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End of WW1

• Germany was in a very poor state:
  – the blockade of Germany had lead to a lack of food and supplies
  – People were starving
  – Riots were breaking out
  – The navy had mutinied against the Kaiser

• The Kaiser realised the situation was hopeless and abdicated in October 1918. Germany was left without a leader and in a mess

• The biggest political party in Germany was the Social Democrats. Their leader, Friedrich Ebert, took on the job of running Germany. He tried to improve people’s lives by giving them better working conditions and freedom of speech
End of WW1

1. What had happened to Germany to leave its people starving?
2. What was breaking out in towns and cities?
3. Who had mutinied against the Kaiser?
4. When did the Kaiser abdicate?
5. Who was the biggest political party in Germany?
6. Who was their leader?
7. What did he promise the people of Germany?
End of WW1

1. Britain had blockaded its ports
2. Riots
3. The navy
4. October 1918
5. Social Democrats
6. Friedrich Ebert
7. Better working conditions and freedom of speech
In January 1919, the German communist party (the Spartacists) decided that they wanted to take over Germany from Ebert.

They started a revolution attempt on 6 January. It was not successful – in a week, Ebert with the help of his Freikorps (ex-WWI soldiers paid to help the government keep order) had stopped the rebellion and killed many communists.

The Spartacist leaders, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebnecht, were murdered.

It was helpful for Ebert that the Spartacists were no longer a threat.

However, he had to rely on the Freikorps to keep order – that made him look weak to the public, and it was risky as the Freikorps could turn on him at any point.
Spartacist Revolution

1. When was the Spartacist Revolution?
2. What political ideology did they believe in?
3. Who did Ebert use to help him?
4. Who were the leaders of the Spartacists?
5. What happened to them?
6. How was the Revolution positive for Ebert?
7. What weaknesses did it show?
Spartacist Revolution

1. January 1919
2. Communism
3. The Freikorps (right wing ex-WW1 soldiers)
4. Rosa Luxembourg & Karl Liebknecht
5. They were both murdered
6. The Spartacists were no longer a threat; showed decisiveness
7. He had to use the Freikorps; made him look weak; Freikorps could turn on him.
The Social Democrats won the January 1919 elections. They held the first meeting of their new government in a town called Weimar – and got the nickname “The Weimar Government.” Their first job was to write a new constitution for Germany. Their new rules included:

- everyone over the age of 20 could vote
- people voted for MPs who would sit in the Reichstag
- the Reichstag would suggest and vote on new laws
- the Chancellor would be head of the Reichstag and would be voted for every 4 years
- there would be a President who would choose the Chancellor and keep control of the army and would be voted for every 7 years
Weimar Constitution 1

1. When did the first elections take place in Germany?
2. Who won them?
3. What was the first job of the “Weimar” government?
4. How old did you have to be to vote?
5. Who was to be head of the Reichstag?
6. Who would be in charge of (answer to 5) and the army?
Weimar Constitution 1

1. January 1919
2. The Social Democrats
3. To write a constitution for Germany
4. 20
5. The President
6. The Chancellor
## Weimar Constitution 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths of the Weimar Constitution</th>
<th>Weaknesses of the Weimar Constitution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Very fair, particularly the voting</td>
<td>➢ Proportional Representation meant that there were loads of different parties in the Reichstag – it was difficult to get them to agree on anything</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Allowed lots of people to have their say</td>
<td>➢ Article 48 could be abused so that the President stopped listening to the Reichstag</td>
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<td>➢ State governments would ensure local issues were addressed</td>
<td>➢ State governments could pass laws that went against what the Reichstag wanted</td>
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<td>➢ Wouldn’t allow one person to take over – the Chancellor and President balanced each other</td>
<td>➢ A poor Chancellor or President would only be around for a limited time</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1. What was particularly fair about the WC?
2. What did it allow state governments to do?
3. But what could this also mean?
4. What should it prevent happening?
5. But how could this be stopped?
6. What was a particular problem of proportional representation?
Weimar Constitution 2

1. Everyone over 20 could vote
2. Make local laws
3. These could go against the Reichstag’s wishes
4. One person becoming all powerful
5. Article 48 could be used which would allow the President to rule without the Reichstag
6. Lots of parties in the Reichstag so difficult to get anything done
Treaty of Versailles

• Signed in June 1919 and punished Germany by:
  – giving them the war guilt
  – making them pay £6.6 billion in reparations
  – reducing their army to 100,000 men
  – taking away their tanks, submarines and planes
  – taking 13% of their land and 12.5% of their population away
  – taking all their overseas colonies
  – demilitarising the Rhineland (border with France)
  – forbidding them from uniting with Austria

• The Germans were outraged. They called the Treaty a “diktat” (dictated peace) and accused the Weimar Government of “stabbing them in the back” by agreeing to such harsh terms

• People began to look to other politicians to rule Germany better than the Social Democrats.
Treaty of Versailles

1. What was the reparations bill?
2. What was the German military reduced to?
3. Which area of Germany was demilitarised?
4. What did many Germans call the Treaty?
5. Of what did they accuse the Weimar politicians?
6. What result did this have?
Treaty of Versailles

1. £6.6bn
2. 100,000 soldiers – no tanks, planes or U-boats
3. The Rhineland (border with France)
4. A “Diktat” – dictated peace
5. Stabbing Germany in the back
6. Germans began to look for alternatives to the Social Democrats
Other Opposition to the Weimar Government

- The German communists continued to create riots around Germany, even after the Spartacist Revolution failed.
- Freikorps had to be sent round to fight them and stop them.
- The right wing also hated the Social Democrats.
- The Freikorps themselves went against Ebert in 1920 when they supported Wolfgang Kapp in his attempt to take over the country (Kapp Putsch).
- It was only the workers of Berlin going on strike and refusing to help the Freikorps that stopped the Putsch.
- Over 200 people connected to the Weimar Government were assassinated between 1919 and 1923. The most famous was Walther Rathenau, the politician who had been involved with the armistice and the Treaty of Versailles.
- These assassinations showed how much people disliked their new government and also made people feel that they were doing a bad job as they weren’t stopping violence on the streets.
Other Opposition to the Weimar Government

1. Who did the Freikorps support in a Putsch in 1920?
2. Who helped stop that uprising?
3. How many political assassinations were there between 1919 & 1923?
4. Who was the highest profile?
5. What had he done to upset his opponents?
6. What in particular was upsetting the German people?
Other Opposition to the Weimar Government

1. Dr Wolfgang Kapp
2. The people of Berlin
3. Over 200
4. Walter Rathenau
5. Had been heavily involved in signing the Armistice and the Treaty of Versailles
6. The lack of reaction to the disorder on the streets – Germans like order!
Beginnings of the Nazi Party

- Anton Drexler had a party called the German Workers Party
- Hitler joined in 1920 and soon had become its leader
- He re-named it the National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP/Nazi Party)
- He gave the party a new flag and a new private army to protect it (the SA/Brownshirts)
- The party was small and would meet in beer houses. It began to attract attention because of Hitler’s powerful speeches, especially his rants against the Treaty of Versailles. The SA would also beat up opponents, especially the communists
Beginnings of the Nazi Party

1. Who was the first leader of the German Workers Party?
2. When did Adolf Hitler join?
3. What was the full title Hitler gave the party?
4. What two elements did Hitler introduce to the party?
5. Where would they usually meet?
6. Who was usually on the end of Nazi beatings?
7. Why did they attract attention?
Beginnings of the Nazi Party

1. Anton Drexler
2. 1920
3. National Socialist German Workers Party
4. A new flag and symbol/the SA (brownshirts)
5. Small beer houses
6. Communists
7. Hitler’s vibrant and passionate speaking
1923: A year of Crisis 1

- Germany paid her first reparation payment in 1921 but couldn’t afford the 1922 payment.
- France and Belgium decided to invade Germany and take the payment by force. They invaded the Ruhr, Germany’s main industrial area, to take goods.
- The Germans reacted with passive resistance. They went on strike and refused to make the goods that the French and Belgians wanted. They sabotaged factories and flooded mines.
- The French and Belgians reacted with violence: shooting some Germans and expelling some others.
- The Weimar Government supported the strikers by printing more money to pay them so that they could afford to keep striking.

Then click here...
1923: A Year of Crisis 1

1. Why did France and Belgium decide to invade the Ruhr?
2. What did they do when they got there?
3. How did the Germans react?
4. And how did the French and Belgians respond to this?
5. How did Germany afford to keep paying the striking workers?
1923: A Year of Crisis 1

1. Germany failed to make a reparations payment in 1922
2. Took goods from the Ruhr to make up for non-payment
3. Passive resistance – they just refused to work, sabotaging mines and flooding factories
4. Shooting some Germans and expelling others
5. Printed lots of money
1923: A year of crisis 2

- Too many notes in the economy meant that prices went out of control
- November 1923 was the worst month: bread cost 201,000,000,000 marks
- People had to carry their wages home in wheelbarrows. Prices went up so fast that a day’s wages would just buy a cup of coffee the next day
- The middle classes and the elderly suffered badly as their savings and pensions were wiped out
- Hitler chose November 1923 as the moment to attempt his Munich Putsch. He thought people were so fed up of their situation that they would support another leader
- The Putsch was easily stopped and he ended up in prison. He got very useful publicity from his trial and wrote *Mein Kampf*
- Hyperinflation ended in November/December - Stresemann introduced the Rentenmark
1923: A year of crisis 2

1. What was the cause of hyperinflation?
2. Which was the worst month?
3. Who were affected the worst?
4. When was the Munich Putsch?
5. Why did Hitler choose Munich?
6. How was the Putsch positive for Hitler?
7. What was the new currency called that Stresemann introduced to end hyperinflation?
1923: A year of crisis 2

1. Government printing too many notes
2. November 1923
3. Middle class and elderly (savings and pensions wiped out)
4. November 1923
5. Already a strong Socialist movement
6. Allowed him time to write Mein Kampf; showed he had support in high places
7. Rentenmark
1924 – 29: Economic boom

• Gustav Stresemann was Germany’s Chancellor in 1923-4 and Foreign Secretary after that

• He helped Germany get back on her feet in two main ways:
  – Economic measures: the Rentenmark, the Dawes Plan 1924 (800,000,000 mark loan from the USA), the Young Plan 1929 (reduced Reparations payments by 67%)
  – International relations: the Locarno Treaties 1925, Germany joining the League of Nations 1926, the Kellogg-Briand Pact 1928 (over 60 nations agreeing not to go to war)
  – This increased the amount of money and foreign goods in Germany. People had more money to spend and the standard of living rose

• This was an age of cinema, clubs, sex, modern art and architecture, industry, radios, cars. Many urban people loved it; many rural people such as the Wandervogel deeply disapproved

• On the surface, Germany was doing well. Underneath, there were problems: Germany was dependent on foreign loans and not making enough of her own money yet to stay afloat
1. When was the Dawes Plan agreed?
2. How much money did Germany get from the Dawes Plan?
3. When and what was the Young Plan?
4. What changed during the 1920s in Germany?
5. Who disapproved of the changes in Germany?
6. Why were there still problems in Germany?
1924 – 29: Economic boom

1. 1924
2. $800,000
3. 1929 – reduced reparation payments by 67%
4. Became more decadent – clubs, music, sex etc
5. The rural population especially Wandervogel
6. Over dependent on foreign loans
1929: Economic bust

- In 1929, the USA’s economy collapsed. They recalled all their loans. Germany’s money stopped and they spiralled into Depression
- Unemployment rocketed. It peaked at 6,000,000
- People lost their homes and had to live on the streets, scavenging on rubbish tips for food
- The Weimar Government dealt with it poorly – they refused to print more money but raised taxes and cut wages instead. This increased people’s suffering
- Violence began to break out again as people got desperate. The Weimar Government failed to deal with it
1929: Economic bust

1. What caused the US economy to collapse?
2. What was unemployment in Germany at its peak?
3. What did the Weimar Government refuse to do?
4. But what did they do?
5. What was the result of this?
1929: Economic bust

1. Wall Street Crash
2. 6,000,000
3. Refused to print more money
4. Raised taxes and cut wages
5. Increased suffering led to more discontent
1929 – 33: Rise of the Nazis

• The Depression played into the hands of the Nazis: people were desperate and wanted a saviour
• The Weimar Government’s inefficiency made people look for an alternative government. President Hindenburg had to start running Germany using Article 48 which was unpopular
• The Nazis used propaganda very well to advertise themselves as the party to solve all the problems: posters, meetings, radio broadcasts, the SA soup kitchens, the “Hitler over Germany” campaign.
• Hitler used his great speaking talents to promote himself as the Saviour of Germany. He came across as dynamic and a powerful leader.
• The SA also beat up opponents, especially the Communists who would naturally appeal to the workers.
• Nazi votes rose. Election results:
• Hitler asked to be Chancellor but Hindenburg (the President) refused. He chose von Papen, then von Schleicher but neither man could get a majority in the Reichstag to make the country run properly. Hindenburg had to keep ruling with Article 48. Eventually Hindenburg had no options left and made Hitler Chancellor on 30 January 1933.
1929 – 33: Rise of the Nazis

1. Which President was struggling to rule at the start of the 1930s?
2. What emergency power did he have to repeatedly use?
3. Name three ways in which the Nazis promoted themselves during this time
4. What particular quality did Hitler have?
5. Why did the Nazis target Communists in particular?
6. In which election did the Nazis get above 200 seats?
7. Who did the President choose to become Chancellor before giving in to Hitler?
8. On what date was Hitler finally made Chancellor of Germany?
1929 – 33: Rise of the Nazis

1. Von Hindenburg
2. Article 48 – ruling without the Reichstag
3. Posters, radio broadcasts, leaflets, rallies, soup kitchens etc
4. His speaking ability
5. They would have naturally appealed to the workers
6. July 1932
7. Von Papen then von Schliecher
8. 30 January 1933