

World War One: Causes

1. The Alliances

- Germany signed a treaty of alliance with Austria-Hungary in **1879**. Italy joined in **1882** and this became known as the **Triple Alliance**.
- In 1892 Russia and France agreed to an alliance; if either country was attacked by Germany, the other country would go to war.
- Britain and France formed an entente in **1904**, which Russia joined in **1907**. The entente meant that this was an ‘understanding’ between the countries that they would try to work together. This was called the **Triple Entente**.

→ This encouraged distrust between the European leaders

→ Created a situation whereby a localized conflict could escalate quickly by drawing in countries from all over Europe

2. The Rise of Germany

- Germany used to be separated into many separate states, one of them was called **Prussia**. In **1860** Prussia wanted to unite all the separate states. France did not like this because they were scared of Germany becoming very powerful. They went to war with Prussia in **1871**, but lost. Thus all the states united into a new **German Empire**.
- Wilhelm I became emperor/Kaiser and his chief minister **Bismarck** became the Chancellor. He was very skillful and stopped Germany from getting into any wars after **1871**. As long as he was the Chancellor, there was little chance of Germany going to war with Britain or France. This changed when Germany got a new Kaiser (Wilhelm II) in **1888** and Bismarck lost his Chancellorship in **1890**.
- Between **1871** and **1914** the German economy grew in strength. This was because of the **industrial revolution** and by 1914, German factories output was greater than Britain’s (because they produced more iron, steel and coal).

→ Britain feels threatened

→ Germans began to feel the need that their country should have a world Empire like Britain

3. Imperialism

- Kaiser Wilhelm II adopted a much more **aggressive foreign policy** and ended the friendly policy between Germany and Russia. This can be seen in the two Moroccan crisis
- France was organizing Moroccan affairs in 1904. In **1905** the Kaiser wanted to test the strength of the Alliance between France and Britain. He also wanted to be an important power in North Africa; wanted his “place in the sun”. The Kaiser suggested Morocco should

be independent which led to an international conference to be organized in Algacris. The only country that supported Germany was Austria-Hungary; Germany was forced to back down.

- Anti-French disputes led the French to send more troops to Morocco in **1911**. The Kaiser objected and sent a battleship to the Moroccan port of Agadir. This provoked an angry response from Britain and France; once again Germany was forced to back down. However the Kaiser demanded a part of the French Congo, which raised the tensions even further.

→ Rising tension

→ Britain and France feeling threatened

4. Militarism

- After **1897** Germany began to build a huge navy to challenge Britain (to become a worldwide empire they needed a huge navy). They claimed that they needed to protect their trade routes.
- Germany built 41 battleships and 60 cruisers. The British responded by building new powerful ships called 'Dreadnoughts'. The Germans built very similar ships; the British built 'Super Dreadnoughts'.
- France passed the 3yr law of conscription so that by **1914**, they had 4,000,000 men. They were still angry at the loss of Alsace and Loraine in **1871**. They prepared Plan 17 to recapture it from Germany.
- Russians started building railways so that they could take men quickly to the border with Germany.
- Germany devised the Schlieffen Plan.
- Britain prepared an expeditionary force of 150,000 men ready to travel to Europe.

→ There was less time to back down

→ Conflict is going to be more bloody

5. Bosnian Crisis

- Serbia wanted to make Bosnia part of their country but Austria-Hungary added Bosnia to their empire instead in **1908**.
- Russia supported Serbia but were not yet ready for war. Germany supported Austria-Hungary and Russia knew they couldn't fight them both. Thus, Russia backed down (but would not do so again).
- Serbia was furious but couldn't do anything without Russia.

→ Created a situation whereby Russia was unlikely to back down again

→ Raises tensions in the Balkans

6. Balkan Wars 1912-1913

- The armies of the **Balkan league** (Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Montenegro) drove Turkey out of the Balkans.
- This made Austria-Hungary alarmed because they were concerned that Serbia was emerging as the most powerful Balkan state. They wanted to crush Serbia but the main European powers forced a peace settlement (fearing wide scale conflict).
- In the next year the Balkan countries fought themselves and Bulgaria lost land.

➔ Bulgaria wants revenge

➔ Austria-Hungary determined to deal with Serbia

All they needed now was a trigger!

July Days 1914

- 28th June: The Arch Duke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary visits Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia, with his pregnant wife Sophie. Both are assassinated by Serbian terrorist group, the Black Hand (Gavrilo Princip actually ended up killing them).
- 5th July: Germany gives Austria-Hungary the Blank Cheque. Austria-Hungary feel they need to attack Serbia and Germany knows it should go to war, to increase empire.
- 23rd July: Austria-Hungary present a list of ultimatums to Serbia
- 28th July: Austria-Hungary declare war on Serbia
- 30th July: Russia mobilize against Austria-Hungary
- 31st July: Germany gives Russia 24hours to back down
- 1st August: Russia refuses and Germany declare war on Russia
- 3rd August: Germany invade France through Belgium (Schlieffen Plan)
- 4th August: Concerned by prospect of German navy in North Sea off Belgium, Britain declares war on Germany



World War One: Consequences

Treaty of Versailles 28th June 1919

Big Three

1. **Lloyd George** - Lloyd George was the British prime minister. The British public wanted revenge on Germany and this strongly affected his decision. George wanted Germany to be stable, reparations should not be too much, so that Germany could rebuild its economy and become a trade partner for Britain and protect Britain from communism. Lloyd George wanted more colonies and revenge.
2. **Woodrow Wilson** - Woodrow Wilson wanted no more wars, isolationism (wanted USA to take care of themselves), league of nations and his 14 points (one of them was self-determination, which meant that you get to choose your own leaders).
3. **Clemenceau** - Clemenceau wanted revenge, alsace and lorraine, reparations (france was running out of money because they were rebuilding the ruins), the rhineland (to mine there) and no german armed forces (so they couldn't attack again).

In the end, Lloyd George got reparations, colonies, small navy for Germany but he thought the treaty was too harsh. Woodrow wilson got the league of nations and selfdetermination but America was not part of the league itself. Clemenceau got alsace & lorraine, rhineland (demilitarised), reparations and the Saarland (french were going to use german industry to rebuild their economy). However he had wanted Germany to be split into small parts and still thought the treaty was not harsh enough.

Germany lost 10% of its territory. Memel, Saar and Danzig were placed under the league's control. Their army was restricted to 100,000 men and they weren't allowed to have any tanks, submarines or airforce. They were only given 6 surfaceships and were forbidden to unite with Austria. They had to pay reparation of 6.6billion pounds and accept the war guilt clause.

Other Paris treaties consisted of the Treaty of St. Germain. Austria lost all of its territorial possessions, got reparations and had their army reduced to 50,000 men. In the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary lost 44% of its land, got reparations and had their army reduced to 30,000 men. In the Treaty of Neuilly, Bulgaria lost one third of its population. In the Treaty of Sevres, the Ottoman empire was dissolved and Turkey lost land to Greece. This led to extreme violence between Turkey and Greece, thus the terms of the treaty had to be revised at Lausanne in January 1923.

Germany was very unhappy with the Treaty of Versailles. They felt that it was unfair, as they were forbidden to join the League of Nations and did not get self-determination. They weren't allowed to send **delegates** (German representatives) to even discuss the Treaty. They didn't believe that they were entirely to blame for the war. They could not afford to pay reparations, and felt like the European forces were trying to starve Germany to death. Without an army, they were defenseless and felt very threatened.

However, the treaty does not seem so unfair when compared to the losses of other countries in the other Paris Peace Treaties. Also, Russia signed the Treaty of **Brest-Litovsk** with Germany on the **3rd March 1918**. Russia was desperate for peace after a huge amount of losses in the war. According to the Treaty, Russia would lose Finland, the Baltic States, all of Poland, Belorussia, Ukraine and Caucasus. This meant the loss of 56% of population, 44% industrial production, 64% farmland and 74% of railways for Russia. Considering that Germany came up with the terms, they were in no position to be complaining about the Treaty of Versailles.

League of Nations

The League of Nations was Wilson's 14th point out of his list of fourteen (published January 1918). The League consisted of..

- **The Assembly:** This consisted of all of the League members. It met annually in Geneva. All decisions had to be agreed by everybody.
- **Council:** This was a smaller body of the more 'important' members (Britain, France, Italy). The Council could meet quickly in a crisis.
- **Secretariat:** This handled all the paperwork generated by the League (located permanently in Geneva).
- **Disarmament Commission:** This was used to campaign for general reduction in armed forces.
- **Mandates Commission:** This office supervised the administration of former colonies and possessions such as Danzig and Syria.
- **World Health Organization**
- **International Labour Organization:** Regulating wages worldwide. Tackling slavery.

The **philosophy** of the League was based on the principle of collective security. If a member state was attacked, the League would naturally come to the aid of the injured party. The weaknesses of the League were that they had no peace-keeping force apart from economic sanctions (which did not work under all circumstances). They had a slow decision-making process and decisions were often based on self-interest of the countries. USA never joined and this fatally undermined the League. Germany and the USSR were banned from joining, which devalued the League to be seen as a club of winners.

The work of the League in the 1920's

Fiume 1919 - Failure

Italy had been promised land from Austria-Hungary in the secret treaty of London in March 1915. In 1919, much of this land was given to the new country of Yugoslavia. One leading Italian called Gabriele D'Annunzio took matters into his own hands and marched into Fiume. The league and the governments of Italy and Yugoslavia could not force D'Annunzio out; it was an embarrassing failure.

Vilna 1920 - Failure

Lithuania is re-established as an independent state and wants the historic city of Vilna as its capital. 80% of Vilna is Polish, thus the Polish army marched into Vilna and refused to leave. Lithuanians appealed to the League but nothing was done.

Aland Islands 1921 - Success

Sweden and Finland both want the Aland islands. The dispute is referred to the league. The league decide that the islands should stay with Finland but no weapons are allowed to be kept on them.

Upper Silesia 1921 - Success

Upper Silesia was given to Poland in the Paris peace treaties. This leads to much rioting and fighting. Thus, the league proposed to divide Upper Silesia between Poland and Germany. They arranged a plebiscite; this popular vote was accepted by both countries.

Dispute between Poland and Russia 1919-1925 - Failure

The border between Poland and Russia was being discussed. Lord Curzon drew his famous line on the map and this led to full scale war. First the Poland invaded Russia and captured Kiev. The Russians then drove back the Poles and nearly captured Warsaw. The french helped Poland and eventually the Treaty of Riga was signed in 1921, and it ended the war. The league was completely ignored.

Dispute between Greece and Bulgaria 1925 - Success

Bulgarian officials were mapping the border between Greece and Bulgaria. There is a shooting on the frontier and the Greeks immediately invade Bulgaria. The dispute is referred to the league and they impose a fine on Bulgaria and order the Greeks to call off their attack.



Manchurian crisis 1931-1933

In 1931, **Japan** claimed that Chinese soldiers had sabotaged the Manchurian railway in Korea, which Japan controlled. Japan attacked and by **February 1932**, had brutally **conquered Manchuria**. Meanwhile in January-March 1932, Japan attacked and captured the city of Shanghai in China itself. In **March** 1932, China appealed to the League of Nations. In **April**, a league delegation arrived in Manchuria to see what was happening and in **October** it declared that Japan should leave. In February 1933, a special assembly of the league voted against Japan, so the Japanese left the league. The League, however, could not agree on sanctions, and Britain and France were not prepared to send an army. Not only did the Japanese stay in Manchuria, but in July 1937 they also invaded China.

Abyssinian crisis 1935

In December 1934 a dispute about the border between Abyssinia and the Italian Somaliland flared into fighting. In January 1935 the Abyssinian emperor asked the League for help and in July the League banned armed sales to both sides. However, this ended up causing more harm to Abyssinia than to Italy. In October, the League's committee suggested that Italy should have some land in Abyssinia. Instead, Italy's army invaded Abyssinia. Britain and France refused to intervene; they agreed on a secret plan called the **Hoare-Laval pact**. This was a plan made by the foreign secretary of Britain and the prime minister of France to give Abyssinia to Italy. In the end the League did almost nothing and by May 1936 Italy had conquered Abyssinia.

New Era?

Gustav Stresemann became Foreign Minister of Germany in October 1923. He came to power at the time of the Hyper-inflation crisis in Germany. Hyperinflation is when a currency loses all its value.

First, France and Belgians invaded the Ruhr because Germany refused to pay reparations. German government adopted a policy of Passive Resistance (Strikes). Productivity fell, but workers still had to be paid. The government printed masses of money and the currency collapsed. **The Dawes Plan** was an agreement between Germany and America in **1924**. The USA lent 800 million dollars to help Germany pay reparations.

Appeasement

Definition: To appease is to meet reasonable demands in order to avoid war. The initiative must come from the appeaser.

→ Examples of Appeasement are the Anglo-German Naval Agreement (June 1935) and the Sudetenland discussed in the Munich conference (29 September 1938). Both of these appeasements are associated with Neville Chamberlain (British prime minister 1937 - 1940).



Events

1937: Neville **Chamberlain** becomes British Prime Minister. In **November**, the **Runciman Mission** is taken into action. Runciman is sent to Czechoslovakia to prove that the Czechs could not be defended if attacked by Germany.

On **November 5th**, **Hossbach meeting** is arranged. Hitler invites many of his generals to the meeting (Göring, General von Blomberg, General von Fritsch, Admiral Raeder, Konstantin von Neurath, Colonel Hossbach). Hitler has three proposals:

1. If tension between France and Italy in the Mediterranean reached a point of war, then Germany must take Austria and Czechoslovakia immediately
2. If political chaos occurred in France, this should be exploited (Make full use of and derive benefit) by the immediate takeover of Austria and Czechoslovakia.
3. Germany must attack Czechoslovakia and Austria by 1942/43 at the latest!

None of these scenarios actually ended up happening. This is a prime example of Hitler speaking for effect to provoke a reaction. The reaction of the generals was one of deep concern. Blomberg, Fritsch and Neurath were all sacked 6 weeks after the meeting.

1938: In **March**, Germany has its **anschluss with Austria**. First Hitler invites Kurt **Schuschnigg** (Austrian chancellor) to Berlin for 'discussions'. Schuschnigg orders a **plebiscite** because he thought that the Austrian people should decide Austria's future. On the **12th** of March, the German **army enters Austria** - without any resistance. On **13th** of March, Schuschnigg is replaced by Arthur **Seys-Inquart**. He signs the Anschluss. On the **15th**, the **results** of the plebiscite are published. 98% of Austrian people say yes (in reality, it was about 80%).

In **September**, Hitler encourages the German people living in the Sudetenland (Czechoslovakia) to demand union with Germany. The Czechs refused and Hitler threatened them with war. This alarms Britain and France, thus leading to the **Munich conferences**.

1. **Berchtesgaden 15th September:** Chamberlain goes to see Hitler and an agreement is reached. Hitler can have Sudetenland by the 10th of October. A second meeting schedules - Chamberlain returns to Britain to get agreement from Parliament and the French.
2. **Bad Godesberg 22-23 September:** Hitler increases his demands; he asks for Techen to be given to Poland and Southern slovakia to be given to Hungary. Chamberlain refuses and they part of bad terms. Chamberlain calls it 'a quarrel in a far away country of whom we know nothing'.
3. **Munich 29 September:** This conference is arranged by Mussolini. It is agreed that Hitler will get Sudetenland (without any discussion with Czechoslovakia), aswell as Poland and Hungary getting the land that Hitler demanded for them. Hitler had to agree that the Sudetenland would be his last territorial demand in Europe. Chamberlain got a personal guarantee from Hitler that Germany would not go to war with Britain on a 'peace' of paper. As Chamberlain arrived back to Britain from the conferences, he waved the piece of paper in the air and everyone cheered.

For Appeasement	Against Appeasement
Royal family was pro-appeasement	Ended up failing
General attempt to avoid war	Hitler could not be trusted
Japan & Italy were seen as a greater danger than Germany	Czechoslovakia was not consulted at any stage
Britain wasn't ready for war	Did chamberlain have the right to decide the future of czechoslovakia?
France could not be relied on for support	It was a sign of weakness - encouraged Hitler to make more demand
No support from USA	Britain wasn't prepared for war afterwards either
No interest in allowing USSR a greater say in Europe	Chamberlain wanted peace, but then declared war on Germany in 1939. Going against himself..
Popular policy - nobody wanted war again	Actually gave Germany more time to get stronger?

Hitler went on to takeover the rest of Czechoslovakia on the 15th of **March 1939**. On the 31st of **March**, Chamberlain made a guarantee that if Poland is attacked, Britain would help them. On the same day, Hitler gave orders to invade Poland on the 1st of September (Operation White).

On the 20th of **August** 1939, Stalin receives a letter from the German foreign minister which suggests an alliance between the two countries. Hitler sends Ribbentrop to Moscow on the 23rd and the Nazi-Soviet pact is signed on the 24th of **August**. The terms of the pact are peace, non-involvement of Russia in a European war and economic trade.

Germany betrays the pact on the 22nd of **June**, when Hitler puts **Operation Barbarossa** into action (invasion of Russia).

On the 1st **September 1939**, the Germans attack Poland. Chamberlain claims Poland can last 2yrs without support. In reality, Poland just lasted for 2 weeks. Modern warfare had produced weapons of terrifying power. “Better to be a ‘betrayed’ czech than a ‘saved’ Pole!” - AJP Taylor 1962. On the 3rd of **September**, Britain and France declare war on Germany.

In September, the USSR invade Eastern Poland, capture Warsaw and Poland surrenders on the 5th of October.

Germany's reasons for the pact	Russia's reasons for the pact
Germany learned from WWI that they couldn't defeat France, Britain and Russia all at the same time.	Russia would get involved if Germany invaded Poland. This pact ensured that Russia wouldn't be involved in any conflict.
Hitler would only have to focus on defeating Britain and France.	Stalin's army was very weak and powerless. This bought time to rebuild his army and get ready for war.
Russia was Hitler's only real threat, as B + F were relying on the policy of appeasement.	Russia gains back much of the land that it lost in the treaty of riga in 1921.
Gains half of poland in the secret protocol	Gains half of poland in the secret protocol
Gains economic assistance	Gains the Baltic States

Hitler's rise to power and Nazi Germany

In 1918, the Kaiser abdicated (left the country) and left a power vacuum. In its place came a new government called the **Weimar** Government. It was made up of Social Democrats and led by **Ebert**. It was a democracy and also had a new parliament called the **Reichstag**. People were allowed to vote for it from the age of 20. The voting system used was **proportional representation**, which meant that the percentage of votes you gained = the percentage of seats you gained in parliament. This led to weak coalitions forming just to get more than 50%. The President was also voted for by the Reichstag and he made final decision. In emergencies he could use **Article 48** which enabled him to dissolve the Reichstag. Proportional representation and article 48 were the Weimar government's greatest weaknesses.

Freikorps: The Freikorps consisted of former members of the military. Ebert armed them and used them put down uprising between 1919 and 1920. They were right wing and involved in the murder of left wing groups. Even though they worked for Ebert, they despised him for giving in to the Treaty of Versailles. Ebert lost the support of left wing and working class because of the violent actions of the Freikorp.

1919: Communists try to take over the German state of **Bavaria** led by Kurt Eisner. He is assassinated and the revolution ended brutally when Ebert orders the **Freikorps** into action. A new pro Weimar government was installed before it too was overthrown by right wingers led by Gustav **Von Kahr**. Bavaria was therefore **autonomous** (did what they wanted) from the rest of the Weimar Republic.

Jan. 1919: The **Spartacist League** led by **Rosa Luxemburg** wanted to make Germany communist like Russia, thus they tried to seize power in Berlin. The Spartacists captured government newspaper and telephone exchange. Once again, Ebert sent in the Freikorps and by the 8th of Jan. the revolution was ended. 100 spartacists were killed and rosa Luxemburg shot. Ebert was shocked by the actions of the Freikorps.

March 1920 Kapp Putsch: Ebert tried to disband the Freikorps as he had little use for them (also treaty of versailles insisted upon it). In response, groups of Freikorps led by **Wolfgang Kapp** tried to seize power in Berlin. Ebert wanted to use the army to put them down but they refused (because they would be fighting against their old friends). Ebert called a general strike and the Kapp Putsch collapsed, and this went to show that Ebert could not rely on the armed forces.

1922: Germany were excluded from the League of Nations so they signed the Rapallo treaty with Russia. This encouraged military and economic cooperation between the two outcasts and angered the winning powers.

1923 Ruhr Crisis: Falling behind with payments, France occupied the Ruhr to force payment of the reparations by using German mines and factories. In response Ebert called a national strike which halted production.

1923 Hyper inflation: The government started to print money to make up for the short fall in revenue. This forced up inflation and led to hyper inflation. Angered the working class who lost their jobs and angered middle class who lost their life savings.

1923 November Beer Hall Putsch / Munich Putsch: In September Stresemann (new foreign minister) gave in to the French over the Ruhr. Hitler and other right wingers were furious. On the 8th of November, Hitler and some SA men interrupted a public meeting led by head of Bavarian government Von Kuhr. He was supported by an ex general called Ludendorff who Hitler planned to form a government around. Hitler declared he was taking over Bavarian government and would March the next day to Berlin and take over there too. At gun point Von Kuhr agreed to support Hitler but that evening he alerted the police about Hitler. The next day (9th Nov.) 3000 supporters and Hitler marched but were confronted by 100 police. 16 Nazis were killed and Hitler was arrested the next day. Hitler failed in part because he had expected support from other right wing groups which didn't materialise and also that he never secured the support of Von Kuhr or the army.

More about the Munich Putsch

Why 8th November 1923? Because of hyperinflation, the Weimar government was weak and Stresemann had given in to the French (started paying reparations to end the Ruhr crisis). At this point, the Nazi party was stronger than ever with 55,000 members and the SA.

Why Bavaria? It is already right wing and semi-autonomous, led by Von Kahr.

The Plan: Hitler hopes to take power by starting a revolution and plotted with two nationalist politicians, Von Kahr and Von Lossow.

The results of Munich Putsch were that the Nazi party was banned and Hitler sent to prison. This was a turning point for Hitler because he moves away from a violence to a democratic route to power (starts to use propaganda, merge with other right wing parties and creates SS to be his personal bodyguard). He uses his own trial to gain publicity and in prison, he writes Mein Kampf (many Germans read this and his ideas become very well known). He also organizes the Nazi party and solidifies his position as the leader.

More about Hitler and Nazi ideology

In 1919, Adolf Hitler joined a small right-wing group called the **German Workers' Party**. He took over as its leader, and changed its name to the **National Socialists** (Nazis). The party developed a **25-Point Programme**, which - after the failure of the Munich Putsch in 1924 - Hitler explained further in his book 'Mein Kampf'. The Nazi ideology was **Lebensraum** (the need for 'living space' for the German nation to expand), a **strong Germany** (all German-speaking people united in one country), **führer** (single leader with complete power rather than a democracy), **social Darwinism** (Aryan race was 'superior' and Jews were 'subhuman'), **autarky** (Germany should be economically self-sufficient) and that **Germany was in danger** (from Communists and Jews, who had to be destroyed).

The 25-Point programme had policies that were **socialist**; eg farmers should be given their land, pensions should improve and public industries such as electricity and water should be owned by the state. **Nationalist**; all German-speaking people should be united in one country; the Treaty of Versailles should be abolished; and there should be special laws for foreigners. **Racist**; Jews should not be German citizens and immigration should be stopped. **Fascist**; a strong central government and control of the newspapers.

The Nazis didn't appeal to the working men (who voted communist) and intellectuals such as students and university professors. They were, however, popular with nationalist, racists, farmers, lower middle-class (who were worried about chaos that Germany was in) and rich people (who were worried by the threat of communism).

Hitler puts Josef Goebbels in charge of Nazi **propaganda**. Methods of campaigning that the Nazis used in the 1920s included radio, mass rallies, newspapers (eg 'Der Stürmer'), Hitler's speeches, and posters.

Hitler's path to dictatorship

Hitler became chancellor on the 30th of January 1933. He called elections for March, which gave him time to destroy left-wing parties.

On the **27th of February**, the Reichstag building was burned down. A dutch communist, **Van der Lubbe**, was blamed for starting the fire and this whipped up anti-communist hysteria (as it gave Hitler evidence that Communists were plotting against his government). On the night of the fire 4,000 leading Communists were arrested and imprisoned to remove the threat. The Reichstag had been seen as a symbol of the Weimar Republic, thus its burning down further consolidated Hitler's power. The next day, Hitler persuaded the president to pass an emergency decree suspending all articles in the constitution which had been introduced by the Weimar Republic and which guaranteed personal liberty, including freedom of speech. It was called the **Reichstag Fire decree** and it gave the police powers to search houses, confiscate property and detain people without trial. Hitler used these powers to intimidate voters. It also enabled him to arrest **80 Communist politicians** before the election, giving Nazis an overall majority of seats.

**What was the Enabling law of 1933?**

- A law that changed the constitution and effectively made Hitler dictator.
- A law that removed parliamentary democracy.
- It gave Hitler power to make laws without the Reichstag.
- The law lasted four years. The law gave Hitler power to crush political opposition.

Hitler, with the support of other parties and the absence of the Communists had a two-thirds majority and brought about his first change to the Constitution by introducing the **Enabling Act on 23rd of March**. This was the legal foundation of his dictatorship because it meant he could now pass laws without the consent of the Reichstag for the next four years. Using the powers of the Enabling Act Hitler reorganised state parliaments so that there was a Nazi majority and a **Nazi state governor**. He later closed down the state parliaments. The new officials had the power to make state laws. He arrested trade union leaders and merged the unions into a '**German Labour Front**'. This meant the Nazis would not be threatened by strikes or other union activities. He ruined the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party by removing all their funds, leaving the Nazi Party the only party allowed in the state. Hitler made a law that the only political party was the Nazi party.

The **SA** was a paramilitary organisation. They were an armed group of mainly ex-soldiers from the Freikorps. They disrupted meetings of Hitler's opponents, especially the Communists and often beat up opposition supporters. They also gave Hitler protection at his meetings.

However, in 1933 they were becoming a problem to Hitler. Ernest Röhm, leader of the SA, had left wing views which would offend businessmen, the very people Hitler wanted to work with. Röhm also wanted to merge the SA into the German army and for him to have control. Hitler feared this would lose him the army's support. Hitler no longer needed the SA as he had the SS, his own personal bodyguard. He was embarrassed by the continued violence of the SA, as it was unnecessary in creating an ordered Nazi state. Moreover Himmler and Goering convinced Hitler that Röhm was a threat to Hitler's power. In reality, they were jealous of Röhm's power. On the **30th of June 1934**, Hitler ordered the SS to arrest the leaders of the SA. Using the excuse that Röhm was planning a revolution, Hitler removed a potential threat to his overall control. This became known as the **Night of the Long Knives** and tightened Hitler's control.

First, Hitler, Röhm and leading members of the SA were in a hotel in Bad Wiessee. Here Hitler informed Röhm and the other leaders they were under arrest. To carry this out he used the heavily armed SS. Röhm was arrested and executed. The others were taken to Munich where they were shot. Over the next few days other SA leaders, including Gregor Strasser, were arrested by the SS and shot. Up to two hundred were killed, including politicians such as von Schleicher.

On the **2nd August** 1934 Hindenburg died. His death allowed Hitler to declare himself Führer. The army was to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler. He had achieved total power.

Controlling the German people

Who was Joseph Goebbels and what was the use of propaganda?

He was Minister for People's Enlightenment and propaganda and controlled the mass media: radio, press and films. He organised mass rallies and poster campaigns. Goebbels' role was to get the Nazi message across to the people of Germany. He did this by bombarding the German people with the Party message ensuring Hitler had popular support. Cheap radios were made easily available to all Germans, so they could hear Hitler's speeches. Posters and photographs (which gave images of high profile) of Hitler were everywhere and rallies such as the ones at Nuremberg displayed the strength of the military. They showed how popular Hitler was and helped to motivate the ordinary people. At the same time he ensured that views hostile to Nazism were suppressed. He did this by censoring newspapers and also organised public book burnings to ensure they did not represent non-Nazi views. What was broadcast was strictly controlled and so the message could be heard. All culture was controlled in this way and undesirable influences, such as Jazz, could be kept away from the German people.



1936 Olympic Games > another example of propaganda

Hitler hoped to show that Germany was superior and also the supremacy of the Aryan race. He wanted to show the world the achievements of Nazi Germany and its technical efficiency. Foreign visitors were highly impressed with the excellence of the facilities and the efficiency of the organisation. The German team won 33 gold, 26 silver and 30 bronze medals, far more than any other team. The star of the Games was Jesse Owens, a black American, winning four gold medals and breaking eleven world records. This did not please Hitler.

The Hitler Youth was a leisure activity organisation, which offered a variety of leisure pursuits and aimed to control young people. It was an opportunity for boys and girls to enjoy weekend trips, camps, walking and sports. This indoctrinated young people into accepting Nazi ideas with loyalty and obedience to Hitler. For boys, it was a training ground for the army with physical activity and military drill. For girls, it was a training ground for young women in home-making. The Hitler Youth Movement was used to promote Nazism as well as producing physically fit and healthy youngsters. It prepared them for adult roles (boys as soldiers and girls as mothers). The life of young people was controlled in school and the Nazis wanted to control it away from school. It also ensured that the first loyalty was not to the family but to Hitler.

Hitler also used **education** to indoctrinate young people. If the young could be indoctrinated into the Nazi way of thinking, those views were likely to stay with them for the rest of their lives. The Nazis realised that through education they could convert the young to their ideas by teaching from books giving a biased view, teaching that the Aryan race was superior and educating girls to be perfect mothers and housewives. The Nazis dictated which subjects were to be taught and made sure that Nazi ideas and racial beliefs were included in the teaching of subjects. Text books were re-written to conform to Nazi beliefs and racial purity. Subjects like history, biology and physical education became important. Biology lessons taught that Germans, as members of the Aryan race, were superior to all other races. For the girls, emphasis was placed on domestic life and role. Teachers were forced to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler and they had to join the Nazi Teachers' League.

The public was also controlled by the **police state**. Nazi Germany was a police state with the power of the authorities supreme. This meant that they could arrest and punish people simply because they said something against Hitler and his party. The **SS** had unlimited powers to search houses, confiscate property and arrest people without charge. They could send people to concentration camps without trial. The **Gestapo** had power to arrest anyone it wanted and often used informers to report anything that might be anti-Nazi. The Gestapo became the most feared organisation in Germany. Law and order was under Nazi control with judges having to take an oath of loyalty to Hitler.

Nazi policy of autarky

Autarky was the policy of making Germany economically self-sufficient. Hitler wanted to stop Germany being dependent on imports, especially raw materials and food. Hitler wanted to ensure that Germany was not dependent on imports if war began. He remembered what had happened in the First World War.

Hitler gained popularity with **male workers** through his public works and re-armament which delivered lower unemployment. He also used propaganda to praise their efforts. The scheme 'Strength Through Joy' was popular as it gave cheap theatre and cinema tickets as well as cut-price cruises. Many had the opportunity to save up in a state scheme to buy a VW Beetle. The '**Beauty of Labour**' scheme improved the workplace with the introduction of washing facilities and low-cost canteens. They also installed ventilation, lighting, created factory gardens and served hot meals.

Why did Nazis persecute minorities?

Nazis believed they were the master race and other races were inferior. The Nazis persecuted other groups including homosexuals and the mentally disabled as they did not match up to the master race. Homosexuality was despised by the Nazis as it was not in keeping with their ideal of Aryan masculinity. Nazis also believed in extreme pride in racial background. People of Eastern European descent received harsh treatment at the hands of the Nazis, who considered them racially inferior. They also lost their citizenship. Nazi propaganda blamed the Jews for the defeat in the First World War thus persecuting them. Furthermore Communists were accused of undermining Germany's efforts in the First World War.

How popular was the Nazi regime?

- The Hitler Youth was founded in 1926. By 1939 it had over seven million members, the vast majority of young Germans. It was used to prepare boys and girls for their roles in life. Many were happy to join as other associations were banned and this offered many activities. The League of German Maidens offered domestic skills and preparation for motherhood. Many were happy to join as there were few other organisations for them. Many enjoyed the activities such as camping and the sports.
- Many Germans admired and trusted Hitler. These people were prepared to tolerate rule by terror and loss of political freedom in return for work, foreign policy success and a strong government. Hitler offered a single leader who would steer them to stability and prosperity following the Great Depression and other problems.
- Large numbers of Germans were attracted by promises of revenge for the Treaty of Versailles. Success in foreign affairs made Germans feel that their country was a great power again after the humiliations of the First World War and the Treaty of Versailles.
- Hitler brought about economic recovery and boosted national pride. Through public works programmes and the re-armament programme, unemployment was reduced. The standard of living was not high but it was beginning to rise. Workers and their families benefited through the 'Strength Through Joy' movement, which also gained Hitler their loyalty.

- Not all women accepted the changes and some joined opposition groups. The policies ignored those women who had particular talents for certain types of jobs.
- Church leaders opposed Nazi involvement in religion and many were sent to concentration camps.
- In schools, through the curriculum, children were indoctrinated into Nazi ideals and racial beliefs. The Nazis must have thought they were not winning support as they thought it necessary to change the school curriculum so as to indoctrinate young people.
- There was opposition from students through the White Rose Movement.
- In 1944, a group of army officers tried to assassinate Hitler. They failed and were executed. (July Bomb Plot.)
- In 1936 membership of the Hitler Youth was made compulsory although some young people were reluctant to join. About 1 million failed to join. Many joined the Catholic Youth organisation rather than the Hitler Youth.
- In the late 1930s gangs began to appear on street corners. They had their own music and looked for Hitler Youth members to beat them up. Some gangs considered themselves part of a wider group called the **Edelweiss Pirates**. They were anti-authority and anti-Nazi. During the war they helped deserters and escaped prisoners.
- The “**Swing**” movement was mainly middle-class teenagers. They listened to American and English music, preferring jazz to regimentation. They accepted Jews at their clubs.

How successful were the Nazis in dealing with opposition?

The Nazis were mostly successful at getting rid of opposition. The SS went round terrorising people into obedience. They could arrest people without trial (thanks to the Reichstag Fire decree) and put them into concentration camps where people were tortured or indoctrinated. The Gestapo spied on people. They had informers everywhere and encouraged people to inform on their neighbours and children to inform on their parents. It meant for a long time there was little opposition. + Night of Long Knives was successful

During the war opposition grew. Some army officers were worried the war was going badly and planned to blow up Hitler in July 1944. It went wrong and they were all executed. Some young people also began to rebel during the war like the Swing Youth. They were fed up with the Nazis controlling their lives and giving them no freedom. The Navajos Gang and Edelweiss Pirates were generally regarded as delinquents but during the war they got involved in spreading anti-Nazi propaganda and in 1944 took part in an attack in which a Gestapo

officer was killed. Some were arrested and executed in public. Hans and Sophie Scholl led a student group in Munich called the White Rose Movement. They were executed in 1943 for anti-Nazi activities. Martin Niemoller was one of a number of Church leaders who spoke out against the activities of the Nazis. He was a theologian and Lutheran pastor. He spent the years 1937- 1945 in concentration camps.

Was Nazi Germany a totalitarian state?

e.g. 'There was a fixed way of thinking.' 'Germany was single party state.' 'Police control was based on terror.' 'The media was totally controlled.' 'The country was open to visitors.' 'The government was not united.' 'People were brainwashed.'

The 'political peace' which existed in Germany following the Night of the Long Knives enabled the Nazis to remodel German society according to their values and beliefs.

German people were to be accountable for their thoughts and feelings as well as their actions. The demands of the Nazi state were more important than the rights of the individual. Nazi Germany was a police state with the power of the authorities supreme. This meant that they could arrest and punish people simply because they said something against Hitler and his party.

The SS had unlimited powers to search houses, confiscate property and arrest people without charge. They could send people to concentration camps without trial. The Gestapo had power to arrest anyone it wanted and often used informers to report anything that might be anti-Nazi. The Gestapo became the most feared organisation in Germany. Law and order was under Nazi control with judges having to take an oath of loyalty to Hitler.

Until the outbreak of war in 1939, Germany was still open to visitors and foreign journalists, unlike the Soviet Union.

The Nazis were sensitive to hostile comments from abroad. An example of this relates to Hitler stopping those in the Party who wished to take extreme measures against the Churches.

The way in which the Nazis enforced their style of government changed dramatically after the outbreak of war in 1939. For example the numbers in concentration camps increased significantly.

The Nazi government was not united. No-one questioned Hitler's authority at the top, but there were fierce struggles for power in the ranks beneath him. Each Party official fought for their own interests and the favour of the Führer. This strengthened Hitler's position but weakened the control of the Nazi government.