

Rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party

– key overview of chronology

Key event: Treaty of Versailles

Background information:

- 11th Nov 1918, armistice signed to end WWI.
- Germany became a republic – Kaiser Wilhelm had been forced out of power and Germany established the WEIMAR REPUBLIC.

Key information about the Treaty:

- Signed on 28th **June 1919**
- The **peace treaty** that decided what would happen to Germany after WWI.
- It was the **Weimar Republic** that signed the Treaty of
- Britain, France, Russia and the USA agreed that Germany would...
 - accept all **blame** for starting the war.
 - have **limits on the land** they could control.
 - have **limits on their military**.
 - pay huge **reparations** (fines).

Impact of the Treaty of Versailles:

- What did ordinary people think of this?
 - about the Treaty itself.
 - about the Weimar Government who signed it.
- How could this help Hitler?

Key event: Munich Putsch

Background information:

- German people were angry about what they saw as the betrayal of the Treaty of Versailles.
- German people were suffering from hyperinflation following the Ruhr Crisis.
- Hitler and the early Nazi party had developed the '25 point plan' that appealed to a variety of German people.

The Munich Putsch

Key information about the Munich Putsch:

- November 1923.
- Hitler and 600 Nazis seized the beer hall where local leaders were speaking.
- Three leaders were held in a room at gunpoint. They agreed to support Hitler's plan to take over the government.
- Leaders allowed to leave – they changed their minds and organised troops and police to resist Hitler's march through Munich.
- 2 sides met in Munich, Hitler and the Nazis were overpowered by army / police. 16 Nazis and 4 police men killed. Incident soon over and Nazis scattered.
- Hitler disappeared but was arrested 2 days later (same day that the Nazi party was banned).
- Hitler put on trial in Feb 1924 – he denied charges of treason and verbally attacked the Weimar Government, the Treaty of Versailles and Jews.
- Hitler was found guilty of treason but given a lenient prison sentence – 5 years, of which he served only 9 months.

The Munich Putsch

Impact of the Munich Putsch:

- Hitler famous = significantly raised profile of him as a potential leader.
- Opportunity to write Mein Kampf.
- Nazi Party changed their methods = from force / illegal methods to legal / democratic methods.

Key event: Wall Street Crash and the Great Depression

Background information:

- German recovery had been based on loans from America.
- Wall Street is the stock market in the USA. This 'crashed' overnight in Oct 1929 creating huge problems world wide, but particularly in Germany.

Caused problems in Germany because...

- Loans made to Germany in the Dawes Plan were recalled.
- International trade pretty much stopped, causing big problems to German businesses. Less trade led to businesses closing and increased unemployment by 1930.

Great Depression

Impact on German people:

- Close of businesses / factories... Unemployment.
- Increased homelessness.
- Government couldn't afford unemployment relief, fear of benefits cuts.



People living in extreme circumstances.



Rise of extreme political parties, e.g.

Communists and Nazi Party.

Great Depression

Impact of the Great Depression:

- Problems for the Weimar Government – called a general election for Sept 1930 that was the political breakthrough for the Nazi Party (107 seats won). Great Depression had given Hitler an opportunity to blame / discredit the Weimar Government for current situation.
- Fear of growing Communist Party, especially from middle classes – Hitler offered an alternative.
- Extreme conditions – Hitler had opportunity to promise solutions to peoples' problems.

Overall, the Great Depression gave Hitler the opportunity to...

- Discredit his opposition (Weimar Government).
- Be seen as a credible alternative (compared to WG and Communists)
- Improve his popularity (promises and policies).



Increase his power through elections.

Election date	Result for Nazis – seats in the Reichstag
May 1928 (before Great Depression)	12
Sept 1930	107
July 1932	230
Nov 1932 (following political scheming)	196

Key event: political scheming

Background information:

- July 1932, Nazis won 230 seats in Reichstag. Largest party, but didn't hold a majority. Hindenburg refused to give Chancellorship to Hitler.
- Chancellor Von Papen called another general election for Nov 1932, hoping it would slow the momentum of the Nazis. He was right, they achieved 196 seats in the Reichstag.

Political scheming

Key information:

- Despite losing seats, Hitler continued to demand the position of Chancellor because the Nazis were still the largest party.
- Von Papen lost his job following his suggestion to Hindenburg that he should dissolve the Weimar Constitution. Von Schleicher was appointed Chancellor in his place.
- Von Schleicher was unpopular as people feared that his government would include socialists and communists.
- Von Papen wanted to regain power and schemed with Hitler to form a Nazi-Nationalist government. Hitler would be Chancellor, with Von Papen controlling him as Vice-Chancellor.
- Von Papen was able to convince Hindenburg that this would bring stability to Germany. Von Papen claimed he would be able to control Hitler, that 'he would make Hitler squeak.'

Political scheming

Impact of Political scheming:

- **Hitler appointed Chancellor on 30th January 1933.**
- He was the leader of the largest party and had been invited to be Chancellor by the President of Germany.

Key event: Reichstag Fire

Background information:

- Hitler had been appointed Chancellor on 30th Jan 1933. He was the leader of the largest party, but did not have an overall majority.
- Hitler called another general election for March 1933.
- There was significant violence in the run up to the elections, about 70 people were killed.

Reichstag Fire

Key information:

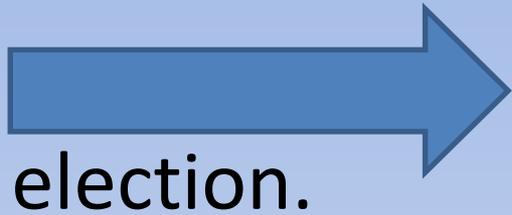
- 27th Feb 1933, Reichstag building set on fire.
- A communist, Marinus van der Lubbe arrested, although it is not known who started the fire.
- Hitler and the Nazis claimed the fire was a Communist plot to take over Germany.

Reichstag Fire

Impact of the Reichstag Fire:

- The Reichstag Fire helps Hitler because it...
 - Decreases opposition to Hitler
 - Increases his appeal / popularity
 - Increases his political power
- By blaming the Communists, Hitler was able to claim Germany was under attack. This meant he could request the use of Article 48 to give him emergency powers and bypass the use of the Reichstag. This was used to create the Enabling Bill / Law / Act which gave Hitler personal control over the government.
- Communist leaders were either imprisoned or shot, physically removing them from the situation.
- The appeal of the Communists decreased with Hitler's accusations against them. Hitler presented himself as a strong leader who would deal with this 'threat' against Germany.

Longer term impact of the Reichstag Fire...



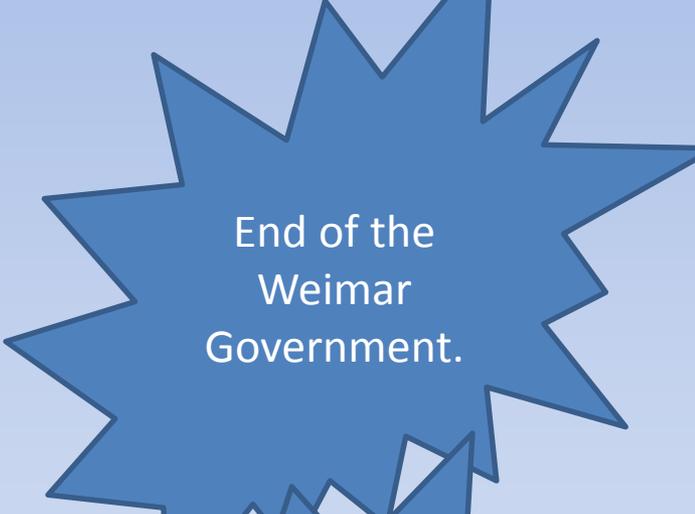
Nazis won 288 seats in the March election.

Nazis won 288 seats in the March election.



Enabling Act:

- Trade Unions banned
- Media controlled
- Other political parties banned
- Supposed to be for 4 years.

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End of the Weimar Government.

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Hitler established a DICTATORSHIP

Key event: Night of the Long Knives

Background information:

- Hitler's overall aim was to increase the empire of Germany by taking over other countries. For this he would need a trained / disciplined fighting force.
- The SA was used as the Nazis private army, they were a very large group, but little more than a band of thugs.
- Hitler needed the support of the army AND to deal with potential opposition from leaders of the SA. He claimed that Rohm (the leader of the SA) and the SA were plotting to overthrow him (there is no real evidence of this).

Night of the Long Knives

Key information:

- 30th June 1934.
- Leaders of the SA had been called to a meeting so were all at the same hotel.
- Rohm and other leaders were shot by members of the SS.
- Other people who were political opponents to Hitler were also shot, e.g. Von Schleicher.
- About 400 people in total were murdered in this 'Blood Purge'.

Night of the Long Knives

Impact of the Night of the Long Knives:

- Hitler increased his position by...
- Decreasing opposition = relegating the SA to a minor role and physically / permanently removing key leaders.
- Ensuring the support of the army. They had been the only people who could have overthrown him, but they were on his side now.

Key events: August 1934

Death of Hindenburg / the Army Oath

Background information:

- Hitler had chosen the army over the SA in the Night of the Long Knives (June 1934).
- Hindenburg was old and in theory the only person who held a higher position than Hitler.

Death of Hindenburg / Army Oath

Key information:

- Hindenburg died on 2nd August 1934. There is no conspiracy theory attached to his death.
- Hitler planned to combine the roles of Chancellor and President to one title = FUHRER. Referendum held, 19th August 1934. Over 90% agreed with Hitler's action.
- Across August 1934, the army swore and oath of loyalty to Hitler. They pledged 'unconditional obedience' even at the 'peril of my life.'

Death of Hindenburg / Army oath

Impact of 2 events:

- Hitler ultimate ruler in Germany.
- army on side.
- Referendum result makes it look like Hitler almost completely supported.
- By Aug 1934, Hitler has...
 - Dealt with opposition
 - Increased his personal power
 - Ensured overall display of support (whether through force or loyalty)