

## GERMANY (c.1870s-1945)

The story of Germany takes you from its origins in 1871 to the end of WW2. It goes across 3 main periods; The Kaiser's German Reich (Empire); the democracy of the Weimar Republic; Nazi Germany (return to dictatorship).

### KAISER'S GERMAN REICH (Empire) 1871-1918

**Formation of Germany in 1871.** 25 former independent states united to form the REICH. Mixture of dictatorship and democracy. Kaiser made final decisions with consultation of BUNDES RAT (States representatives) and REICHSTAG (elected Parliament). Kaiser hated the system as he wanted all power.

Main problems for Kaiser:

- Demand for more democracy** - from Bundesrat & Reichstag. They wanted more say in laws and spending of taxes.
- Demand for more social reform** - Rise of the Social Democrats = SPD (socialist party representing workers and middle class). Wanted more Welfare State style reforms. ¼ Germans voted SPD.
- International Rivalries** - Competition v Britain for world status; Empire; industrial / economic rivals; Arms Race (Dreadnought battleships). Lead up to WW1.
- Increasing costs; debts; higher taxes** - 490 BILLION marks (mostly from cost of Naval Laws/ battleships).

### WW1 & the November Revolution 1918

#### IMPACT OF WW1 ON GERMANY

- Bankrupt Economy:** Cost of War crippled a government in debt. Added cost of War Pensions.
- Famine:** Families starving due to British Naval Blockade stopping supplies
- Spanish Flu Epidemic** - killed 260,000 in Germany
- NOVEMBER REVOLUTION** - SPD started a revolution against Kaiser.

#### NOVEMBER REVOLUTION 1918

Kaiser ordered the Navy in Kiel to go out and fight as a last action to the war. Navy refused and mutinied (disobeyed orders). Reichstag politicians asked the Kaiser to abdicate (leave). Navy sailors rebel; Riots in the street; Kaiser **ABDICATES and leaves Germany (EXILE)**.

### NEW GERMAN REPUBLIC (WEIMAR REPUBLIC) 1918

The SPD politicians who took over when the Kaiser ran away were nicknamed "The November Criminals" by Kaiser supporters/ NATIONALISTS.

**SPD**

## WEIMAR REPUBLIC (1918-34)

### EARLY POLITICAL INSTABILITY

1918-23 - **New Weimar Government barely survived first 5 years**  
1918 - **November Criminals**; 1918 **Spartacists Putsch**; 1920 **Kapp (NATIONALIST) Putsch**;  
1923 Munich Putsch. Attacked from all sides = political instability.  
1919 - **Treaty of Versailles**: Weimar Politicians (led by SPD) stabbed Germany in the back again! **€6,600 Million REPARATIONS**; Loss of 30% land; loss of 40% industry; Cut back Army to 100,000 men (loss 95%).

### ECONOMIC INSTABILITY

1918 - **Germany Bankrupt from cost of war** (490 Billion mark debt before war); debt from war pensions  
1919 - **Treaty of Versailles**: cost of REPARATIONS crippled economy.  
1920 & 1922 - **GENERAL STRIKES** - effects weak economy  
1922 - **French Invasion of the Ruhr**: German government failed to pay REPARATIONS. French invade. German gov calls for a **GENERAL STRIKE** v French.  
1923 - **Hyperinflation**: Price of Bread goes from 2 marks to 2 BILLION by 1923.

### RECOVERY (1924 - 1929)

- New Currency (Rentenmark)**
- International Status (**Locarno Pact 1925**)
- US Loans (**Dawes Plan 1924, Young Plan 1929**)
- Investment & Growth of Cities & industry
- Cultural Growth - **Jazz Bars, Modern Art (Bauhaus movement), German Cinema.**
- Stable leadership of **Gustav Stresemann** but all relied on US \$\$.

### CONTINUING PROBLEMS (1924-29)

- Middle Classes & Pensioners** had lost all savings in Hyperinflation. **Forgiven but not forgotten.**
- Countryside/ Farmers** were ignored
- Countryside & Conservatives** hated new US Jazz and wanted **traditional German values**
- 30% voted for extremists:** Communists & Nazi/ Nationalists

## RISE OF THE NAZIS (1928-1934)

1928 - **Nazis polled 2% of the vote.** Seen as a joke (especially since Munich Putsch).  
1929 - **Wall St Crash and Great Depression**: Withdrawal of US Loans = Lack of Investment/ Cash; Businesses Closed; 6M Unemployment; Collapse of Governments (4 elections in 5 years!); **Loss of Faith in SPD & Weimar Republic**  
1932 **Elections - Nazi 42%** (Largest party in Reichstag)  
1933-1934 - **Reichstag Fire; Emergency Decree for the Protection of the German People; Enabling Act; Suspension of Other Parties; Trade Unions; Media; Night of the Long Knives.**  
1934 - **President Hindenburg died.** Hitler combined roles of President & Chancellor to become the **FUHRER** (overall leader) of the New NAZI Germany. **The End of the WEIMAR REPUBLIC.**

## FACTORS for the RISE of NAZIS (1928-1934)

- Wall St. Crash & Great Depression**  
Collapse of German Economy. Lost faith in Weimar Republic.
- Won over the Middle Classes**  
Fear of Communism (more unemployed = more Communist support), Lost faith in Weimar Republic.
- Attracted some Working Class Supporters**  
Nazis gave them hope (role in SA) & scapegoats to blame (Jews), smart SA uniforms in a time of Depression.
- Role of the SA**  
Paid thugs, handed out Nazi propaganda, caused riots for political opponents.
- Hitler's leadership**  
Speech-maker, strength in weak times, tradition and conservative values, Make Germany great again, Promised "Work, Bread & Hope".



## NAZI GERMANY 1934-1945



### NAZI TERROR (1934-45)

**SA** - The Brownshirts bullied people on the streets.  
**Gestapo** - secret police, used informers to arrest people  
**SS** - controlled the **concentration camps**. All **judges and police** swore allegiance to Nazis (or replaced).  
**Atmosphere of intimidation.**



### NAZI PROPAGANDA (1934-45)

**Joseph Goebbels & Ministry of Enlightenment**  
Nazi control of all media.  
**Nazi Radios** - affordable but limited to Nazi stations.  
Celebrated traditional classical German music e.g. Wagner.  
Goebbels created modern style show of **Olympics**.



### NAZI ECONOMY (1934-45)

Dr Schacht & New Plan Goering & the **4 Year Plan**  
**Forced Conscription** into Army (1M recruits) & **Self-sufficiency**. **Forced Work Programmes (DAF)**. A WAR ECONOMY.  
**Public Works building** - new roads (autobahns), new hospitals, schools, housing. Berlin Olympics 1936.



### NAZI EDUCATION & YOUTH (1934-45)

Girls - **Kinder, Kirche, Kuecher** (Kids, Church, Kitchen). Subjects included **Eugenics** (science of breeding). **League of German Maidens (BDM)**.  
Boys - **Hitler Youth** as young as 5 yo. Hitler Youth = soldier skills developed (Marching, fighting, camping) Subjects included **Nazi & Aryan Ideas**.

### NAZI OPPOSITION (1934-45)

**Overall lack of opposition** due to Nazi Control; Propaganda; Economic Success.  
**Youth Opposition** - Jazz Gangs e.g. Edelweiss Pirates. The White Rose protests at Munich University 1942.  
**Operation Valkyrie 1944** - Senior Army Officers tried to assassinate Hitler but failed bomb attempt.  
**The Catholic Church** - stopped Nazi EUTHANASIA programme v disabled Christians.

### NAZIS & WOMEN (1934-45)

1934-39 **Banned all women from jobs**.  
Rewards for women all focused on motherhood. **Medals for Mothers** of 4+ children. After WW2, Women needed in factories.  
Most women in 1930s Germany agreed with **Nazi traditional values**. Nazi targeted their support.

### NAZI & JEWS (1934-45)

Stage 1: Discrimination (racist jokes & posters) & Boycotts of Jewish shops. Aryan Superiority  
Stage 2: Legalised Discrimination & Loss of Civil Rights. Nuremberg Laws 1935.  
Stage 3: Segregation & Ghettos.  
Stage 4: The Final Solution - mass genocide/ murder of 6M Jewish people.



### NAZI WARTIME (1939-45)

Women forced into war work. UK & US bombing - mass destruction in cities. E.g. destruction of Dresden. Rationing & Shortages. War time spirit. Hitler Youth called into fight and defend Germany at the end.



## GERMANY c.1880-1945 Keywords

### KAISER'S GERMAN REICH (c.1880 - 1918)

KAISER = King or Emperor

REICH = Empire

BUNDESRAT = State Government representatives

REICHSTAG = German Parliament

DEMOCRACY = every citizen has the right to vote

SPD/ Social Democrat Party = Political party for workers

NAVAL LAWS = Laws created to fund and build Germany's new navy and battleships.

ABDICATE = when a King resigns from their position

EXILE = running away from your country

REVOLUTION = take over of power

### WEIMAR GERMAN REPUBLIC (1918-1934)

NOVEMBER CRIMINALS = nickname given to the SPD/ Weimar Politicians for forcing the KAISER to ABDICATE.

NATIONALIST = Political supporter of traditional Kaiser led Germany (hated SDP)

PUTSCH = Violent attempt to take power (violent revolution)

SPARTACISTS = Communist political supporters (Hated Nationalists)

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION (PR) - system of voting where the % of votes = % of seats/ power in Reichstag. The PR system was fairer and more representative

COALITION GOVERNMENTS - The PR system created more COALITION Governments which were an alliance or group of different parties pooling their votes and sharing power. It was fine in times of peace but COALITIONS often broke up in times of crisis when different parties could not agree with each other.

REPARATIONS = Payment or Fine for "repairing" damages during WW1.

GENERAL STRIKE = A huge strike across lots of different industries.

HYPERINFLATION = Rapid and huge increase in inflation (rising prices)/ decreasing value of money.

FUHRER = Combined position of President & Chancellor (Overall Leader of Germany)

### NAZI GERMANY (1934-45)

SA = Nazi "storm troopers" or "brownshirts", who did the basic work of the Nazi Party.

SS = Nazi "blackshirts". These were the elite, strongest supporters of Hitler.

GESTAPO = Secret Police (led by SS)

CONCENTRATION CAMPS = First created as prisons for political prisoners, then used for Nazi unwanted e.g. Jews.

PROPAGANDA = Political Advertising

ARYAN = Idea of White racial superiority

EUTHANASIA = Nazi programme to kill off the disabled or mentally ill.

SEGREGATION = forced separation of Jews in GHETTOS (poor areas) and Camps

RATIONING = Government shared food programmes during WW2 food shortages.