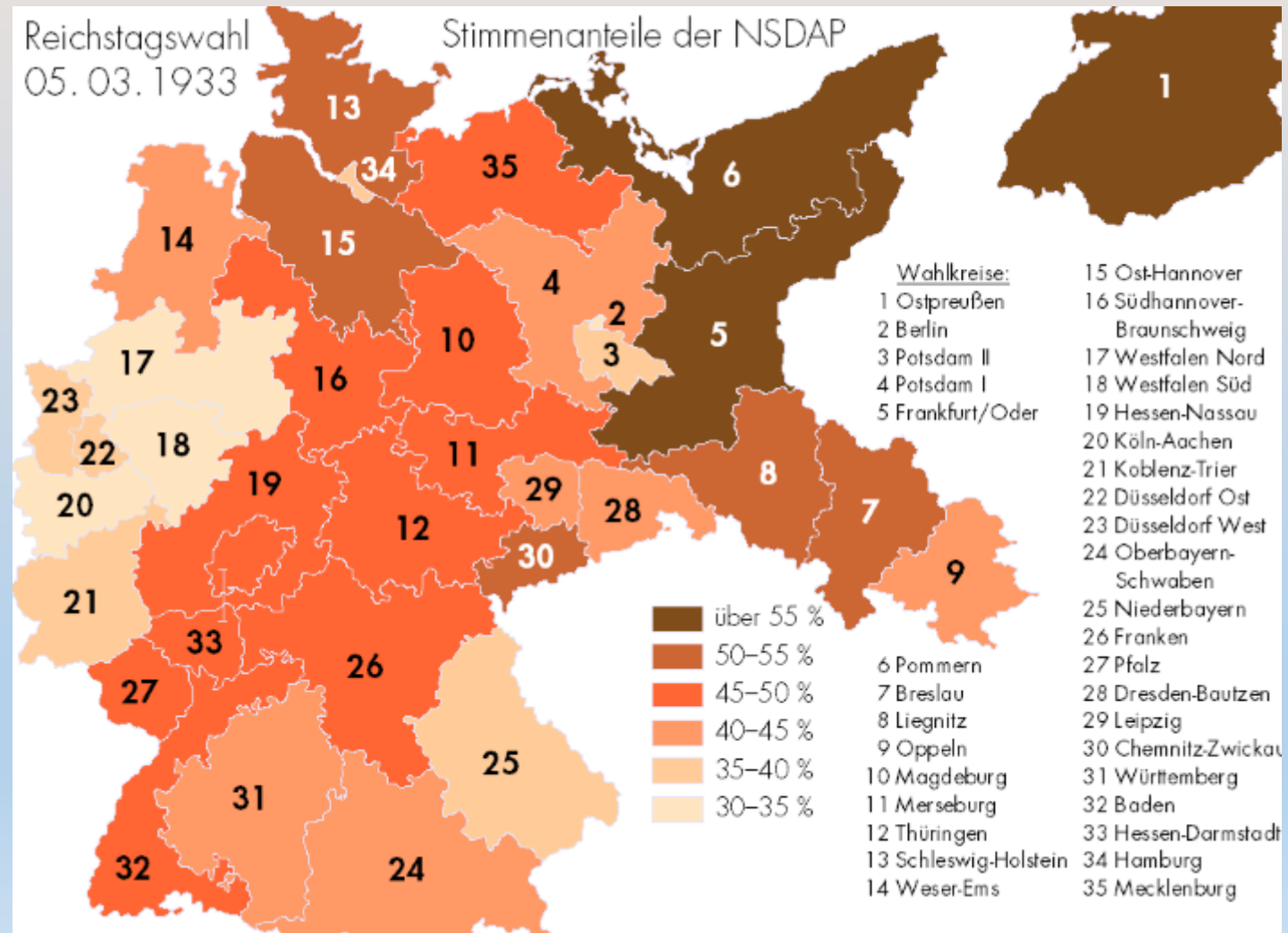


Where did the support for National Socialism come from?

- Lower class – much socialist support but
 - Nazis were able to receive substantial support; promises of work
- Middle class – shopkeepers, traders, craft makers
 - Saw Nazis as supporting their position
- White Collar/Professionals – wanted protection from Marxism, feared weak democracy
- Elites – Nazis needed their funds, were disillusioned by G.D economy

Where did the support for National Socialism come from?

- Geographically
 - Strongest in North and east – rural/protestant areas
 - Catholics cities such as Cologne had few Nazi supporters
- Age
 - Supported by pre war generation assaulted by Weimar
 - Also those coming of age during depression
 - 43% of support was 20-29 years old



Hitler Historiography

- Did he have a clear plan?
 - **AJP Taylor** - no, decisions made by economic pressures, demands from within Nazi party
 - **Hildebrand** – yes, 1) end TOV and ally with Britain and Italy; 2) defeat France; 3) conquest of Russia; 4) global conquest/defeat US

Hitler: Consolidating and Maintaining of Power

How did Hitler consolidate his power to create an authoritarian regime?

- Between March and July 1933 **all other political parties ordered to disband**
 - KPD – banned after Reichstag Fire, under decree
 - SPD – Socialists imprisoned, June 22nd 1933 party officially banned
 - DNVP – (right-wing nationalist party), disbanded itself after forming coalition with the Nazi party
 - Catholic Center party - disband as part of concordat with the pope
- **Law Against Establishment of Parties – July 14th 1933**
 - Criminal offense to organize any party
 - **Nov. 1933- Nazi party took all Reichstag seats**
 - Nazi state was centralized state, forced local governments to resign by seizing public buildings (local governments placed under Nazi Party control)

Purge of Civil Service

- **April 1933 - Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service**
 - Jews and other “alien elements” fired or forced to retire from positions in the administration, courts, schools, and universities
 - 1939 Nazi membership became compulsory
- Labor unions – associated with socialism/communism
 - Replaced with **German Labor Front (DAF)**/ membership compulsory
 - No collective bargaining or striking
 - Replace “discord with harmony” – Hitler
 - Teachers and professors had to sign declarations in support of Hitler
 - **Law to Ensure the Unity of Party and State – Dec. 1933** – legally established Hitler’s authoritarian state



Night of the Long Knives - 30 June 1934

- Hitler used the paramilitary SA to destroy the communist movement, and he became concerned about the SA's violent and uncontrollable behavior
- **Ernst Rohm - leader of SA** - wanted to be the leader of the merged SA and army/ he openly condemned Hitler's compliance with the elite
- Hitler decided that SA served its purpose and was no longer needed
- **Purging of Nazi SA brown shirt org. Why?**
 - Internal conflict between SA leader Ernst Rohm and SS
 - Himmler and Goring spread rumor that Rohm was planning "second revolution" to redistribute wealth
 - Army fear of this growing paramilitary group
- Hitler gains support from wealthy industrialist, military leadership
- It was also the only organization powerful enough to stop Hitler

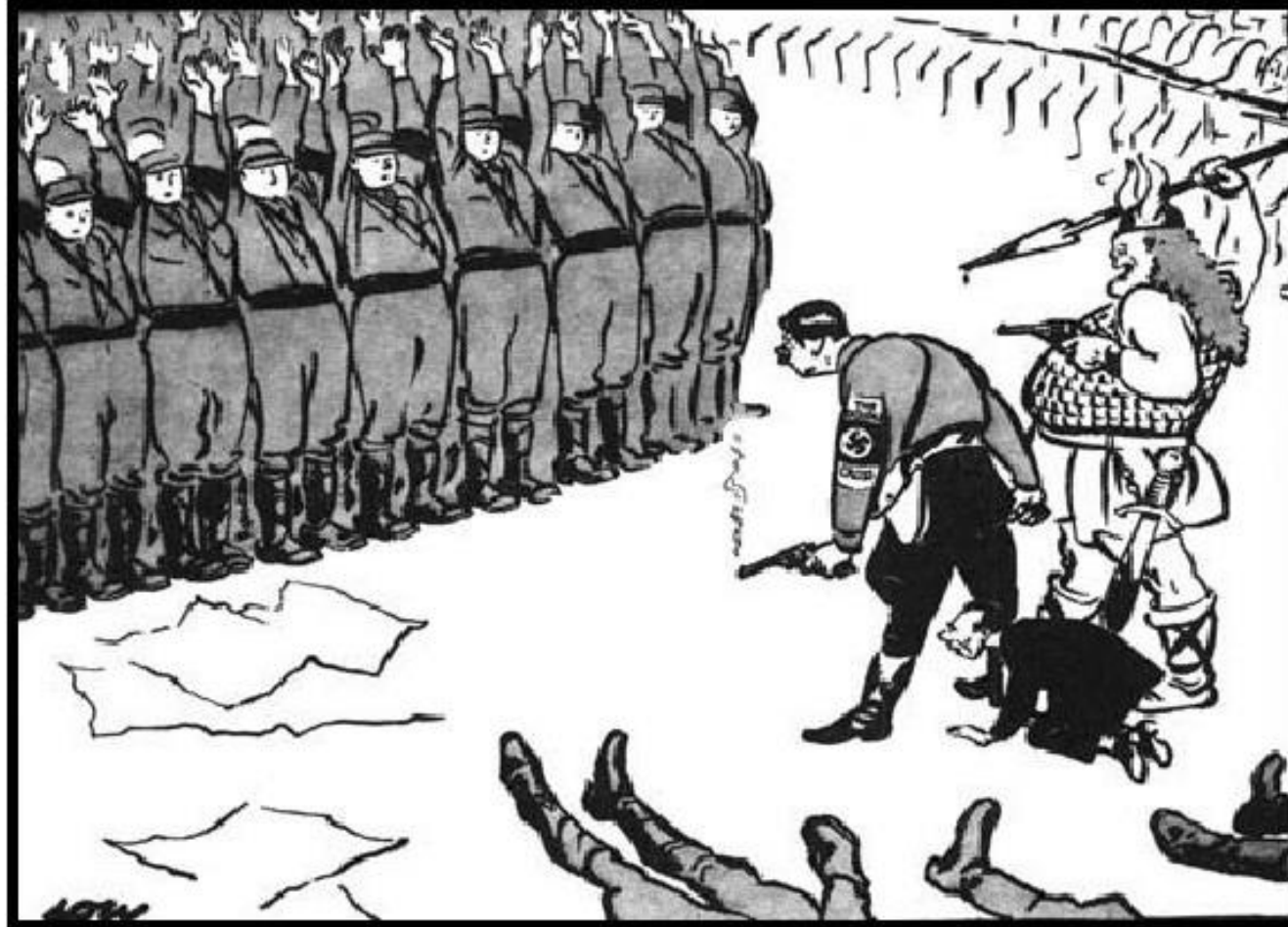


Night of the Long Knives - 30 June 1934

- During the Night of the Long Knives
 - **Rohm and 85 others were killed** by the SS men
 - Some killed were not even SA members – **Kurt von Schleicher**, the former chancellor was killed, **and von Papen** was put under house arrest
 - This night **confirmed Hitler's authority** – he justified his actions to Reichstag saying that he alone had acted on behalf of the German people at a time of emergency and he thus gained credit for “heroic actions”; Reichstag made murder acceptable by doing nothing
 - Gobbles portrayed Hitler as a man to had personally saved the country – **Cult of Fuhrer**
 - Hindenburg died in August of 1934, armed forces swore a personal oath of loyalty to Hitler – combined chancellorship and presidency.



British cartoon by David Low, 1934

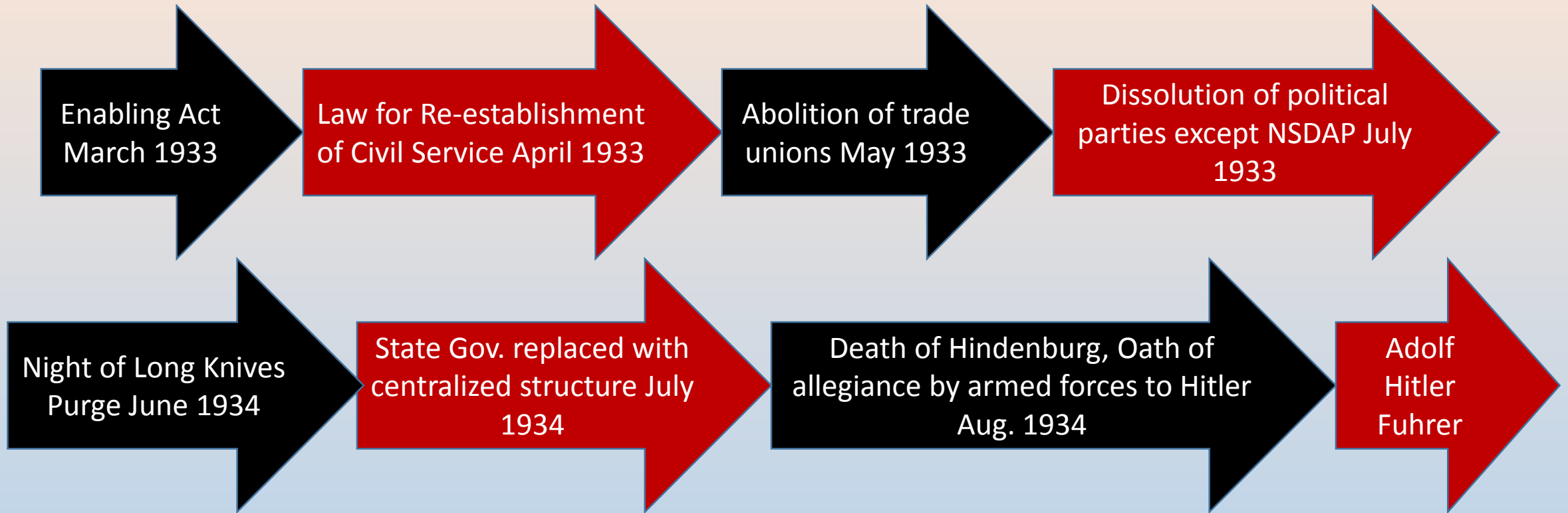


They salute with both hands, now!

- **Hitler became der Fuhrer in August 1934**

- Army oath – “I swear by God this sacred oath, that I will render unconstitutional obedience to Adolf Hitler, the Fuhrer of the German Reich and people, supreme commander of the armed forces, and will be ready as a brave soldier to risk my life at any time for this oath...”





Hitler & the Army

- Hitler understood that the army could stop his ambitions despite loyalty so he left army unchanged until 1938, but focused on **nazification** of the military (symbols, indoctrination, training)
- Army favored Nazi enforcement of law and order and agreed with Hitler's criticisms of VT and promises to restore conscription
- Disagreements:
 - Commander in Chief Werner von Fritsch - Hitler was rushing too much; disagreement over Hitler's expansionist aims – military favored reversal of the VT and limited conquest to restore the old empire, but strongly opposed the war against Russia and Hitler's policies regarding Lebensraum
- **Hossbach Memorandum – Nov 1937** – Hitler's plan of rapid expansion opposed by the military leadership – consequently Hitler dismissed von Fritsch for allegedly being gay, and von Blomberg (war minister), for allegedly marrying a prostitute
- Drastic reshuffle of the army followed – 16 generals left the army and 44 were transferred

Methods:

Propaganda

- Controlled by Joseph Goebbels after 1929
- Advertised party through radio, film, torchlight processions, loudspeakers, banners, "[Hitler over Germany](#)" – 1931-1932

Charisma and powers of oratory

- Albert Speer – "I was not choosing the NSDAP but becoming a follower of Hitler"

Other Factors

- Lack of solid base for democracy in Germany
- Abuse of constitutional provisions – Art. 48
- Failure of parties to work together in prop. rep.
- Stresemann's "Golden Year's" not enough to anchor democracy's foundation
- Army's distaste for democracy
- Divided left – Hobsbawm – "suicidal idiocy"
- Political intrigue by von Papen and Hindenburg

Violence, intimidation, murder

- Beer Hall Putsch – 1923
 - A failure?
- Paramilitary groups – SA, SS
 - Protected meeting, disrupted others meetings, controlled streets, elections
- Murder – Head of Gestapo Diels claims
 - 500-700 political opponents by SA in late 1933 alone

Pragmatism – Hitler adapted to circumstances

- Played down, dropped parts of Nazi program
 - Anti-capitalist ideas of the 25 point program
- Worked with other parties
 - DNVP (Nationalist) – Failed Harzburg Front against Weimar Govt.
 - Zentrum – collaborate with Catholics to pass Enabling Act

Opportunism

- AJP Taylor – "Only the Great Depression put the wind into the sails of National Socialism"
- Reichstag Fire – played into Hitler's hands at a critical time

Demonization – groups were ID'd as hate symbols

- Jews, Marxist KDP and SPD
- "November Criminals" who signed Armistice 11/11/18
- Weimar "traitors" who signed Versailles "Diktat" 6/19

Abuse of Democracy

- Dual path of outvoting and intimidation
- Party made its goal no secret
 - "We do not believe that parliament is our goal...We are not as friends or neutrals. We come as enemies. As the wolf attacks the sheep, so we come" – Goebbels – 1928
- NSDAP transformed into a national org. with youth, women, campaigning, policymaking depts.
 - 800,000 members by 1931
- Collaboration with
 - big business/industrialist
 - Zentrum (Catholic Center) and DNVP (Nationalist) parties
- Legal appointment as chancellor
- Enabling Bill passed with 2/3rds majority

Bribery

- "buy" support from DNVP/Zentrum Parties
- "deal" eliminating Rohm's SA as a threat to Army

What part did personality and propaganda play in the consolidation of power?

• Personality:

- **Confidence in self and in Germany** brought optimism to a broken German state
- **Hitler's skill as an orator**
- Hitler's passionate commitment to the German state ; propaganda presented "**Will of the Fuhrer**" as all that's best for Germany
- **Fuhrer Myth** – contributed to popularity
- **Cult of Hitler** – almost like religious cult – Hitler presented as all-powerful and all-knowing, portrayed as father figure who cared for his people
- Hitler, despite fanaticism, **was not interested in routine government business** – not an early riser, preferred reading news and watching movies; preferred talking rather than listening, and heard only what he wanted to hear



Propaganda

- **Joseph Goebbels** – Reich Minister of Popular Enlightenment and Prop.
- Wanted to achieve “mobilization of mind and spirit”
- Controlled a monopoly over all media
 - Eliminated “alien elements” hostile to Nazis
 - “I consider the radio to be the most modern and most crucial instrument that exist for influencing the masses”
 - “at all cost avoid being boring”
 - Be interesting/dynamic/do not lecture audience



Propaganda – Radio

- Volksempfänger - “People’s receiver” – 70% of homes owned one – 1939
- Factories, rural communities, public places, bars
 - Loud speakers attached to shared unit
 - Was a state controlled media during Weimar – easy to take over

Stadt und Land

Volk und Regierung, Handarbeiter und Kopfarbeiter, alt und jung verschmelzen miteinander durch den Rundfunk. So wird der Volksempfänger „VE 301“ zum Mittler der großen deutschen Volksgemeinschaft, die Deutschland wieder stark und glücklich machen soll. – Über die Grenzen der engeren Heimat hinaus verbindet er die Reichsdeutschen mit ihren Stammesbrüdern in aller Welt und läßt sie am geistigen Leben aller Nationen teilnehmen. Jede Gemeinschaft deutscher Menschen, jeder deutsche Haushalt braucht lebensnotwendig die politischen, kulturellen und wirtschaftlichen Werte, die ihm vermittelt werden vom Volksempfänger „VE 301“.

Nachdruck 1991

Volksempfänger VE 301

NORA
RADIO · GMBH
BERLIN · CHARLOTTENBURG 4

Propaganda – Press

- More challenging to control
 - Many political/religious factions had their own
 - Communist papers outlawed – ‘33
 - **1934 Reich Press Law** – “racially clean” journalism
 - Jewish Journalist/publishers removed

"Not every one has the right to write for the public. That right has to be earned through moral and patriotic qualifications.

...

The world has begun to realize more and more that bounds must be set to freedom of thought and freedom of opinion at the point where these begin to conflict with the interests of the nation as a whole." – Goebbels – 1934

Propaganda - Deification of Hitler

- Culture became form of propaganda with concert halls bedecked in swastikas
- Presented in film, newsreels, airwaves, press as
 - Infallible, omniscient
- Holidays – rallies/public rituals/parades
 - 30 Jan. – appointment as Chancellor Day
 - 20 April – [Adolf's B-Day](#) (4:30-6:00)
 - 9 Nov. – Remembrance of Putsch



Propaganda – Lit./Music/Film

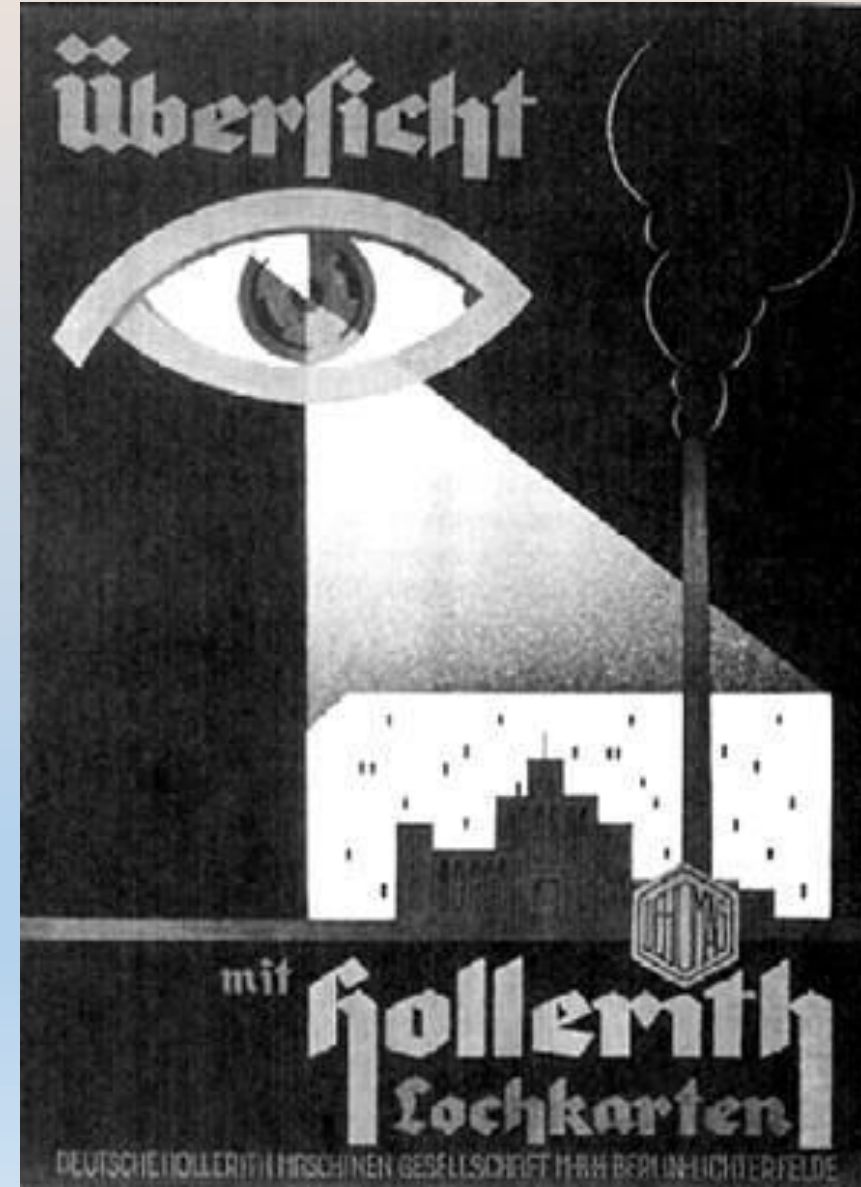
- Opponents no longer allowed to publish/were exiled
- Book Burning – 10 May 1933 – Communist/Liberal/Int./Jewish – “Un-German”
 - Led by German Student Union – [25,000 burned in one night](#)
- Books to be published must (1)
 - Emphasize German heroism
 - Promote National Socialism
 - Express racial superiority
 - Stress uniqueness of German Spirit
 - Mein Kampf was to be the model for all writing

Propaganda – Lit./Music/Film

- Music – Wagner (Hitler’s fav.)
 - Not experimental/modern/Jewish
 - Jazz – degenerate/racial inferior
- Film – [Triumph of the Will](#)
- **Leni Riefenstahl’s** documentary of 1934 Nuremberg Rally
 - Celebration of greatness of new party
 - Olympia – 1936 – glorify German Strength
 - Even Goebbels knew non-party film had to be kept to sustain morale – 1300+ films produced, many non-propaganda
 - Effects were difficult to measure
 - Combined w/ repression/fear/econ. Improvements
 - Many accepted, did not question propaganda
 - Diminished urge for popular dissent.
- Difficult to evaluate success of propaganda because Germans were also influenced through repression – but it must have played some role in strengthening the regime

Opposition during the Third Reich (33-34)

- Totalitarian Gov't Goals
 - Bracher – “all had common techniques of omnipresent surveillance, persecution, monopolizing public opinion”
- There were acts of defiance
 - **Private** – reading banned literature, listen to foreign news, protect/hide Jews, refuse to join Nazi org.
 - **Public** – distribution of anti-Nazi leaflets; activity from exile, underground groups
 - Judges who refused to administer Nazi Justice, and churchmen who spoke against Nazi Policies (Bishop Galan, Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer)
 - Assassination attempts on Hitler:
 - Nov. 1939 Georg Elser – socialist- planted a bomb in a beer hall where Hitler was speaking
 - Stauffenberg 20 July 1944 [Wolf Lair plot](#)



Opposition during the Third Reich (33-34)

- Most Germans loyal –
 - **McDonough** – “less than 1% engaged in active opp.”
 - Fear of punishment
 - **Hans Rothfels** – critical of view that German submissiveness permeated the Nazi period
 - No one has the right to judge trials of living under totalitarian gov't. if they themselves have not



Treatment of the opposition

- Secret State Police – [Gestapo](#) (Geheime Staatspolizei) – used to maintain order in Germany through repression
 - Established by **Hermann Goring**
 - Successor of the Weimar Political Police
 - **Gerald Reitlinger** – “It was found that all by ten of fifteen out of a hundred Gestapo men in Koblenz had joined the police under the Weimar Republic”
 - 30,000 officers at peak
- Recent scholarship stresses Gestapo’s collaboration with ordinary citizens
 - “culture of denunciation” – many sought to benefit from turning in supposed enemies of the regime
 - Gestapo fostered an image of monolithic all seeing secret police
 - Fear would dissuade resistance

Extent of Resistance

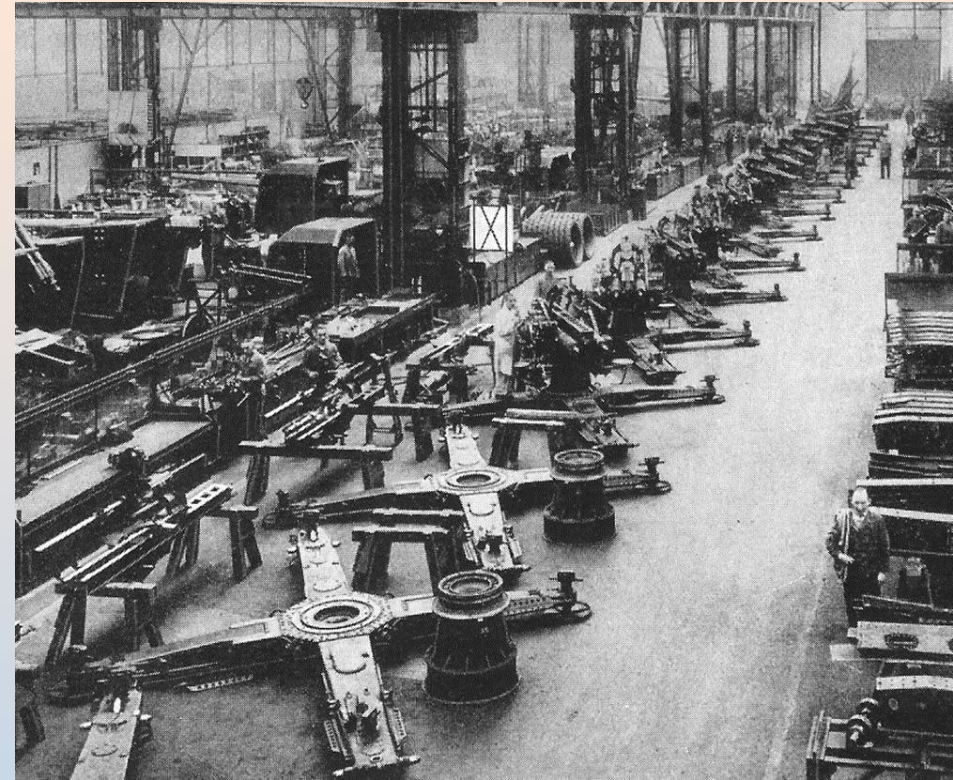
- Difficult to give reliable estimate of the extent of opposition but it increased during war time
- Nazis used **concentration camps** to “re-educate” dissidents – between 1933-39 around 225,000 Germans were convicted of political crimes, and 162,000 were placed in protective custody in prison without a trial
- In wartime, opposition was punishable by death – and during war, army and churches were best places for opposition



What was the impact of Foreign
Policy on Hitler's consolidation of
Power?

FOREIGN POLICY SUCCESSES:

- Hitler's personal interest lay in foreign affairs **to right the wrongs of the VT** – rather popular with the Germans
- **Oct 1933** – Left the LoN; started rearmament, attempted to take Austria in 1934 but forced by Italians to withdraw



- **March 1935** – public announcement of conscription and Naval Treaty with GB- increased Hitler's popularity
- **March 1936** – marched his troops into **Rhineland** – presented him as the man for the job – prepared to take on the world
- GB and France were dealing with economic issues – allowed Hitler to express open defiance
- **Mussolini's alliance – Oct. 1936**, and their joint fight in the Spanish Civil War – Hitler finally achieved Anschluss with Austria in March 1938, and Mussolini stopped trying to prevent this from happening
- **Agreement of September 1938** allowed Hitler to take Sudetenland; invasion of all Czechoslovakia followed in March 1939, and after signing **Nazi-Soviet Pact** in August, Hitler ordered invasion of Poland in Sept. 1939 – with this Second World War began
- German press hailed Hitler's victories



FOREIGN POLICY FAILURES

- Hitler's triumphs continued until 1942
- Limited opposition to Hitler prior to 1944
- when allied bombs started falling on Germany; in March 1943 – it was an eye opener to Germans
- Seizure of Denmark and Norway (April 1940), Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, and France (May 1940), Yugoslavia, Greece (April 1941) created a **myth of invincibility**
- By 1942, German armies were overstretched
- Decision to invade USSR (**Operation Barbarossa**) in June 1941, and to declare war on USA (Dec. 1941), and bailing out Italians out of N. Africa – placed heavy strain on German resources
- German people were shielded from news of defeats, but they could not escape allied bombing, food shortage, and loss of men
- By the D-Day (June 1944), many illusions were shattered
- Some Germans welcomed British/American advance



International Responses to German Aggression 1933-1940

What was international reaction to German rearmament?

- GB had sympathy for Germany/ wanted to bring Germany back to LoN to establish new condition for the rearmament
- Violation of the ToV, clearly a concern – Germany catching up militarily, which would enable Germany to further treaty modifications
- **Conference at Stresa held in 1934** – attended by Italy, GB, France – drew up formal protest to Hitler (Stresa Front)
- However, developments followed that **undermined the Stresa Front:**
 - Russia entered the LoN/ signed treaty with France; while Italy and GB were unwilling to work with a communist government
 - GB unwilling to enter Naval Race with Germany – signed Anglo-German Naval Agreement – allowing Germany's Naval Capacity to be 35% of the British Fleet, and allowing German Submarine fleet equal to British – this was a violation of ToV and Stresa
 - Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia – ruined Stresa Front

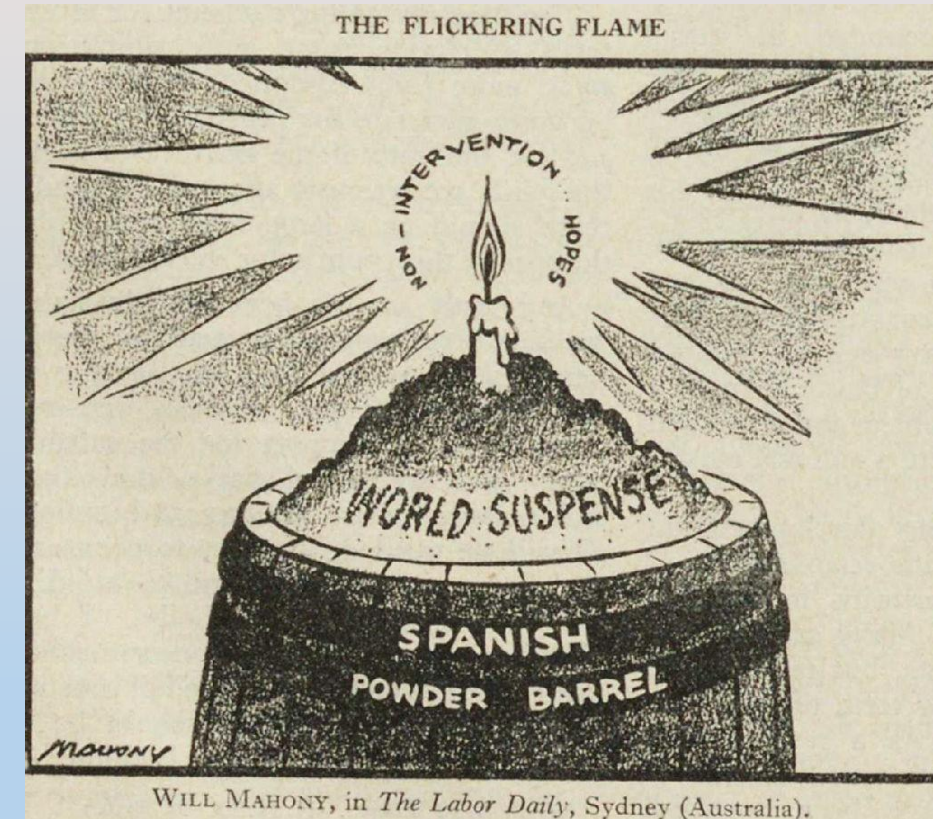
What were international reactions to the remilitarization of Rhineland?

- **GB and France did not oppose**; French government divided – no ability to fight a war;
 - **Misinformed** about the number of soldiers that entered the Rhineland (reports of 265,000 rather than 30,000) – French look at GB for response, but British PM **Stanley Baldwin**'s government was unwilling to go to war over Rhineland due to “British forces feeling stretched too thin” in 1936
 - Hitler was not perceived as threatening – since he offered negotiations at the same time as invading – making settlement more likely
 - Failure to stop Hitler at this point seen as a “turning point” – last chance to stop Hitler without a war



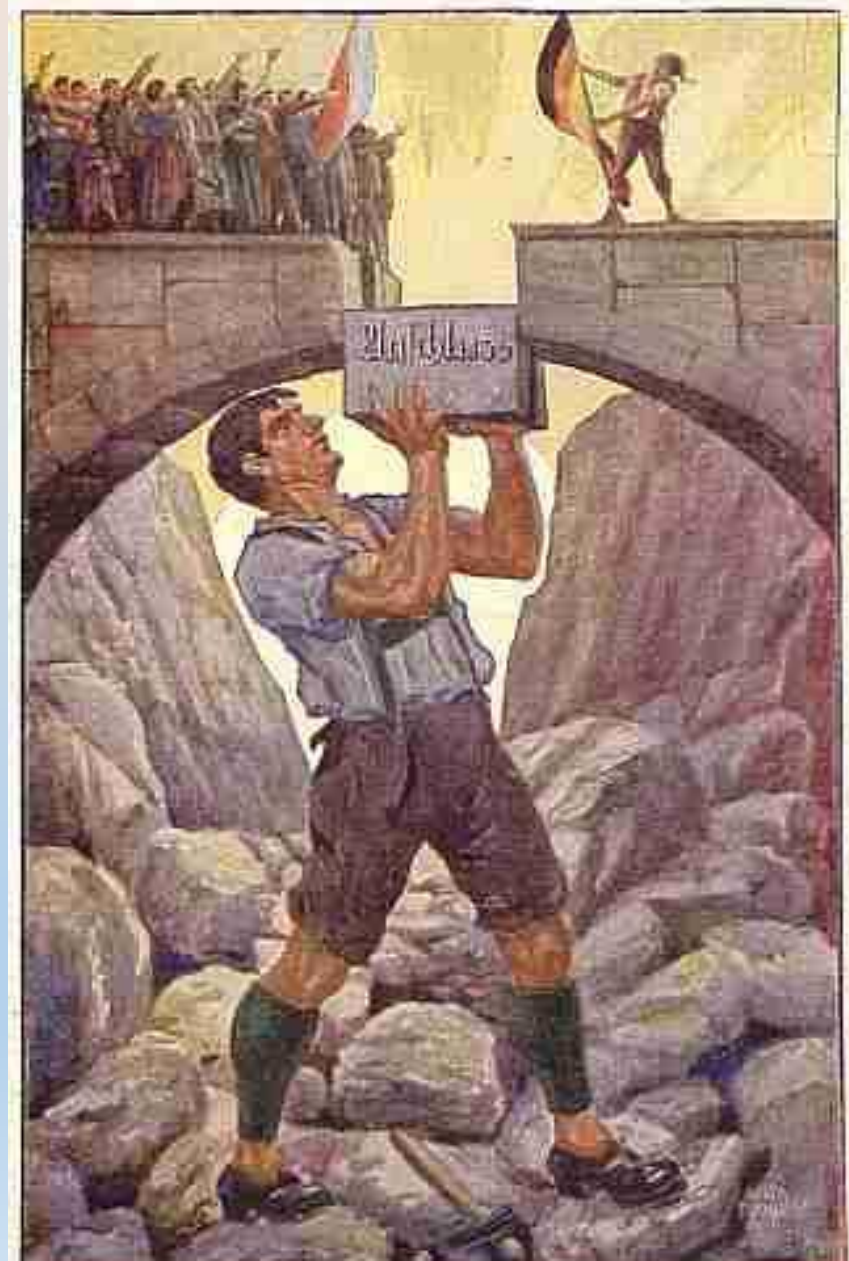
The International Reaction to the Spanish Civil War: the Non-intervention Committee

- **French PM Leon Blum** wanted to support Spanish Government – due to British not supporting any direct moves against Spain; suggested non-intervention – all European countries would commit to keeping out of the conflict / GB agreed – wanted to prevent Spanish conflict from spilling over
- Baldwin – did not want to make Franco his enemy; also Spanish elected government perceived as communist – therefore British business interest could be at stake if Franco lost
- **16 countries signed the Non-Intervention Pact**, but 3 members (Germany, Italy, and Soviet Union) ignored it
- British policy of non-intervention favored Spanish nationalists, since it prevented aid to republic and allowed help to nationalists; **1936 GB signed trade agreements with Nationalists**
- Policy of non-intervention thus played a role in allowing Franco to win the civil war in Spain



What was the international response to Anschluss?

- **Anschluss, May 1938** – another violation of ToV, which forbade the union of Germany and Austria
- **Very limited international response** because:
 - France paralyzed by internal political crisis
 - Italy increasingly dependent on German friendship
 - LoN discredited after Abyssinian affair
 - Britain – perception that Anschluss was inevitable





What was the international reaction to German aggression in Czechoslovakia?

- **France** had signed 2 treaties with Czechoslovakia, however was not able to keep treaty obligations (it could not defend Czechoslovakia), so France followed GB to avoid war with Germany / focus on diplomatic solutions

Great Britain

- GB sympathized with Czechoslovakia; however Chamberlain did not believe that Czechoslovakia was worthy fighting for; he saw it as highly artificial state, and therefore unsustainable
- He thought that **peaceful handover of Sudetenland** was the best option – GB couldn't offer military help to aid Czechoslovakia
- Chamberlain flew to Germany to meet with Hitler, Sept 1938 – Hitler demanded all parts of Czechoslovakia where over 50% of population was German; Chamberlain pressured Czechoslovakia into accepting the deal on September 21st 1938
- By Oct 1st, Hitler changed his demands, wanted Sudeten land and parts of Hungary and Poland – this was rejected- all nations started preparing for war; however Chamberlain STILL thought he could appease Hitler and scheduled the Munich conference, chaired by Mussolini (not inviting Soviet or Czech leaders)



Sudetenland	
German territory	

Invasion of Czechoslovakia – End of Appeasement

- Hitler's takeover over the rest of Czechoslovakia shocked many in GB – Hitler broke signed agreement – Chamberlain was pressed to take a stand against Hitler

What was the International reaction to Hitler's demands regarding Poland?

- Polish government was right-wing military dictatorship and rather anti-Semitic
- GB and France – doubled armies introducing conscription;
- **Pact of Steel** between Italy and Germany confirmed that the two would act together
- GB started negotiating with USSR in April 1939 (despite reluctance) – Stalin wanted mutual assistance agreement, while GB wanted only assurance that Russia will protect Poland

International Reaction to the Invasion of Poland – out break of WW2

- Chamberlain continued to hope for negotiated settlement
- **Hitler invaded Poland Sept. 1st 1939**; Sept. 3 Chamberlain issued an ultimatum to Germany, and since Germany did not reply, GB declared war on Germany later same day

What were the reactions of GB and France to Hitler's actions in 1939-40?

- Despite promises – no help offered to Poland
- Failed to help Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark – led to **Chamberlain's resignation; Churchill took over**
- After the defeat of France, GB stood alone, and was trying to find allies; however USA continued isolationist policy, with small amendment of Neutrality acts



The Second World War – Historical Debate

- **How important was appeasement as a cause of World War 2?**
- Appeasers seen as weak men, who didn't realize the nature of Hitler; they were giving in to Hitler's demands and encouraged his aggression
 - **AJP Taylor** – argued that Hitler didn't have a clear plan for FP, and his behavior was reactionary to European leaders actions
- It is also clear that Chamberlain was dealing with complex situation: British economy, imperial commitments, public opinion – and appeasement policy is easier understood
 - **Richard Overy** - argues that Chamberlain policy was the right one for GB at that time
- Most historians today agree that it was the ambitions of Hitler that were the key cause



Nazi Policies and their Impacts

What factors influenced domestic and social policy?

- **Volksgemeinschaft**
 - Achieve **national community** – everyone worked together for the greater good of Volk
 - Based on “**blood and race**”, Volk = racially pure Aryans/ master race
 - **Nationalism** – **Weltanschauung** (World View) – Aryans (**Volksgenossen** – members of this community), striving towards world domination



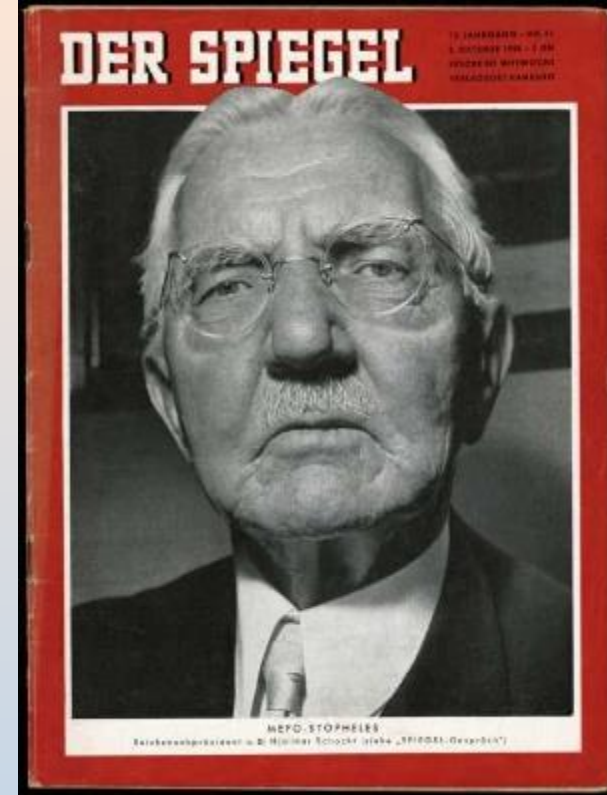
How successful was Nazi Economic Policy?

- No clear economic program in 1933
- 1920- **Nazi 25 point program** – specified help for small farmers and smaller urban traders, but Hitler rather focused on bigger businesses once in power
- Policies of early 1933 - have some aspects of “socialist”
 - Peasant debt suspended/high tariffs put on imported food
 - **Reich Food Estate** – organization guaranteed prices of produce
 - **Reich Entailed Farm Law (Sept 1933)**, provided small farmers security of tenure by forbidding the sale, confiscation, division or mortgaging of land

- **Wehrwirtschaft** – pursuit of **self-sufficiency**, defense economy that would provide for Germany's needs in a future war
- 1936 – state developed modern, large-scale farms; also acceleration of rearmament between 1933-36 over 1600 new **cartel** arrangements happen (cartel= agreements between companies to work together to reduce production costs and improve efficiency)
- **Richard Grunberger (Historian)** – by 1937, 70% of German Production was in hands of monopolies
- **Historian Bracher** said that “at no time did National Socialism develop a consistent economic or social theory”.
- Nazi conflict between “guns” and “butter” (maintaining the standard of living)
- From 1933 – Nazis had to address issues of high unemployment



- March 1933 – **Dr. Hjalmar Schacht** appointed as president of Reichsbank (not a Nazi, well respected)
- June 1933 – measures to reduce unemployment
 - **Arbeitsdienst** – government spending on public works
 - Subsidies for construction and renovation
 - Income tax rebates/loans to encourage industrial activity
 - Construction of highways
 - Unemployed sent to work on government projects – Reich Labor Service
 - Laws prevented usage of machinery if labor available
 - Discouragement of female labor / includes marriage loans to remove women from labor market
 - Conscription and increase of rearmament





- Schacht also took action to erode Germany's debt
- **July 1934 – debt repayment stopped altogether** and creditors were given bonds (contracts accompanying a loan – promise to pay in the future, while in the mean time only interest is paid)
- **New Plan of September 1934** – increased government regulation of imports, and focused on developing trade with less developed countries
 - Led to series of trade agreements (Balkans, S. America), led to import of vital raw materials
- Other influences that helped the revival of the economy:
 - **Dissolution of trade unions** and banning of strikes
 - Propaganda increased illusion of success and prosperity to maintain confidence

Did the Nazis perform an economic miracle?

- Unemployment fell from 6 million to 2.5 million within 18 months; by 1936 it stood at 1.6 million and by 1939 it had fallen below 200,000
- Economic investment increased, and so did public expenditure
- However, despite all talk, economic situation not as bad as Hitler claimed
 - Thanks to **Bruning** reparations had ended and unemployment started to fall/ basis was laid for economic recovery
 - Despite considerable achievement – not a complete success – reserve of foreign currency remained low, and the balance of payments continued to be in deficit
 - Rearmament put a strain on the economy
- **Kershaw and Overy** – argued that there was no coherent economic policy so it was wrong to ascribe the term “Nazi Economic Miracle”, policies developed according to political whim

TABLE 1.

	Percentage of Workers Unemployed			
Country	1929	1932	1937	1938
World index	5.4	21.1	10.1	11.4
Australia	11.1	29.0	9.3	8.7
Austria	12.3	26.1	20.4	15.3
Belgium	1.9	23.5	13.1	17.6
Canada	4.2	26.0	12.5	15.1
Czechoslovakia	2.2	13.5	8.8	8.5
Denmark	15.5	31.7	21.9	21.4
France	—	—	—	8.0
Germany	9.3	30.1	4.6	2.1
Japan	4.0	6.8	3.7	3.0
Netherlands	5.9	25.3	26.9	25.0
Norway	15.4	30.8	20.0	22.0
Poland	4.9	11.8	14.6	12.7
Sweden	10.7	22.8	11.6	11.8
Switzerland	3.5	21.3	12.5	13.1
United Kingdom	10.4	22.1	10.5	12.6
United States	1.0	24.9	13.2	19.8

Source: League of Nations, *World Economic Survey: Eighth Year, 1938/39* (Geneva, 1939), 128.

How ready was Germany for war in 1939?

- By 1938 Schacht suggested slowdown in the pace of rearmament due to strain, but Hitler disagreed
- **August 1936, Four Year Plan announced** , directed by **Hermann Goering**
 - Emphasis on self-sufficiency (production of “ersatz”, substitute synthetic materials)
 - Special encouragement for chemical industry
 - Steelworks were to be developed
 - Production of heavy machinery
- Four year plan extended Nazi control by setting up “managed economy”, private industry had to meet expectations
- **Plan had some success**; overall targets were not met and production of synthetic materials proved costly. By 1939, Germany still imported a third of its raw materials

Historiography

- **Tim Mason (Marxist historian)**, argued that German economy had reached a crisis point by 1938 and that it drove Germany to war; claims that the economy was put under strain by rearmament
- **Overy** – the decision to go to war caused, rather than was caused by, an economic crisis – outbreak of war was decided by the ending of appeasement, not an economic need.
- Most historians agree that Germany wasn't fully prepared in 1939
 - **AJP Taylor** – Hitler unable to concentrate on rearmament because he had to keep up consumer production
 - **Burton Klein**, Germany was ready for Blitzkrieg, but not for a total war
 - **Overy** – Hitler was preparing for war but wasn't ready in 1939 – he planned to absorb Poland peacefully, and use Polish resources for economic build up before launching into full scale war in 1942

Speer's management of wartime German economy

- When war started Nazi rearmament programs were only half completed; German's early victories were a result of enemies' weaknesses
- Resources within Germany were not used efficiently – army could call up any worker regardless of skills, women remained at home
- **Albert Speer** – made minister of armaments in 1942
 - His management enabled Germany to fight war until 1945, turning war production around ; persuaded Hitler to establish Central Planning Board to organize allocation of raw materials/ larger proportion went into rearmament
 - Speer worked hard, Hitler remained unrealistic
 - Persuaded Hitler to employ women in some factories, also used foreign labor
 - In first six months of Speer's control armament production rose 50% and despite Allies bombing production kept increasing into 1944
 - By 1945, it was the bombing and shrinking resources that made the economy crumble – 400,000 civilians killed in bombing raids, and infrastructure in ruins



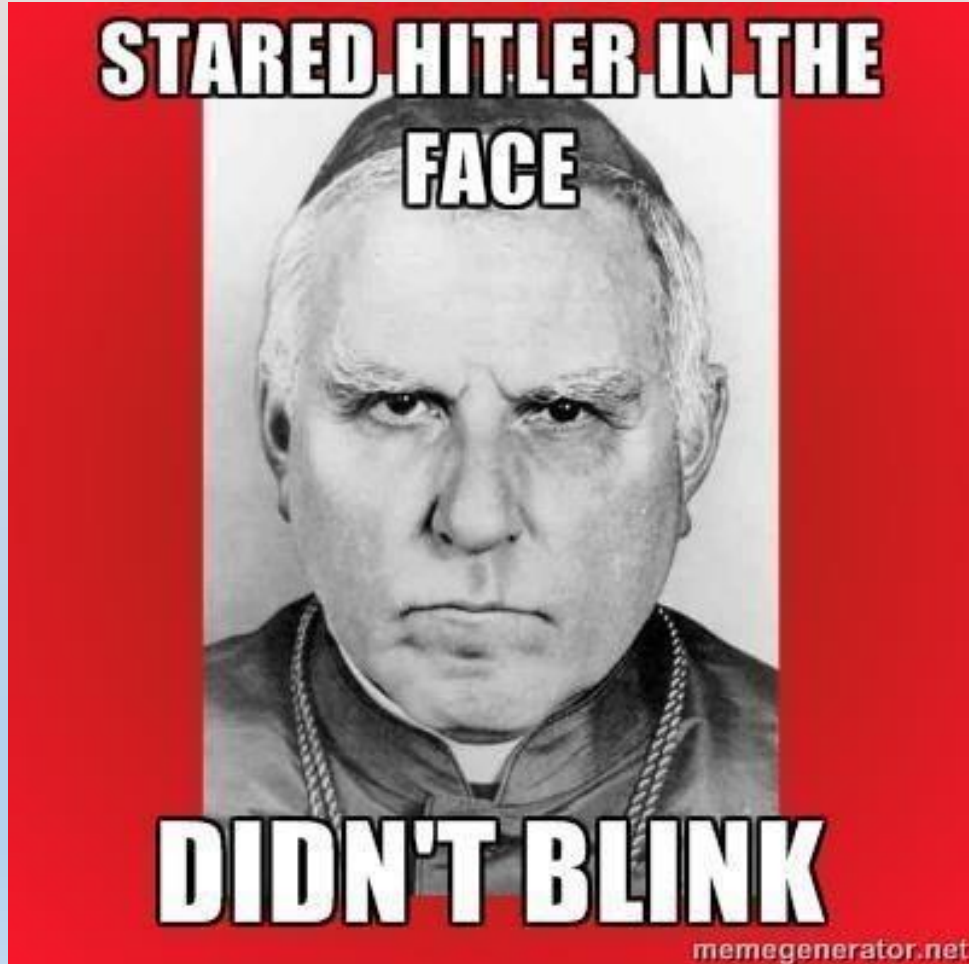
What was the relationship between the Nazis and the Churches within Germany?

Protestant Church (58 % protestants)

- Younger members called for **“People’s Church”- German Christians** – SA of the Church; uniforms, marches, salute adopted
- “swastika on our breast and cross in our heart”
- 1933 – Hitler set up the Reich Church, and appointed **bishop Ludwig Muller**
- Some even wanted to remove the Old Testament from religious practice – called “Jewish”
- Not all approved of changes
- **Martin Niemoller** and 100 other pastors set up Pastor's Emergency League – to resist the German Christians and defend traditional Lutheranism
- Oct 1934 – formally broke with Reich Church/ created Confessional Church



Bishop Galen



Catholic Church (32 % Catholic)

- **Concordat – July 1933** – dissolution of the Center Party and Vatican promising not to interfere in politics and recognizing Nazi regime
- 1933-39 – Nazis insulted Catholics, closed Catholic school/ youth organized closed once HJ became compulsory
- 1937 pope Pius XI wrote “With Burning Anxiety” attacking Nazi beliefs , but this success Pius XII failed to condemn Nazism
- **Bishop Galen’s** protest against euthanasia in 1941 was the most outspoken criticism coming from the Church

The German Faith Movement

- Mid 1930s encouraging Germans to abandon Church, and encouraging pagan beliefs centered round “**Blut und Boden**” (blood and soil)
- At height it had 200,000 supports/ strong within the SS
- Carols and nativity plays banned from schools in 1938
- Overall, church almost completely surrendered to Nazi leadership
- Church attendance, however, remained steady – making Christian belief to an extent obstacle to a fully totalitarian state



How did the Nazis see the role of education any try to ensure the support of young people?

- Young people were very important to Nazis/ much effort put into youth movements and control of education
- July 1933 – **Baldur von Schirach** – appointed as Youth Leader – controlled all youth organizations (exc. Catholic – exempted under Concordat)
- **In 1936 members to Hitler** youth (Hitler Jugend – HJ) became **compulsory** (Catholic org. closed at this point, schools as well)
- Aims – train boys for war; train girls for motherhood; uniforms at every level; and variety of activities
- Values of discipline, honor, self-sacrifice; and contempt for moderation, intellect, and sensibility
- HJ – well received by young people; but some disliked its regimentation
- Late 1930s – illegal youth groups formed – **Edelweiss Pirates, and Swing Movement** –rejected Nazi values

Boys		Girls	
Pimpfen (cubs)	6-10 years	Junge Madel (JM)	10-14
Deutsches Jungvolk (DJ)	10-14	Bund Deutscher Madel (BDM)	14-18
Hitlerjugend (HJ)	14-18	Glaube und Schonheit	18-21

Jugend dient dem Führer



German Educational System

- Wasn't changed much, but used to inculcate Nazi values
- 1934 – Central Reich Educational Ministry established ; followed by radical revision of curriculum
- **Biology, German, and History** – became means to convey Nazi philosophy ; also new subjects such as racial theory, genetics, military studies introduced
- Religious education – left schools in 1935, and focus was overall on different education for males and females
- Teachers subject to Nazi control – became Reich Civil Servants
- It is difficult to measure effectiveness of Nazi policies but the willingness of millions of youth to fight for Nazi cause suggests a degree of success.

How did Nazism affect the arts and media?

- All forms of art seen as reinforcing Nazi statehood/ focus on traditional art forms
- Main themes of art: **blood and soil, anti-feminism, and anti-Semitism; emphasis on order**
- **1933 Goebbels, minister of propaganda** and popular enlightenment/ imposed rigorous censorship of all art forms/ encouraging art with suitable propaganda message
- 1933 – he organized book burning/ destroying works of “Jews, Bolsheviks and Negroes”
- Many artists expelled or went into exile
- Some artists worked to give regime some respectability (composer Strauss)
- Impact of Nazism on arts is contradictory – not everything produced was an artistic disaster, but much of creativity and inspiration was lost
- Music suffered the least



How were social, religious and racial minorities treated within the Nazi state?

- Those who failed to fit Nazi criteria for Volksgenossen were subject to intimidation and persecution
- Also focus on “**asocials**” (habitual criminals, work-shy, tramps, beggars, alcoholics, prostitutes, gays)
- Also focus **on biological outsiders** – people with hereditary defects
- Sept 1933, some 300,000 to 500,000 “asocials” rounded up and sent to forced labor or concentration camps/ could be compulsory sterilized
- Biological outsiders - Law in 1933 demanded compulsory sterilization of those suffering from hereditary illnesses/ **hereditary courts** established to consider individual cases
- Some 350,000 sterilized under the law

Euthanasia

- Propaganda was devaluing people with mental or physical disabilities as “burdens on the communities”
- This culminated in euthanasia programs in 1939
- Secretly targeting children under the age of 3, but later extended to children up to 16; by 1945 some 5,000 children were murdered by injection or deliberate starvation
- Carbon monoxide gas used in mental hospitals – extending the euthanasia program to adults/ by 1941 72,000 people killed
- After it was protested, the program continued as a secret program 14F13 led to gassing of 30,000 to 50,000 people with disabilities



Roma & Sinti

- Nazis persecuted Roma and Sinti people because of their race
- Population of about 30,000 of them lived in Germany/ after 1940 they were deported to camps
- In 1942 sent to Auschwitz, subjected to medical experiments (with Dr. Mengele)
- Some **10,000** were killed in **Auschwitz**



Religious minorities

- **Jehovah Witnesses** targeted for their refusal to join military service/ many perished in camps
- Nazis also closed “**Free Thinkers League**” – an atheist association



Mug shots of Else Woieziek, a Jehovah’s Witness sentenced to death and executed in 1944. Düsseldorf, Germany, 1937–38.

Jews

- Only some 500,000 Jews (less than 1% of population) lived in Germany, most were well assimilated
- Nazis said they “posed a serious racial threat” and basically were a scapegoat for all German problems
- **1933 Law of Restoration of Civil Service**
- Persecution increased in 1935 with introduction of **Nuremberg Laws** and it escalated in 1938 as the regime grew more radical
- Nov. 1938, **Kristallnacht**, attacks on synagogues, businesses and homes/ many injured and murdered/ some taken to concentration camps
- Aryan only areas created excluding Jews
- Invasion of Poland added some 3 million Jews to Reich/ placed in ghettos, subject to curfew, wear yellow star
- **Madagascar Plan – in 1940** to get rid of Jews/ failed – due to inability to take over GB
 - Followed by mass shootings and extermination camps
- **Wannsee Conference in 1942** – planning of the final solution/ building of extermination camps
- 6 million died in camps



**Gauleiter
Dr. Meyer**



**Reichsamtseiter
Dr. Leibbrandt**



**Staatssekretär
Dr. Stuckart**



**Staatssekretär
Neumann**



**Staatssekretär
Dr. Freisler**



**Staatssekretär
Dr. Bühler**



**Unterstaatssekretär
Luther**



**SS-Oberführer
Klopfer**



**Ministerialdirektor
Kritzinger**



**SS-Gruppenführer
Hofmann**



**SS-Gruppenführer
Müller**



**SS-Obersturmbannführer
Eichmann**



**SS-Oberführer
Dr. Schöngarth**



**SS-Sturmbannführer
Dr. Lange**



**SS-Obergruppenführer
Heydrich**

What was the position of women in the Nazi State?

Hitler disliked female emancipation

- Duties of women: mothers, housewives, support for husband, community organizers
- Birth control centers were closed; abortion made illegal, maternity benefits increased
- 1935 Lebensborn (Spring of Life) Project - unmarried women with “good racial credentials” to become pregnant with selected SS men – “bear children for Fuhrer”
- 1935 – couples need certificate of “fitness to marry” before they could get a marriage certificate
- From 1938 an “unproductive marriage” could be ended
- 1933 -Law of Reduction of Unemployment – women encouraged to leave work force/ receive marriage loans, which did not need to be paid back if couple had children
 - By
- By 1939, 42% of all marriages were loan assisted
- 1934- all married women were forced out of their careers in medicine, law, and civil service
- Politics – out of women’s reach
- Only 10% of university entrants were women
- With labor shortage in 1936, some women were allowed back in the work force
- 1939 - compulsory agricultural labor for women under age of 25, and from January 1943 women aged 16-45 could be conscripted for war effort
- During war time – women were encouraged again to train for professional positions

- Policies towards women – contradictory – in one side promote family values/ while at the same time Nazi Party was placed above family (during youth training). They focused on importance of marriage, but also permitted “illegitimate” births and easier divorce, and advanced compulsory sterilization for some

To what extent did the Nazi authoritarian regime achieve its aims?

- Never created a truly totalitarian state; Nazi Germany was one-party state, dependent on propaganda and repression and clearly bound by ideological principles, the power of the Nazis was never total
- Chaotic governmental structure – left confusion of authority
- There was comparatively little opposition in Nazi Germany, but it never disappeared altogether.

Was Nazi Germany a totalitarian state and was Hitler “Master of the Third Reich” – Historiography

- By 1938, outward appearances gave the impression of an effective and successful totalitarian regime; all powerful Fuhrer with unlimited power
- In theory, the party and state worked together, but studies of Nazi rule suggested that the regime was not run as effectively as was once thought ; More common to see Nazi regime as confused, polycratic system (overlapping bodies of government). – it was often not clear who was responsible for what creating conflict between individuals (there was conflict between Speer and Goering over the economy).
 - According to historian **Broszat**, Hitler, created a confusing system of empires – causing “cumulative radicalism” that marked Nazi Regime. Broszat claims that policies grew more extreme because party leaders were constantly trying to go one step further to please or impress Hitler and Hitler encouraged competition
 - According to **structuralist historians Mommsen, Kershaw, Jeremy Noakes and Broszat**, the Third Reich was not a powerful totalitarian state and Hitler was a weak dictator.
 - **Intentionalist historians, such as Bracher and Hugh Trevor-Roper**, suggest that the overlapping interest was deliberate and that Hitler was a powerful integrating figure at the center of government, and internal rivalries generated a degree of effectiveness.

Did all power stem from Hitler with no individual being allowed to grow too powerful?
Were there deliberately overlapping 'empires' with final decision-making dependent on access to Hitler?

Lack of opposition from 1934:

- no unions
- control over the media
- one-party state
- control over courts
- control over Civil Service
- bargains with army, church and big business

Control of a powerful security system:

- police
- Gestapo
- SS

Absolute control over:

- ideology
- education
- the economy
- the army

A far-reaching propaganda machine:

- press
- radio
- all forms of art and culture

STRONG DICTATOR

What kind of ruler



was Hitler?

WEAK DICTATOR

View of Hans Mommsen, Ian Kershaw, Jeremy Noakes and Martin Broszat

Nazi programmes were left unfinished:

- plans for economic recovery not carried through fully
- suggested Germany might be ready for war in 1942-43, in the 1937 Hossbach memorandum
- rearmament narrowly based and no war economy until 1942

Hitler's personality:

- lazy
- erratic
- easily bored and uninterested in detail (especially economics)

Opted out of government:

- set ministers against one another with overlapping duties
- allowed ministers/Gauleiters and mayors to give different decisions and compete for influence
- permanent confusion over planning, especially in war years