

# **Year 13 History Unit 3**

## **From Kaiser to Fuhrer: Germany, 1900-1945**



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## Introduction:

### **This revision guide provides:**

- A summary of the necessary evidence for each unit
- Instructions on how to answer the exam questions
- Practise Exam Questions
- An explanation of your exam essays will be marked
- Exemplar Essays

### **This revision guide does not:**

- Provide you with a line of argument as you must work out your own!
- Form points (with judgements) that answer exam questions – these are for you to work out!
- Explain how the evidence proves your points and explain how your points supports your line of argument
- Evaluate the evidence. It is up to you to consider the contradictory view to your point and argue against it

## How to answer the exam questions

### Section A:

#### Introduction:

1. Interpret the question
2. Explain your line of argument which should support, reject or modify the judgement in the question to a specified degree
3. Explain how your line of argument will be developed and proved

#### Main Paragraphs:

	<b>How far do you agree with the interpretation?</b>	<b>How far do you agree with a cause as the most important?</b>
<b>POINT</b>	Make a point that answers the question. This should contain a factor, a judgement and a reason for this judgement Link this point to your overall line of argument (that you outlined in your introduction)	Make a point that answers the question. This should contain a factor, a judgement and a reason for this judgement Link this point to your overall line of argument (that you outlined in your introduction)
<b>EVIDENCE</b>	This should be detailed, precise and relevant. It must be selected to prove your point. It must include evidence FOR and AGAINST in a balance that is necessary to support the judgement in your point	This should be detailed, precise and relevant. It must be selected to prove your point. It must include evidence FOR and AGAINST in a balance that is necessary to support the judgement in your point
<b>EXPLAIN</b>	Explain throughout and at the end of your paragraph how your evidence proves your point's judgement	Explain why this factor is a cause (what is the explicit link between the factor and the question) Explain throughout and at the end of your paragraph how your evidence proves your point's judgement
<b>LINK</b>	Explain how your point supports your line of argument	Explain how your point links to other points (How the factors link together)  Explain how your point supports your line of argument

#### Conclusion:

1. Explain your line of argument
2. Explain how your line of argument was developed and proved

## **Section B:**

### **Introduction:**

Interpret the question

Explain the judgement of the three sources and whether they agree or disagree with the opinion in the question

Explain the controversy that the question refers to

### **Paragraph 1:**

Construct an argument FOR the opinion in the question

Explain which source largely agrees and how this source largely agrees with the opinion in the question

Explain which sources agree with each other and how these sources agree with each other about the opinion in the question

Use small quotes

Use your own knowledge to provide further evidence to support the judgements of this argument

Use your own knowledge to evaluate this argument

### **Paragraph 2:**

Construct an argument AGAINST the opinion in the question

Explain which source largely disagrees and how this source disagrees with the opinion in the question

Explain which sources agree with each other and how these sources agree with each other in disagreeing with the opinion in the question

Use small quotes

Use your own knowledge to provide further evidence to support the judgements of this argument

Use your own knowledge to evaluate this argument

### **Paragraph 3:**

Construct an argument that covers a middle way (a combination of FOR and AGAINST the opinion in the question)

Explain which source largely agrees and how this source largely agrees with this middle way

Explain how the sources agree and disagree with each other regarding this middle way

Use small quotes

Use your own knowledge to provide further evidence to support the judgements of this argument

Use your own knowledge to evaluate this argument

### **Conclusion:**

Explain your line of argument which reconciles these differences of opinions.

Form an argument that includes all interpretations covered

## Practise Exam Questions

### Unit 1:

1. 'Power in the Second Reich lay in the hands of the traditional elites'. How far do you agree with this judgement?
2. 'The threat of constitutional reform was the biggest problem facing the Second Reich'. How far do you agree with this judgement?
3. 'Moderate reform caused the balance of power to remain unchanged'. How far do you agree with this judgement?
4. 'WWI heightened rather than narrowed the problems that the Second Reich faced'. How far do you agree with this judgement?

## Unit 2:

### 1. 'WWI was caused by an aggressive foreign policy'. How far do you agree with this opinion?

#### Source F

Expecting as he did that peace negotiations would be opening shortly, Bethmann-Hollweg describes his programme of 9 September as 'provisional notes on the direction of our policy on the conclusion of peace'. The 'general aim of the war' was, for him, 'security for the German Reich in west and east for all imaginable time. For this purpose France must be so weakened as to make her revival as a great power impossible for all time. Russia must be thrust back as far as possible from Germany's eastern frontiers and her domination over the non-Russian peoples broken.'

The objectives in the east were not yet set out in detail in the programme itself, since peace with Russia was not yet regarded as imminent, but this does not mean that they had not yet assumed concrete form. The detailed explanation of 'individual war aims' was confined to the continental west, where the conclusion of peace seemed within grasp. They ran as follows:

*France. The military to decide whether we should demand cession of Belfort and western slopes of the Vosges, razing fortresses and cession of coastal strip from Dunkirk to Boulogne.*

*The ore field of Briey, which is necessary for the supply of ore for our industry, to be ceded in any case.*

*Further, a war indemnity, to be paid in instalments; it must be high enough to prevent France from spending any considerable sums on armaments in the next fifteen–twenty years.*

*Furthermore a commercial treaty, which makes France economically dependent on Germany, secures the French market for our exports and makes it possible to exclude British commerce from France. This treaty must secure for us financial and industrial freedom of movement in France in such fashion that German enterprises can no longer receive different treatment from the French.*

And so the document goes on for other countries . . .

From Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, published in 1967

#### Source G

There is a fundamental flaw in Fischer's reasoning which too many historians have let pass. It is the assumption that Germany's war aims as stated after the war had started were the same as German aims beforehand. Thus Bethmann-Hollweg's 'September Programme' for a separate peace with France – drafted on the assumption of a quick German victory in the West – is sometimes portrayed as if it were the first open statement of aims which had existed before the war. If this were true, then the argument that war was avoidable would collapse; for it is clear that no British government would have accepted the territorial and political terms which the September programme proposed for France and Belgium, as these would have realised the Napoleonic nightmare by giving Germany control of the Belgian coast. But the inescapable fact is that no evidence has been found by Fischer and his pupils that these objectives existed before Britain's entry into the war.

From Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War*, published in 1998

#### Source L

Asquith did not know how little control the Kaiser and Bethmann exercised. A country where the Chancellor hardly dared to ask the General Staff what they were doing was outside his comprehension. He assumed that, when it came to the moment of the decision, the German government would be likely to choose an invasion route which would not force Belgium to call for British military help.

We do not know everything about what happened during the last days of July in Berlin and Potsdam: but we can be sure that events there belied Asquith's assumptions. The General Staff had concealed from the political leaders the worst political horror in their war plans, namely that their first objective was the capture of Liège and its forts. They needed a head start in the war in order to mount a surprise attack there; and they might decide to follow that with a massive bombardment. Bethmann does not seem to have been told this until 31 July. The General Staff were in charge.

From Michael Brock, *The Coming of the First World War*, edited by R.J. Evans and Hartmut Pogge von Strandmann, published in 1990

2. 'WWI was caused by an aggressive German foreign policy'. How far do you agree with this opinion?

**Source E**

The documents do not permit attributing a conscious desire for a European War to any one government or people. Mutual distrust had hit a peak, and in leading circles it was believed that war was inevitable. Each one accused the other of aggressive intentions, and only saw a guarantee for security in an alliance system and continual armament increases.

From the Franco-German Historians' Commission 1951

**Source I**

It is now apparent that the 'men of 1914' in Berlin were working to an elaborate and cunning scenario, a secret plot designed either to split the Triple Entente wide open in order to effect a massive diplomatic revolution, which would have given Germany control of the European continent and much of the world beyond, or – a better method in the eyes of many to achieve the same goal – to provoke a continental war against France and Russia in what appeared to be exceptionally favourable circumstances. If that war could be brought about through a Balkan crisis rather than through some incident in western Europe, they calculated, three highly desirable advantages would accrue to the Reich: Austria-Hungary would be on the front line and would not be able to wriggle out of its alliance commitments to Germany; the German population could be manipulated into believing that Germany was being attacked by 'barbarous' Russia and so would rally to the defence of the Fatherland; and Britain might be persuaded to stay out of the war, at least for the first six crucial weeks during which France would be defeated by means of a lightning attack through Belgium.

From John Röhl, 'Germany', in Keith Wilson (editor), *Decisions for War*, published in 1995 by Palgrave Macmillan

**Source J**

The picture of Bethmann-Hollweg's policy in the July crisis, such as it emerges from the Riezler diaries, fits neither into the pattern of a Germany pushed into a war against her will, nor of a Germany wilfully pushing into war. Egmont Zechlin found a very adequate term for this attitude. He called it preventive *Abwehr* (preventive defence). This seems to me to be more to the point than 'preventive war', although Bethmann-Hollweg himself, sometime later, called the First World War 'in a certain sense' a preventive war. Fischer shares the opinion that preventive war is not the right term, because on the side of the *entente* there was objectively no intention of attacking Germany. In my view, the term preventive *Abwehr* fits better than preventive war, because Germany, though taking the risk of war, had hope of disrupting the *entente* without war.

From Karl Dietrich Erdmann, *A Judgement on Bethmann-Hollweg*, published in 1964

3. 'WWI was born out of a German fear of encirclement'. How far do you agree with this opinion?

**Source J**

The picture of Bethmann-Hollweg's policy in the July crisis, such as it emerges from the Riezler diaries, fits neither into the pattern of a Germany pushed into a war against her will, nor of a Germany wilfully pushing into war. Egmont Zechlin found a very adequate term for this attitude. He called it preventive *Abwehr* (preventive defence). This seems to me to be more to the point than 'preventive war', although Bethmann-Hollweg himself, sometime later, called the First World War 'in a certain sense' a preventive war. Fischer shares the opinion that preventive war is not the right term, because on the side of the *entente* there was objectively no intention of attacking Germany. In my view, the term preventive *Abwehr* fits better than preventive war, because Germany, though taking the risk of war, had hope of disrupting the *entente* without war.

From Karl Dietrich Erdmann, *A Judgement on Bethmann-Hollweg*, published in 1964

**Source W**

German responsibility for war should not be restricted to the issue of whether Bethmann, or the German government, or the Kaiser, desired peace in 1912–14 or, for that matter, earlier. Of course they would have preferred to get what they wanted without war. But German actions going back to the 1890s had done much to create international tension. Bethmann personally was a sensitive, passive, fatalistic man, but he was faced with reaping the whirlwind sown by his predecessors. Others bore more responsibility, like Tirpitz, who built a battle fleet aimed at the British but professed his peaceful intentions.

From David Blackbourn, *History of Germany 1780–1918*, published in 1997

**Source I**

It is now apparent that the 'men of 1914' in Berlin were working to an elaborate and cunning scenario, a secret plot designed either to split the Triple Entente wide open in order to effect a massive diplomatic revolution, which would have given Germany control of the European continent and much of the world beyond, or – a better method in the eyes of many to achieve the same goal – to provoke a continental war against France and Russia in what appeared to be exceptionally favourable circumstances. If that war could be brought about through a Balkan crisis rather than through some incident in western Europe, they calculated, three highly desirable advantages would accrue to the Reich: Austria-Hungary would be on the front line and would not be able to wriggle out of its alliance commitments to Germany; the German population could be manipulated into believing that Germany was being attacked by 'barbarous' Russia and so would rally to the defence of the Fatherland; and Britain might be persuaded to stay out of the war, at least for the first six crucial weeks during which France would be defeated by means of a lightning attack through Belgium.

From John Röhl, 'Germany', in Keith Wilson (editor), *Decisions for War*, published in 1995 by Palgrave Macmillan

4. 'The outbreak of WWI was ultimately the result of decisions taken by the German military'.  
How far do you agree with this opinion?

#### Source C

Thus to the general necessity inherent in the Schlieffen Plan for the violation of Belgian neutrality and offensive action as soon as possible after mobilisation, the attack on Liège required even more immediate action, since it was scheduled to take place on the third day of mobilisation with such troops as were immediately available. It was, therefore, as Moltke was to argue in a long meeting with Bethmann on the evening of 31 July 1914, essential to launch the attack in the west the moment Russia proclaimed mobilisation, so as to carry out the onslaught on France before Russian mobilisation was complete and before fighting began on the eastern front. And to launch the attack in the west, it was equally essential to capture Liège within three days. The attack on Belgium had therefore to be launched almost immediately after the proclamation of mobilisation and there was no margin for any delay between mobilisation and the start of hostilities. The Liège operation had been kept a deep secret, and it looks as though the Kaiser himself had not been told about it and that Bethmann only grasped its implications on 31 July. While the other powers could order mobilisation and wait what to do next, in the case of Germany mobilisation inevitably meant war.

From James Joll, *The Origins of the First World War*, published in 1984

#### Source W

German responsibility for war should not be restricted to the issue of whether Bethmann, or the German government, or the Kaiser, desired peace in 1912–14 or, for that matter, earlier. Of course they would have preferred to get what they wanted without war. But German actions going back to the 1890s had done much to create international tension. Bethmann personally was a sensitive, passive, fatalistic man, but he was faced with reaping the whirlwind sown by his predecessors. Others bore more responsibility, like Tirpitz, who built a battle fleet aimed at the British but professed his peaceful intentions.

From David Blackbourn, *History of Germany 1780–1918*, published in 1997

#### Source A

Economic expansion was the basis of Germany's political world diplomacy, which vacillated in its methods between rapprochement and conciliation at one moment, aggressive insistence on Germany's claims the next, but never wavered in its ultimate objective, the expansion of Germany's power.

From Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, published in 1967

5. 'The outbreak of WWI was ultimately the result of decisions taken by the German military'.  
How far do you agree with this opinion?

#### Source B

Given these indications that the war would not be localised, there were ample opportunities for Germany to back down. Yet the initial British peace keeping initiatives were given only the most insincere support by Germany. The Germans pressed on, urging the Austrians to make haste, and after 26 July openly rejecting diplomatic alternatives. Only at the eleventh hour did they begin to lose their nerve; the Kaiser first, on 28 July, and then Bethmann who, after hearing of Grey's warning of the 29th to the Germany ambassador [in London] frantically sought the Austrians to apply the brakes. Berchtold tried to respond; but it was the German military which ultimately secured, by a combination of persuasion and defiance, the mobilisation orders, the ultimate and declarations of war which unleashed the conflict.

From Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War*, published in 1998

#### Source O

What still needs to be investigated is the crucial question of when war was decided upon. The exciting hypothesis is gaining ground, as previously hidden sources come to light, that the decision was not taken in response to the Sarajevo assassination but some time before that event took place, as a result of a long process which began with Germany's perceived humiliation in the Second Morocco crisis [which was in 1911].

In a top secret memorandum of 1 April 1912, Admiral von Tirpitz formulated the question which seems to have informed all military-political thinking in Germany from Agadir to Sarajevo. Under the heading 'Bringing about the War', Tirpitz asked: should we speed up [the outbreak of war] or attempt to delay it?

From John Röhl, 'Germany', in Keith Wilson (editor), *Decisions for War*, published in 1995

#### Source J

The picture of Bethmann-Hollweg's policy in the July crisis, such as it emerges from the Riezler diaries, fits neither into the pattern of a Germany pushed into a war against her will, nor of a Germany wilfully pushing into war. Egmont Zechlin found a very adequate term for this attitude. He called it preventive *Abwehr* (preventive defence). This seems to me to be more to the point than 'preventive war', although Bethmann-Hollweg himself, sometime later, called the First World War 'in a certain sense' a preventive war. Fischer shares the opinion that preventive war is not the right term, because on the side of the *entente* there was objectively no intention of attacking Germany. In my view, the term preventive *Abwehr* fits better than preventive war, because Germany, though taking the risk of war, had hope of disrupting the *entente* without war.

From Karl Dietrich Erdmann, *A Judgement on Bethmann-Hollweg*, published in 1964

6. 'The outbreak of WWI was ultimately the result of decisions taken by the German military'.  
How far do you agree with this opinion?

#### Source R

Not many historians nowadays dissent from the proposition that the German government, egged on by its generals, deliberately provoked the war of 1914 . . . In the two years before the July Crisis, Germany's leaders appear to have been gripped by a mood of desperation. In December 1912, for instance, a Crown Council quite seriously suggested that there should be war within a year and a half, that the press should be prepared, that military increases should be undertaken, and that the Reichsbank should build up a larger war chest. The Reichstag could not control the government; at the same time, the Kaiser, surrounded, often enough, by hysterical generals and noblemen, lost any sense of cool *raison d'état* . . . War squared the circles of German politics. Bismarck had to conquer Germany in order to rule Prussia. Would Bethmann-Hollweg have to conquer Europe in order to rule Germany?

From Norman Stone, *Europe Transformed 1878–1919*, published in 1983

#### Source M

The evidence on the secret 'military-political conference' of 8 December 1912 must be described as unusually abundant. If historians nevertheless encounter difficulties in interpreting this meeting, that is primarily because the 'war council', as Bethmann-Hollweg angrily described it on 20 December 1912, cannot be separated from the emotive controversy on the immediate causes of the First World War. With few exceptions, even those historians who see German policy in the July crisis of 1914 as the main cause of the outbreak of the world war are reluctant to accept that this policy was formulated a year and a half earlier by the Kaiser and his faithful followers in the army and navy meeting in a hastily convened 'war council'.

From John Röhl, *The Kaiser and his Court*, published in 1994

#### Source Q

The more direct and immediate consolidation of the Navy Bill was to come from the unifying effects of the naval armaments programme at home. More indirect and more long-range were the stabilising benefits which the government hoped to derive from the navy as an instrument of foreign policy and German imperialism in the twentieth century. But it is not difficult to see that, in the final analysis, the result would be the same. It is in this sense that the decision to build a large battle fleet represented an 'inner-political crisis strategy' designed to contribute to the survival of the Prusso-German political system; with the help of the Navy the monarchy wanted to overthrow the status quo internationally in order to preserve it at home . . . The trouble is, no complex modern society can be ruled like this [as Germany was on the eve of war] for too long. The political system was no longer capable of overcoming internal divisions. The élites were more and more tempted to use war as the catalyst for the renewed attempts to stabilise the monarchy.

From Volker Berghahn, *Germany and the Approach of War in 1914*, published in 1973

7. 'WWI was born out of a German desire to solve their domestic problems and tensions'. How far do you agree with this opinion?

**Source Q**

The more direct and immediate consolidation of the Navy Bill was to come from the unifying effects of the naval armaments programme at home. More indirect and more long-range were the stabilising benefits which the government hoped to derive from the navy as an instrument of foreign policy and German imperialism in the twentieth century. But it is not difficult to see that, in the final analysis, the result would be the same. It is in this sense that the decision to build a large battle fleet represented an 'inner-political crisis strategy' designed to contribute to the survival of the Prusso-German political system; with the help of the Navy the monarchy wanted to overthrow the status quo internationally in order to preserve it at home . . . The trouble is, no complex modern society can be ruled like this [as Germany was on the eve of war] for too long. The political system was no longer capable of overcoming internal divisions. The élites were more and more tempted to use war as the catalyst for the renewed attempts to stabilise the monarchy.

From Volker Berghahn, *Germany and the Approach of War in 1914*, published in 1973

**Source V**

By 1913 the question of civil war and foreign war had indeed become two sides of the same coin in the minds of the Kaiser and his advisers, and it is virtually impossible to decide which issue obsessed them more. They felt encircled not merely by the Triple Entente, but also by the forces of change. Germany's internal and external enemies, they believed, wanted to destroy them and the monarchical order. While the news was bad on the domestic front, it was arguably worse on the international one. The diplomatic isolation of Germany which started in 1904 had worsened and while Bethmann-Hollweg was making efforts to ease some of the pressure, the generals could only think of further rearmaments expenditure as a remedy. The 1913 Army Bill, which had now unleashed yet another major conflict over the distribution of tax burdens, had in part been a response to growing tensions in the Balkans and the weakening of the position of the Dual Alliance in that part of the world. In view of these developments, it seemed even more urgent to Helmuth von Moltke, the Chief of the General Staff, to fill the gaps which the 1912 Army Bill had left. Yet, rearm as strenuously as they might, the Germany military were unable to check the deterioration of the Reich's international predicament by trying to shift the balance of power in their favour.

From Volker Berghahn, *Modern Germany*, published in 1987

**Source W**

German responsibility for war should not be restricted to the issue of whether Bethmann, or the German government, or the Kaiser, desired peace in 1912–14 or, for that matter, earlier. Of course they would have preferred to get what they wanted without war. But German actions going back to the 1890s had done much to create international tension. Bethmann personally was a sensitive, passive, fatalistic man, but he was faced with reaping the whirlwind sown by his predecessors. Others bore more responsibility, like Tirpitz, who built a battle fleet aimed at the British but professed his peaceful intentions.

From David Blackbourn, *History of Germany 1780–1918*, published in 1997

8. 'WWI was born out of a German desire to solve their domestic problems and tensions'. How far do you agree with this opinion?

**Source Q**

The more direct and immediate consolidation of the Navy Bill was to come from the unifying effects of the naval armaments programme at home. More indirect and more long-range were the stabilising benefits which the government hoped to derive from the navy as an instrument of foreign policy and German imperialism in the twentieth century. But it is not difficult to see that, in the final analysis, the result would be the same. It is in this sense that the decision to build a large battle fleet represented an 'inner-political crisis strategy' designed to contribute to the survival of the Prusso-German political system; with the help of the Navy the monarchy wanted to overthrow the status quo internationally in order to preserve it at home . . . The trouble is, no complex modern society can be ruled like this [as Germany was on the eve of war] for too long. The political system was no longer capable of overcoming internal divisions. The élites were more and more tempted to use war as the catalyst for the renewed attempts to stabilise the monarchy.

From Volker Berghahn, *Germany and the Approach of War in 1914*, published in 1973

**Source P**

It would be wrong to analyse foreign policy solely in terms of a theory of the *Primat der Innenpolitik* or to attribute the decision for war to domestic pressures alone. At the same time there is much evidence to suggest that German politicians, generals and admirals were very conscious of the connection between domestic and foreign policy, not only because at certain moments they believed that foreign ventures might contribute to a mood of national solidarity at home, but also because they feared the strength of socialist opposition to warlike policies. The balance between the awareness of internal problems and dreams of world power was always a delicate one; and if recent historical writing had stressed the importance of the internal contradictions of German society in determining German foreign policy and the decision for war and has thus drawn attention to factors which had been largely overlooked by an older generation of historians, we must not forget that for many leading Germans the positive pursuit of world power or the negative securing of Germany's position in what was regarded as a hostile world was something to be undertaken for its own sake regardless of the domestic profit and loss.

From James Joll, *Origins of the First World War*, published in 1984

**Source H**

Three points deserve emphasis. Firstly German war aims not only exceeded those of any other combatant; they were aspirations to world power. Secondly, there was a greater consensus over those aims that pre-Fischer historians like to admit. Annexationist ambitions were not confined to soldiers like Hindenburg or Ludendorff, or to Pan-Germans and other super-patriots. They were shared by civilian ministers, civil servants, Catholic and liberal politicians, liberal intellectuals such as Max Weber, even by some Social Democrats.

From David Blackbourn, *History of Germany 1780–1918*, published in 1997

### **Unit 3:**

1. 'The main threat to the existence of the Weimar Republic in the years 1919-1923 was its fated constitution' How far do you agree with this judgement?
2. 'A period of instability followed by a period of stability' How far do you agree with this judgement of the Weimar Republic?
3. 'Germany experienced a period of stability during the Stresemann years'. How far do you agree with this judgement?
4. 'The Weimar Republic survived for so long because of economic policy successes'. How far do you agree with this judgement?
5. 'Economic depression in 1929 highlighted the inherent weaknesses of the Weimar Republic' How far do you agree with this judgement?

### **Unit 4:**

1. 'The appeal to a Volksgemeinschaft explains the rapid growth in Nazi support by 1932' How far do you agree with this judgement?
2. 'The economic depression of 1929 explains the rapid growth in Nazi support by 1932' How far do you agree with this judgement?
3. 'Political intrigue explains why Hitler was able to become Chancellor in 1933' How far do you agree with this judgement?
4. 'The Nazi consolidation of power in 1933 was caused by brutality and terror' How far do you agree with this judgement?
5. 'The Nazi rise and consolidation of power by the end of 1933 was caused by the failure of communism to stop them'. How far do you agree with this judgement?
6. 'The effects of the Wall Street Crash caused the Weimar Republic to give way to Hitler's regime'. How far do you agree with this judgement?
7. 'Hitler had fully consolidated his power by the end of 1933'. How far do you agree with this judgement?
8. 'Economic depression accounts for the failure of the Weimar Republic by the end of 1933' How far do you agree with this judgement?
9. 'The failure of the Weimar Republic by 1933 was inevitable' How far do you agree with this judgement?

## **Unit 5:**

1. 'The Nazi regime depended more on its broad popularity than on terror in the years 1933-39'. How far do you agree with this opinion?

### **SOURCE 4**

(From Robert Gellately, *Backing Hitler*, published 2001)

Most people in Nazi Germany had no direct confrontation with the Gestapo, Kripo, or the concentration camps. Moreover, while they read many stories about the 'People's Court', rather few people attended its sessions. In other words, for most Germans, the coercive or terroristic side of Hitler's dictatorship was created by what passed along by word of mouth, by what they read in the press, or heard on the radio. Historians have paid remarkably little attention to these representations, when in fact these played an important role in the dictatorship.

At every level, there was much popular support for the expanding missions of the new police and the camps, especially as the latter were presented in the media and elsewhere as boot-camps in which the state would confine both 'political criminals' and variously defined asocials, in order to subject them to 'work therapy'.

### **SOURCE 5**

(From Richard J Evans, *The Third Reich in Power*, published 2005)

At the same time, the Gestapo was only part of a much wider net of surveillance, terror and persecution cast by the Nazi regime over German society in the 1930s; others included the SA and SS, the Criminal Police, the prison service, the social services and employment offices, the medical profession, health centres and hospitals, the Hitler Youth, the Block Wardens. Even apparently politically neutral organizations like tax offices, the railway and the post office were involved. All of these provided information about deviants and dissidents to the Gestapo, the courts and the prosecution service, forming a very mixed, uncoordinated but pervasive system of control, in which the Gestapo was merely one institution among many. Everything that happened in the Third Reich took place in a pervasive atmosphere of fear and terror, which never slackened and indeed became far more intense towards the end. 'Do you know what fear is?' an elderly worker asked an interviewer some years after it was all over: 'No'. 'The Third Reich was fear,' the worker replied.

### **SOURCE 6**

(From E A Johnson, *The Nazi Terror*, published 1999)

The key to understanding the sometimes brutal, but always effective, Nazi terror lies in its selective nature. Never implemented in a blanket or indiscriminate fashion, it specifically targeted and ruthlessly moved against the Nazi regime's racial, political and social enemies; at the same time it often ignored or dismissed expressions of non-conformity and mild disobedience on the part of other German citizens. The two-way treatment of different sections of the German population helped the Nazi regime to gain support among the populace. Indeed, many Germans perceived the terror not as a personal threat to them but as something that served their interests by removing threats to their material well-being and to their sense of community and order.

2. 'The Nazi regime was popular because of Hitler's charismatic leadership'. How far do you agree with this opinion?

**SOURCE 3**

(From Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality*, published in 1994)

Frustration and disappointment with the realities of everyday life under National Socialism led ordinary Germans to grumble and complain, but seldom to engage in behaviour that can be appropriately termed 'resistance'. Why? Organised terror played a central role. But the most important mechanism promoting unity and social integration in Nazi Germany was Hitler's charismatic leadership. The 'Hitler myth' secured the loyalty to the regime even of those who opposed the Nazi movement. Millions of ordinary Germans believed that the Führer would certainly right all wrongs in Nazi Germany.

The 'Hitler myth' was not just a cunning triumph of the Goebbels propaganda machine; mass belief in the charismatic leader was the inevitable corollary of the disappointments of daily existence in the Third Reich. In the 'Hitler myth' ordinary Germans found compensation for the tensions, anxieties and frustrations of everyday life under National Socialism.

**SOURCE 5**

(From D. J. K. Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition and Racism in Everyday Life*, published in 1989)

The longer the Nazi regime lasted, the less people believed its slogans about the new solidarity of the 'works community' and the 'national community'. Workers' disapproval and criticism related primarily to practical everyday matters, and to the social achievements and failures of the regime. The personal figure of Hitler, as SOPADE reports confirm, was largely exempt from criticism. When analysing the popular mood in general, the fact that people's high regard for the figure of the 'Leader' was unaffected by the general 'grumbling' can be taken as an indication of a certain basic consent to the regime, or at least of a passive adjustment to a situation which could not be changed.

**SOURCE 6**

(From F. McDonough, *Hitler and Nazi Germany*, published in 1999)

One way ordinary Germans could secretly express dissatisfaction with the Nazi regime was through jokes. Anti-Nazi humour was a low-level form of opposition. The Nazi leaders provided endless ammunition for jokes. Hitler jokes tended to stress his enormous power and brutality. Joseph Goebbels was the subject of a great many jokes, usually revolving around the fact that he did not live up to the promised image of the master race. Goebbels had many nicknames, most notably the 'Poison Dwarf'. Perhaps the major source of jokes was the repressive nature of the regime. It was claimed nobody would go to the dentist in Nazi Germany because they would never be able to open their mouths in front of a stranger.

3. 'The Nazi policy towards the Jews was plain and unwavering'. How far do you agree with this opinion?

**SOURCE 4**

Line (From Alan Bullock, *Hitler: a Study in Tyranny*, published in 1952.)

25 It was to the conquest of Eastern Europe and Russia that Hitler looked for the opportunity to build his New Order, the empire of the *Herrenvolk* based upon the slave labour of the inferior races. Such plans involved the movement of populations, the deliberate depression of whole  
30 races to a lower standard of life and civilization, the denial of any chance of education or medical facilities, even, in the case of the Jews, their systematic extermination. From speeches as early as 1922, through the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 and the pogrom of the autumn of 1938 to the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto and the death camps of Mauthausen and Auschwitz, Hitler's purpose was plain and unwavering. He meant to carry out the extermination of the Jewish race in Europe, using the word 'extermination' in a precise and literal sense as the deliberate policy of the German state. And he very largely succeeded.

**SOURCE 5**

(From J. Noakes and G. Pridham, *Nazism 1919–1945*, published in 1984.)

35 The Nazis had made little attempt to prepare a detailed programme of anti-Jewish measures which could be implemented on their coming to power. They were determined to exclude the Jews from German life, but little thought had been given to how this was to be achieved. The fact that the Jew was regarded as a figure of total evil, as an abstraction, meant that partial measures excluding Jews from this or that sphere of German life were in a sense irrelevant. The totality of this 'evil' implied from the start a total solution, although there is no real evidence that the Nazis had any clear idea what form such a total solution should take until very much later.

**SOURCE 6**

(From Daniel Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, published in 1996.)

40 Hitler and the Nazis' desire to eliminate the Jews was, even before they gained power, clear and constant. However, the evolution of their immediate intentions and actual policies towards the Jews was not consistent and unambiguous. This is not surprising. A regime had come to power determined to undertake a task – the elimination of Jews from all spheres of social life in Germany and from their capacity to harm Germany – that was enormously complex and  
45 difficult, and that was without precedent in modern times. It was a task that had to be carried out under a variety of constraints and concurrently with competing, if not conflicting, goals. The Nazis had assumed power under trying circumstances in the middle of a depression, beset by hostile outside powers and with a number of revolutionary goals in mind. It is unrealistic to expect any regime in this situation to have pursued the goal of eliminating Jewry from  
50 Germany, from Europe, from the world, without making compromises and adjustments, or without deferring long-term goals in favour of short or medium term gains in other areas.

4. 'Hitler was a weak dictator'. How far do you agree with this opinion?

**SOURCE 2**

*(From Richard Overy, Goering: The Iron Man, published in 1984)*

Goering's political role in the two years between the Röhm purge and his assumption of control in October 1936 over the Second Four Year Plan, depended less on formal ministerial power than on the special relationship that he enjoyed with Hitler. It was this informal relationship that provided Goering with political nourishment and indeed led contemporaries to regard him as Hitler's second in command. Goering's appeal for Hitler lay partly in the fact that he was a large political personality, enjoying a large degree of popular support and prestige. He was fanatically loyal, and sufficiently ruthless to ensure that others less loyal would be unable to undermine Hitler's power. Hitler came to regard Goering as a special deputy, not detailed to one particular aspect of policy, but available for discussion on a wide range of affairs and for activities which suited Goering's political style.

**SOURCE 5**

*(From Tim Mason, Nazism, Fascism and the Working Class, published in 1995)*

Personally, Hitler had a preference for creating new organs of state to carry out specific projects. He had a preference, too, for choosing 'the right man for the job' and giving him the powers to carry it out, regardless; and there is no doubt that he carefully sought out men who were loyal to, and dependent upon, him for all top positions in the regime. More importantly, his personal popularity was a source of power. However, while this shielded Hitler against ultimate contradictions by ministers and generals, it was not much help in the practical business of selecting goals, reaching decisions and making policy. Hitler's sense of dependence upon his own popularity was so great that the cult of the Führer may well have contributed to government inaction in domestic affairs. Hitler was certainly careful not to associate himself with any measure that he thought might be unpopular. In this sense Hitler can be said to have been a 'weak dictator'.

**Source E**

In the twelve years of his rule in Germany Hitler produced the biggest confusion in government that has ever existed in a civilised state. During his period of government, he removed from the organisation of the state all clarity of leadership and produced a completely opaque network of competencies. It was not laziness or an excessive degree of tolerance which led the otherwise so energetic and forceful Hitler to tolerate this witch's cauldron of struggles for position and conflicts. It was intentional. With this technique he systematically disorganised the upper echelons of the Reich leadership in order to develop and further his own will until it became a despotic tyranny.

From Otto Dietrich, *Hitler*, published in 1955

5. 'In the years 1933-1939 Hitler's rule became a despotic tyranny'. How far do you agree with this opinion?

**SOURCE 4**

Line (From Alan Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives*, published 1992.)

30 Hitler withdrew from the day-to-day business of government after he succeeded von Hindenburg. This was coupled with his resistance to comprehensive reforms that were designed to clear up the confusion and contradictions in administration. This left the more powerful of the Nazi leaders free, not only to build up rival empires, but to feud with each other and with the established ministries in a continuing fight to take over parts of each other's territory. This state of affairs extended to the policy-making and legislative functions of government as well as the administration. Decrees and laws alike were issued on the authority of the Chancellor. 35 Göring, Goebbels and Himmler had direct access to the Führer and could secure his agreement to decrees without consultation or co-ordination with other ministers.

**SOURCE 5**

(From Ian Kershaw, *Hitler 1936-45: Nemesis*, published 2000.)

40 To most observers, both internal and external, after four years in power the Hitler regime looked stable, strong and successful. Hitler's own position was untouchable. The image of the great statesman and national leader of genius, manufactured by propaganda, matched the sentiment and expectations of most of the population. The internal re-building of the country and the national triumphs in foreign policy, all attributed to his genius, had made him the most popular leader of any nation in Europe. Most ordinary Germans looked forward to peace and prosperity. Hitler appeared to have established the basis of these. He had restored authority to government. Law and order had been re-established. There was work again. The economy was booming. 45

**SOURCE 6**

(From Otto Dietrich, *Twelve Years with Hitler*, published 1955. Here he is remembering his time as Hitler's press chief.)

50 In the twelve years of his rule in Germany, Hitler produced the biggest confusion in government that had ever existed. During his period of government, he removed from the organisation of the state all clarity of leadership and produced a confused network of responsibilities. It was not all laziness or an excessive degree of tolerance which led the otherwise so energetic and forceful Hitler to tolerate this real witch's cauldron of struggles for position and conflicts. It was intentional. With this technique he systematically disorganised the upper levels of Reich leadership in order to develop and further the authority of his own will until it became a despotic tyranny.

6. 'The power of the Fuhrer was comprehensive and total'. How far do you agree with this opinion?

**SOURCE 3**

(From Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power*, published 2005.)

The Nazis, far from concealing the existence of repressive institutions and practices, regularly announced executions, prison sentences, court verdicts against dissent, 'malicious gossip' and so on in the newspapers and other propaganda organs of the regime. Therefore, some argue, the vast majority of ordinary people who read the newspapers had no objection to these practices. But a major function of advertising the terror imposed by the regime on deviants and dissenters was to deter millions of ordinary Germans from going down the same road. The truth is that, far from Nazi terror being levelled exclusively against small and despised minorities, the threat of arrest, prosecution and imprisonment in increasingly brutal and violent conditions loomed over everyone in the Third Reich.

**SOURCE 4**

(From Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship*, published 1993.)

The Nazi state saw the dissolution of the government into a multiplicity of competing and non-coordinated ministries, party offices, and hybrid agencies all claiming to interpret the Führer's will. Hand in hand with this development went the growing autonomy of the Führer's authority itself, detaching itself and isolating itself from any framework of corporate government and correspondingly subject to increasing delusions of grandeur and a diminishing sense of reality. The overall structure of government was reduced to a shambles of constantly shifting power bases or warring factions.

**SOURCE 5**

(From Geoff Stewart, *Hitler and the Nazi State*, published 2002.)

Albert Speer admitted to being baffled by the way Hitler chose to squander his working time. He got up late, often not until lunchtime, went for walks and in the evening watched innumerable films. It was not the lifestyle of a hands-on dictator. Once he became Führer, the number of cabinet meetings declined steadily from 72 in 1933, to 12 in 1935 and seven in 1937, and finally the last one was held on 5 February 1938. It must be remembered that he was an outsider with limited knowledge of Germany's political system. He had no training or experience to fit him for the job of governing the most powerful nation in Europe.

7. 'Hitler was a weak dictator'. How far do you agree with this opinion?

**SOURCE 3**

(From Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality*, published 1994)

The adoration of Hitler by millions of German people meant that the person of the Führer became the focal point of the Nazi system of rule. With Hitler's massive personal popularity, the regime could repeatedly call upon plebiscites for support. This legitimised its actions at home and abroad, defused opposition and boosted the independence of the Nazi leadership from the traditional conservative élites, who had imagined they could keep Hitler in check. Hitler's popularity sustained the increasingly dangerous momentum of Nazi rule. Most important of all, Hitler's huge platform of popularity made his own power position even more unassailable. It made possible the process by which his personal ideological obsessions became translated into attainable reality.

**SOURCE 5**

(From Tim Mason, *Nazism, Fascism and the Working Class*, published 1995)

Hitler had a preference for creating new organs of state to carry out specific projects. He had a preference for choosing 'the right man for the job' and giving him the powers to carry it out, regardless; there is no doubt that he carefully sought out men who were loyal to, and dependent upon, him for all top positions in the regime. More importantly, his personal popularity was a source of power. However, while this shielded Hitler against ultimate contradictions by ministers and generals, it was not much help in the practical business of selecting goals, reaching decisions and making policy. Hitler's sense of dependence upon his own popularity was so great that the cult of the Führer may well have contributed to government inaction in domestic affairs. Hitler was certainly careful not to associate himself with any measure that he thought might be unpopular. In this sense Hitler can be said to have been a 'weak dictator'.

**SOURCE 6**

(From Edgar Feuchtwanger, *Hitler's Germany*, published 2000)

Hitler often refused to take decisions, especially when a decision might damage his popularity, and left his subordinates to thrash these out. He gave those men who were close to him conflicting responsibilities, which often resulted in a state of near anarchy. Some have argued that Hitler was a weak dictator, but this really does not stand up. He could take any decision he wanted to, and took some of his major decisions without much consultation. The very fact that he had removed himself from day-to-day decisions of government made him the central figure of the Third Reich. It meant that he could take key decisions without having to go through a time consuming and confusing process of bureaucratic consultation.

**Unit 6:**

1. 'The main opposition during WWII came from the youth'. How far do you agree with this judgement?
2. 'The war economy lacked the efficiency to meet the demands of total war'. How far do you agree with this judgement?
3. 'Systematic extermination emerged as the Final Solution to the Jewish Question as a result of the chaotic nature of the Nazi state'. How far do you agree with this judgement?
4. 'WWII highlighted the inherent weaknesses of the Nazi regime'. How far do you agree with this judgement?

## How your exam essays will be marked:

### Question A

<b>Level 1</b>	1-6 Grade: U	Simple statements Supported by factual material with some relevance but not directed at the focus of the question
<b>Level 2</b>	7-12 Grade: U-E	Developed statements Some analysis Largely implicit focus on the question
<b>Level 3</b>	13-18 Grade: E-C	Analytical for the most part with some understanding of the focus of the question Some material only implicitly relevant to the focus of the question Some degree of direction Some convincing argument
<b>Level 4</b>	19-24 Grade: C-A	An analytical response which is well related to the focus of the question Some understanding of key issues raised Some evaluation of argument Supporting evidence will be accurate and mostly relevant Logical development of argument A convincing argument for the most part
<b>Level 5</b>	25-30 Grade: A-A*	A sustained analysis which directly focuses on the question Explicit understanding of all key issues raised Evaluation of argument Supporting evidence will be accurate and well selected The answer will be convincing and clearly expressed Logical development of argument

### Question B – AO1

<b>Level 1</b>	1-3  Grade: U	Series of statements supported with some relevant material  Material not directed at the focus of the question  Implicit links between sources and own knowledge
<b>Level 2</b>	4-6  Grade: U- E	Statements from own knowledge  An attempt to link own knowledge with source material  Some accurate and relevant knowledge  Some analysis but focus will be largely implicit  Elements of direction
<b>Level 3</b>	7-10  Grade: E- C	An analytical response for the most part using own knowledge; which offers some support of the sources  Accurate and relevant knowledge  Some understanding of the focus of the question; some material only implicitly relevant  Some degree of direction
<b>Level 4</b>	11-13  Grade: C- A	An analytical response from own knowledge which supports an analysis of the source material. There is some integration between these  Knowledge will be well selected  The selected material directly focuses on the question  Some understanding of the key issues contained in the question  Some evaluation of interpretations  Logical argument with direction
<b>Level 5</b>	14-16  Grade: A- A*	Sustained analysis from own knowledge which supports and is integrated with an analysis of the source material  Knowledge will be well selected  The selected material directly focuses on the question  Explicit understanding of the key issues raised by the question  Evaluation of the interpretations  Convincing and logical argument

### Question B – AO2

<b>Level 1</b>	1-4  Grade: U	Has a basic understanding of the sources  Uses the sources to identify points which both support and differ from the view in the question  No integration between knowledge and the sources
<b>Level 2</b>	5-9  Grade: U	Understands the sources  Notes points of challenge and support from the sources  Combines the information from the sources  Judgements will be made by linking own knowledge to source material  Reaches a decision with limited support
<b>Level 3</b>	10-14  Grade: E-D	A full interpretation of the sources  Some understanding of the arguments offered  Develops points of challenge and support for the view in the question using the source material which is linked to own knowledge  An understanding that the issue is one of interpretation  A direct focus on the question  Reaches a judgement supported by the sources and own knowledge
<b>Level 4</b>	15-19  Grade: C-B	A full interpretation of the sources  An understanding of the arguments offered which are related to own knowledge  A discussion of the claim in the question by exploring the issues raised from an analysis of the sources and an extension of these issues from own knowledge  Presents a debate of all this evidence and creates judgements. Some issues will not be fully developed  Reaches a conclusion based on the discriminating use of the evidence
<b>Level 5</b>	20-24  Grade: A- A*	A full interpretation of the sources with discrimination  A full understanding of the authors arguments which are assessed in light of own knowledge  All parts of the question have been addressed  A sustained evaluative argument  Fully supported conclusions which show an understanding of historical debate

## Exemplar Essays

### Section A

#### 'A strong sense of patriotism and nationalism firmly kept power in the hands of the Kaiser during the period 1900-1914'

##### How far do you agree with this judgement?

During the years 1900-1914 the Kaiser faced many potential threats to the extent of his power. These ranged from demands for social reform, from the SPD, to the demands for constitutional change, from the liberals, to demands for more power, from the Centre Party and finally to demands for a more aggressive foreign policy. Despite these threats ultimate power remained in the hands of the Kaiser in 1914. This retention of power was primarily due to the sense of patriotism and nationalism that existed in Germany and can most clearly be seen in the support that was apparent for nationalist foreign policies. The exact workings of the political structure of Germany also allowed the Kaiser to retain control but this structure could only remain because of the patriotism and nationalism that the Kaiser both exploited and enjoyed. It cannot be denied that a small amount of moderate reform also played a small role but its limited scope together with the failure to introduce some of the intended reform show once again that it was really the sense of nationalism and patriotism that kept the power where it was. It cannot be denied, however, that the lack of unity of the political parties meant that a real threat to power was never even attempted. In this sense the Kaiser was fortunate but because the threat did not materialise it was primarily the sense of nationalism and patriotism that allowed him to maintain his power.

The support for nationalist foreign policies followed throughout this period highlight the strong sense of nationalism and patriotism that existed and ultimately explain the most important reason why power remained in the hands of the Kaiser. The policy of *Sammlungspolitik* under the chancellorship of Bulow clearly shows this in action. This policy aimed to ally the Conservatives, Liberals, Junkers and Industrialists against socialism and towards the current political system, with the Kaiser at the helm. Both protectionism and a strong colonial policy, called *Weltpolitik*, were used to enforce support for the political system and show the strength that an appeal to nationalism could have. The attempt that was made to further the size of the navy, via a second navy law which would build 38 battleships in twenty years, further proves this and shows how nationalism and patriotism were used to soak up any tensions that existed. The Herero uprising can be seen as evidence to contradict the power that nationalism had. This is because the use of the policy of genocide, which was used as revenge against an uprising of the people against their colonial oppressor, tore apart the coalition as the Centre party were horrified by events and demanded more parliamentary control over the financing of all current affairs. However what this evidence actually shows is that ultimate power actually always remained in the hands of the Kaiser as not only were these demands ignored but the Reichstag was dissolved after the parties with the balance of power voted against the building of a new railway in the region. The use of patriotism and nationalism to keep power in the hands of the Kaiser was then ultimately shown by Bulow managing to gain a victory for his 'Bulow-Bloc' in the next election by portraying the socialists and Catholics as unpatriotic. Even the SPD voted for an army bill in 1913 because they did not want to be seen as

unpatriotic. In short nationalism and patriotism were inherent throughout Germany and their existence is clearly shown in the support for the foreign policy. They proved to be a very useful tool to keeping power in the hands of the Kaiser

A study of the political structure of the federal state during the second Reich both provides us with another important reason why power remained in the hands of the Kaiser but also once again emphasise the important role that patriotism and nationalism had in achieving this. The political system was such that the chancellor, who had control of the Bundesrat, was chosen and responsible to the Kaiser. Furthermore the ministers for this Bundesrat were voted in using a three tier voting system that favoured the Conservatives and the Prussians, who were the Kaiser's allies. Finally the Kaiser could, and did, dissolve the Reichstag, if it threatened the status quo. In short power rested with the Kaiser. In such a system it would be easy to explain the existence of opposition. However the reason that this opposition did not grow into a real threat to the Kaiser's power is because the Kaiser was seen as a pillar of strength and the figurehead in the midst of squabbling and failed coalitions between political parties. The importance of nationalism and patriotism cannot be overemphasised here as they provided the Kaiser with a respectability that was crucial in allowing him to keep his power. It must be remembered of course that the exact technicalities of the structure of the system provide another smaller reason why the Kaiser maintained power. For example the political structure meant that the Kaiser was able to remove Bulow after the Daily Telegraph affair when he was blamed for failing to censor the interview between the Kaiser and the British. Also the Kaiser forbid the chancellor from informing the Reichstag that he sent a military officer to investigate the Zabern affair and ignored the Reichstag when they passed a vote of no confidence against Hollweg for his actions. This evidence clearly show that the political structure aided the Kaiser in keeping his power but it must be remembered that the reason he was able to maintain this political structure in the first place was because of the patriotism and nationalism that he both exploited and enjoyed.

Moderate reform played a small part in keeping power in the hands of the Kaiser but its limited scope together with the lack of any real success show once again that it was patriotism and nationalism that played a more pivotal role. This is clearly shown in the lack of substance inherent in Bulow's and Hollweg's reforms to placate the socialists together with the failure of Hollweg's reforms to reform the constitution. On the surface it seems that Bulow's reforms to solve the socialist threat show that it was actually reform that maintained power in the hands of the Kaiser, these include the laws to extend accident insurance, to give longer and more generous hours to workers in poor health and those to reduce the amount of factory work. However the introduction of a tariff law in 1902, which put higher duties on imported grain and thus raised food prices, turned worker support away from the Kaiser's system and to the SPD and thus proves that moderate reform was never intended to be the mechanism to keep power in the hands of the old elites. This is clearly shown once again in the chancellorship of Hollweg when his attempts to reform the Prussian voting system were defeated by the Conservatives and thus the proposals had to be dropped. It cannot have been reform that maintained the Kaiser's power as the lack of reform to a clearly biased and unpopular voting system was not carried out but yet the Kaiser's power was maintained. The small reforms of Hollweg, including the Imperial insurance code, are not significant enough to counter this evidence. Thus the lack of any real depth to any reform together with the lack of success in some of

its implementation clearly show that moderate reform only played a small role and one that is not as significant as the sense of patriotism and nationalism.

The strong sense of nationalism and patriotism were largely important but not solely so because the disunity of the Reichstag parties also played a minor part. In short the political parties could have dented the power that the Kaiser had but their disunity prevented this from happening. The main example of this was in the 1912 election when the SPD won the most votes but an effective coalition was not formed because other parties would not work with them; their views were too different. The political parties were keener to protect their own interests than they were to work with each other and this would ultimately play into the hands of the Kaiser and allow him to keep his power. Other examples include the emergence of new middle class groups, including the Mittesland Association and Mittesland League together with the emergence of groups on the other side of the political spectrum, including the Association of Commercial Assistants. All these groups were interested in their own interests and survival and thus would not collaborate. This meant that an effective front was not provided against the Kaiser's power and it meant that the Kaiser had further opportunities to exploit the heavily nationalistic and patriotic nature of the country.

The lack of unity of the political parties in the Reichstag clearly meant that a realistic threat to the Kaiser's power never materialised. In this sense the Kaiser was fortunate, it meant that the Kaiser could enjoy and exploit the great sense of patriotism and nationalism that existed in Germany in order to maintain his power. This is clearly shown in a range of foreign policies that had nationalism as their underlying aim. Furthermore it allowed the Kaiser to be a pillar of strength and a figure head in the midst of these quarrelling parties which again shows the role of nationalism in maintaining power. It might have been the exact working and technicalities of the political system that allowed the Kaiser to dissolve the Reichstag and remove chancellors but this system only existed because of the nationalistic and patriotic support that he enjoyed. It could be argued that moderate reform played a more important role but a real examination of this evidence clearly shows that the reform was too limited and in many cases without success to be a real reason why power was maintained. The sense of nationalism and patriotism was at the heart of the Kaiser's retention of power.

## **Section B:**

### **'The power of the Fuhrer was comprehensive and total'**

How far do you agree with this opinion?

*Use the evidence of sources 1, 2 and 3 and your own knowledge of the issues relating to this controversy*

#### **Source 1:**

(From Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power*, published 2005.)

The Nazis, far from concealing the existence of repressive institutions and practices, regularly announced executions, prison sentences, court verdicts against dissent, 'malicious gossip' and so on in the newspapers and other propaganda organs of the regime. Therefore, some argue, the vast majority of ordinary people who read the newspapers had no objection to these practices. But a major function of advertising the terror imposed by the regime on deviants and dissenters was to deter millions of ordinary Germans from going down the same road. The truth is that, far from Nazi terror being levelled exclusively against small and despised minorities, the threat of arrest, prosecution and imprisonment in increasingly brutal and violent conditions loomed over everyone in the Third Reich.

#### **Source 2:**

(From Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship*, published 1993.)

The Nazi state saw the dissolution of the government into a multiplicity of competing and non-coordinated ministries, party offices, and hybrid agencies all claiming to interpret the Führer's will. Hand in hand with this development went the growing autonomy of the Führer's authority itself, detaching itself and isolating itself from any framework of corporate government and correspondingly subject to increasing delusions of grandeur and a diminishing sense of reality. The overall structure of government was reduced to a shambles of constantly shifting power bases or warring factions.

#### **Source 3:**

(From Geoff Stewart, *Hitler and the Nazi State*, published 2002.)

Albert Speer admitted to being baffled by the way Hitler chose to squander his working time. He got up late, often not until lunchtime, went for walks and in the evening watched innumerable films. It was not the lifestyle of a hands-on dictator. Once he became Führer, the number of cabinet meetings declined steadily from 72 in 1933, to 12 in 1935 and seven in 1937, and finally the last one was held on 5 February 1938. It must be remembered that he was an outsider with limited knowledge of Germany's political system. He had no training or experience to fit him for the job of governing the most powerful nation in Europe.

This question concerns the extent and strength of Hitler's power and refers to the controversy concerning the efficiency of the Nazi regime; the debate between intentionalist and structuralist viewpoints. Evans in source 1 argues that the Nazis publicised terror in order to enforce control; thus largely supporting the viewpoint that the Fuhrer's power was comprehensive. On the other hand Stewart in source 3 presents the evidence of Hitler's bohemian lifestyle which would seem to disagree with the view that the power of the Fuhrer was total. Kershaw adopts a middle way and whilst he accepts that the structure of government was a shambles with competing factions, he argues that they did so in order to interpret Hitler's world view; thus showing a different and interpretation of total and comprehensive power.

Evans clearly demonstrates the extent of the terror system and this can be used to support the opinion of the total and comprehensive power of the Fuhrer. Furthermore Evans explains how this system was greatly publicised as a method of control so that everyone became fearful of 'arrest, prosecution and imprisonment in increasingly brutal and violent conditions'. Indeed the terror system was efficiently run by Himmler and from his desk Himmler did control a whole network of spies, torturers, policeman and informers which spread into every town, factory, school and house. This was a result of his overall control of the SS and police. Further evidence to support this view of the totality of Hitler's power were the key decisions he made, most notably Operation Hummingbird, and his foreign policy decisions, most notable to reoccupy the Rhineland, to form an Anschluss with Austria and to seize Czechoslovakia. To an extent Kershaw agrees with the totality of Hitler's power, and thus with Evans, as he argues that the autonomy of the Fuhrer grew over time and that it 'detached and isolated itself from any corporate government'; thus showing that Hitler had such power that he need not concern himself with the mundane government business. This is supported by Stewart who demonstrates this isolated, but yet total, power by referring to the declining number of cabinet meetings. Kershaw may go on to mention the 'competing and non-coordinated agencies' but intentionalists would explain this as Hitler's policy of divide and rule; a key component that was intended to maintain total power. This can clearly be seen in the sphere of the economy when Goring was allowed to undermine Schacht when he took control of the Four Year Plan; leaving Schacht with no choice to resign. Thus there is no denying the strength of Hitler's power but Evans is mistaken in his explanation of its nature. The terror system did not enforce this total power as it was actually directed at certain sections of society, most notable political opponents such as communists and socialists, and furthermore the terror did not 'loom over people' but was actually popular amongst them; many, for example, were appreciative of the removal of the communist threat. Furthermore even the SS warred amongst themselves. Thus the power of the Fuhrer was comprehensive but not in the way that Evans' evidence seems to suggest; instead it was a mystical and isolated power and this cult of the Fuhrer was enforced by the Goebbels' propaganda machine.

Stewart's evidence presents the opposite viewpoint as his evidence would seem to present the case that the Fuhrer's power was limited; the very opposite of comprehensive and total. Stewart refers to Hitler's bohemian lifestyle which was not the lifestyle of a 'hands-on dictator'. Furthermore Stewart mentions that Hitler had 'limited knowledge of the political system' and that he did not have any 'training or experience to fit him for the job of governing'. Thus Stewart is in direct contrast to Evans. To further these opinions structuralist historians would refer to Hitler's reliance on the power of the Gauleiter, as shown when he could not support Frick in trying to subordinate them, the setting up of

rival agencies to that of the traditional state which created political chaos and the use of Fuhrer orders which were often contradictory. The latter was notably the case when in 1935 both Hess and an official from the Ministry of the Interior were given contradictory orders with regards to whether it would be best for the Jews to be allowed to stay in Germany. To an extent Kershaw agrees with this structuralist view as he refers to the reducing of the structure of government to a 'shambles of constantly shifting power bases' and 'warring factions'. To accept the evidence of Stewart in supporting the viewpoint of a lack of power would be to show a misunderstanding of Hitler's role and significance. His absorption of the powers of Chancellor and President combined with the army's oath, both in 1934, gave unassailable power. This then allowed Hitler to be presented as a demigod who was worshipped by the German people, most notably in the Triumph of the Will which portrayed the Nuremburg Rally. In short Hitler's dictatorship was so powerful that he could distance himself from the detail of government and furthermore this helped maintain power as blame for any unpopular measures would be directed to subordinates and not as an attack against the Fuhrer himself. Thus the bohemian lifestyle and competing agencies that were left behind do not show weakness in power but completely the opposite.

It has been shown that the Fuhrer's power was total but in a mystical and isolated sense and that the competing ministries and agencies left behind did not impact upon this. It is this context that Kershaw provides the most acceptable account of the Fuhrer's total and comprehensive power. Kershaw accepts that the vacuum left by Hitler's distancing created a 'dissolution of the government into a multiplicity of competing and non-coordinated ministries'. However this chaos does not show a lack of comprehensive power as within this vacuum the agencies were competing to 'interpret the Fuhrer's will'. In fact a situation where all were trying to find the right method to achieve an element of the world view at the right time shows a much higher level of power. This competition to deduce the most appropriate method was constantly motivated by the reward of influence in being allowed to make the proposal a reality. This viewpoint can clearly be supported by analysing how the policy towards the Jews was formulated. Frick's 'Aryan Clause', Wagner's speech leading to the Nuremburg laws, the street violence following Anschluss, the 1938 legislation to isolate the Jews and Goebbels' green light for Kristallnacht were all methods and legislation formed by those 'working towards the Fuhrer'; trying to come up with the right method at the right time. Kershaw would further support this by disagreeing with Evans by saying that in 1933 even the SS, a fundamental part of the terror system that Evans' mentioned, even had to work towards the Fuhrer and their success was shown by the ensuing Night of the Long Knives. This theory on the totality of the Fuhrer's power explains the strength of the dictatorship mentioned by Evans and the apparent lack of leadership mentioned by Stewart.

The power of the Fuhrer was comprehensive and total. Evans is right in implying this but incorrect in saying it was a result of terror mechanisms that were put in place. Stewart is right in presenting Hitler's bohemian lifestyle but it would be wrong to use this evidence to argue a lack of power. Instead it was Hitler's hand off approach that allowed a much higher level of power to develop. By distancing himself from government Hitler left a vacuum that was filled by competing agencies and ministries all trying to form a method that fully interpreted his world view. Kershaw is correct to adopt this viewpoint as this style of government did create chaos but it was this competing chaos to please and gain influence from Hitler, supported by the representation of Hitler as a mystical religion in propaganda, that show the true totality and comprehensiveness of the Fuhrer's power.

# **Unit 1: Society and Government in the Second Reich (1900-1919)**

## **Who had the power in the Second Reich from 1900-1914?**

### **Traditional Elites**

*The Bundesrat was the government. 58 members were nominated by state assemblies, was part of the law making process. It was created as a barrier to radical legislation and could veto Reichstag legislation if 14 members voted against a bill. Prussia had 17 of the 58 seats in the Bundesrat ensuring Prussian dominance in the passing of legislation. The Prussian Chamber of Deputies had to agree to all legislation. The electorate for the Prussian Chamber of deputies was divided by a 'three class franchise'. The votes of those who paid more tax counted for more than the votes of those who paid less tax. The lowest tax payers made up 92% of the electorate. This meant it was always dominated by Conservatives. 418,000 votes translated into 212 Conservative seats while 6000,000 votes translated into 6 SPD seats.*

Bulow devised strategies to protect interests of ruling classes against to counter the demand for constitutional reform. The policy of 'Sammlungspolitik' was the policy of building an alliance of conservative interests in the Reich which would present a broad front against the threat of socialism. This would be achieved through a policy of protectionism and through the rallying of Germans through the following of a nationalist foreign policy (Weltpolitik). Central to this was the building of Germany's armed forces, especially a navy to rival Britain. Thus a second navy Law sailed through the Reichstag in 1900 which proposed to build 38 battleships over the next 20 years. In 1906 a third Navy Law added six cruiser style ships to the programme

The Reichstag was elected on a one person one vote system whereas in Prussia the lower house of Parliament was elected on a three-class system. This meant that the votes of the middle and lower classes were worth less than those of the upper class. The result was conservative control of The Prussian parliament. To reduce socialist agitation Hollweg introduced reform to the Prussian electoral system. These plans were dropped as they received such hostility from the conservatives.

The 'Zabern Affair' highlighted the influence of conservative groups and underlined the weakness of the Reichstag. In 1913 a lieutenant of the German army made damning remarks about the quality of young Alsatian recruits. Demonstrations followed and the army cleared the streets. The Reichstag was frustrated with the actions of the army and the fact that Hollweg would not side with the politicians against the army. The Reichstag passed a vote of no confidence against him but Hollweg survived because the constitution showed that he was responsible to the Kaiser and not the Reichstag.

### **Kaiser (Emperor)**

*This was always to be the Prussian king. Control over foreign policy. Commander in Chief of the army of all states. Appointed and dismissed the chancellor and could dissolve the Reichstag. Introduced federal law which was made by the central parliament. Wilhelm II took over as Kaiser in 1888. Believed it was his responsibility to rule rather than share power with the Reichstag. The Chancellor was directly responsible to the Kaiser. Appointed and dismissed state secretaries who oversaw the*

*running of government ministries. Could ignore the resolutions of the Reichstag. Did have powers to manipulate the Kaiser and Reichstag but did depend on his political ability, he needed to be able to negotiate legislation through the Reichstag.*

The appointment of Hollweg (as chancellor) exemplified the authority of the Kaiser. Hollweg's strengths were not foreign policy and this left the Kaiser to take the initiative.

Political parties would not challenge the power of the Kaiser for fear of being labelled unpatriotic. Even many socialists felt very loyal towards him. This can be demonstrated when the socialists and Catholics opposed the Colonial policy (under Bulow). Thus in the 1907 election Bulow presented them as unpatriotic. Thus he enticed the Progressives to join a new coalition based on support for Weltpolitik. Thus the Bulow Bloc won a crushing electoral victory with 216 seats as opposed to 105 seats of the Centre Party. The SPD was squeezed out as it lost 36 seats. In the 1912 election the SPD gained 4,250,000 votes as a result of an alliance with the progressive liberals. In 1913 they voted for an army bill, which would increase the size of the army by 136,000 soldiers, at a cost of a billion marks. They were prepared to do this because they did not want to be seen as unpatriotic and because the money came from a direct property tax.

### **Mass Political Movements**

There was growing support for the socialists but their party was split. The revisionists believed that parliamentary democracy was the means to achieve social change. Advancement could be made within the political system. Vollmar believed that change could be made through parliamentary means and through an alliance with the middle class. Others wanted to use revolution in order to achieve social change. Karl Kautsky, who drew up the Erfurt programme, believed that the collapse of the capitalist system was inevitable. Overall the socialist movement was gradually moving towards a reformist approach but German rulers still saw the SPD as a threat to the German political system.

The power of the trade union movement was also considerable. The General Commission of Trade Unions rejected the revolutionary stance of the SPD and argued in favour of political representation as a means by which workers could improve their standard of living

The chancellors Bulow and Hollweg introduced reforms to placate the socialists:

1899 - Increase in old age pensions

1900 – Accident insurance was extended

1902 – Tariff Law restored a higher duty on imported agricultural goods which resulted in higher food prices.

1903 – Sickness Insurance Law was amended to give longer and more generous help to workers in poor health

1908 – Law to reduce the amount of factory work

1911 Hollweg tried to please the workers. He introduced the Imperial Insurance code which consolidated all previous workers insurance laws and amended and extended their provisions. Certain groups were insured against sickness, old age and death

The fragmentation and radicalisation of right wing politics occurred because of the economic changes taking place and the fact that different groups wanted to protect their own interests. There were new Middle Class groups. The Mittesland Association (1904) and the Mittesland League (1911) represented farmers and small shopkeepers. The lower middle class was organised into a range of groups from the socialist Association of Commercial Assistants (LEFT) to the right wing German-national Commercial Assistants' Association.

### **Reichstag**

*Joint law making power with the Bundesrat. Particular control over the defence budget but could only vote on it once every five years. They passed an annual budget (limited by protectionism). Could be dissolved by the Kaiser but had the right to hold elections soon after. Elected by universal male suffrage – over 25. Limited powers to initiate its own legislation – had to debate that proposed by the Bundesrat. The Chancellor was not accountable to the Reichstag. Members were not paid – so only high class people.*

The constituency boundaries did not change despite urbanisation. Therefore the Centre Party and SPD received the most votes in the 1907 elections but faced a comprehensive defeat in the number of seats gained.

Despite the methods used to counter the demand for constitutional reform, the Reichstag still demonstrated considerable power. This can be clearly demonstrated when in 1908 the Kaiser gave an interview to a British newspaper in which he gave the impression that he wanted a close alliance with Britain. The Reichstag objected to the fact that the Kaiser made foreign policy without consulting the Reichstag. The Kaiser blamed Bulow for failing to censor the interview and gave a guarantee that he would not repeat the same mistakes in the future. Bulow chancellorship came to an end in 1909 when his budget was formerly defeated; however the real reason was because he no longer had the confidence of the Kaiser. This event shows that the Reichstag had some power as the Kaiser could not displease them.

In 1910 many different radical groups came together to form the Fortschrittliche Vereinigung. They supported the SPD in this election where the socialists campaigned against Protectionism. The Socialists won 67 new seats and made them the largest party in the Reichstag. Their victory did not bring them any closer to power and this shows the limitations of Reichstag power. Coalitions between them and the Middle class would not be formed due to differing interests.

Parties only acted as interest groups. They only looked after the interests of those who voted for them, this made collaboration between parties difficult. The parties did not really trust each other.

## Military

*The Kaiser was a poor decision maker and regularly turned to the army for advice.*

In January 1904 the Herero people (indigenous people of South West Africa) rose in revolt at their colonial repressor. They were defeated at the battle of Waterberg. They were then subjected to a policy of genocide through execution, incarceration in concentration camps and forced migration. The Centre party were scandalised by reports coming back from the Catholic missionaries in the region. This affair highlighted the lack of parliamentary accountability for the army and the greater need for financial control of colonial affairs as the rebellion suppression cost the state 465 million marks. In May 1906 the government wanted a new railway in South West Africa and compensation for settler losses. The Centre Party and SPD voted against it and thus the Reichstag was dissolved.

## What Social and Political tensions were inherent in the Second Reich?

### Demand for Social reform from the Socialists

SPD – Socialists: Growing support but party was split. Many wanted to achieve change through parliamentary democracy whilst some still wanted to use revolutionary means. The power of the trade union movement was considerable. The General Commission of Trade Unions rejected revolutionary stance of SPD and argued in favour of political representation as a means by which workers could improve their standard of living. Overall the socialist movement was gradually moving towards a reformist approach but German rulers still saw the SPD as a threat to the German political system.

Bulow introduced reforms to placate the socialists:

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In 1911 Hollweg tried to please the workers. He introduced the Imperial Insurance code which consolidated all previous workers insurance laws and amended and extended their provisions. Certain groups were insured against sickness, old age and death

### Demand for constitutional reform

Bulow devised strategies to protect interests of ruling classes. Sammlungspolitik: Build an alliance of conservative interests in the Reich which would present a broad front against the threat of socialism. This would be achieved through a policy of protectionism and through the rallying of Germans

through the following of a nationalist foreign policy (Weltpolitik). Central to this was the building of Germany's armed forces, especially a navy to rival Britain. Thus a second navy Law sailed through the Reichstag in 1900 which proposed to build 38 battleships over the next 20 years. In 1906 a third Navy Law added six cruiser style ships to the programme

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The appointment of Hollweg (as chancellor) exemplified the authority of the Kaiser. Hollweg's strengths were not foreign policy and this left the Kaiser to take the initiative.

The Reichstag was elected on a one person one vote system whereas in Prussia the lower house of Parliament was elected on a three-class system. This meant that the votes of the middle and lower classes were worth less than those of the upper class. The result was conservative control of The Prussian parliament. To reduce socialist agitation Hollweg introduced reform to the Prussian electoral system. These plans were dropped as they received such hostility from the conservatives.

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No great move to parliamentary democracy. The chancellor still operated independently of party politics. This was because:

- a. The constituency boundaries did not change despite urbanisation. Therefore the Centre Party and SPD received the most votes in the 1907 elections but faced a comprehensive defeat in the number of seats gained.
- b. No political party would challenge the power of the Kaiser for fear of being labelled unpatriotic. Even many socialists felt very loyal towards him

- c. Parties only acted as interest groups. They only looked after the interests of those who voted for them, this made collaboration between parties difficult. The parties did not really trust each other.

### **Tensions caused by demands for a more aggressive foreign policy**

Under Bulow few opportunities were presented for global expansion because most territory had been seized by other European powers. Thus there was a tension between the pressure for expansion and the lack of opportunity to do so. The SPD hated imperialist adventure when so much social reform was required at home

In January 1904 the Herero people (indigenous people of South West Africa) rose in revolt at their colonial repressor. They were defeated at the battle of Waterberg. They were then subjected to a policy of genocide through execution, incarceration in concentration camps and forced migration. The Centre party were scandalised by reports coming back from the Catholic missionaries in the region. This affair highlighted the lack of parliamentary accountability for the army and the greater need for financial control of colonial affairs as the rebellion suppression cost the state 465 million marks. In May 1906 the government wanted a new railway in South West Africa and compensation for settler losses. The Centre Party and SPD voted against it and thus the Reichstag was dissolved.

The socialists and Catholics opposed the Colonial policy (under Bulow). Thus in the 1907 election Bulow presented them as unpatriotic. Thus he enticed the Progressives to join a new coalition based on support for Weltpolitik. Thus the Bulow Bloc won a crushing electoral victory with 216 seats as opposed to 105 seats of the Centre Party. The SPD was squeezed out as it lost 36 seats.

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### **Demand for more power by the Centre Party**

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The Centre Party deeply resented their treatment and became to oppose Bulow at every stage. A problem was caused by the fact that in 1908 the army and navy cost 1200 Reich marks per year and the Conservatives and Agrarian league opposed an increase in taxation. The Progressives wanted to increase property taxation and to cause disharmony the Centre party supported the Conservatives.

### **Fragmentation and radicalisation of right wing politics**

The fragmentation and radicalisation of right wing politics occurred because of the economic changes taking place and the fact that different groups wanted to protect their own interests.

1. The Agrarian League became politically more important

2. There were new Middle Class groups. The Mittesland Association (1904) and the Mittesland League (1911) represented farmers and small shopkeepers. The lower middle class was organised into a range of groups from the socialist Association of Commercial Assistants (LEFT) to the right wing German-national Commercial Assistants' Association.
3. Nationalist groups were formed with the intention of lobbying in favour of national priorities. They campaigned from an anti-socialist viewpoint. They helped radicalise German politics.
4. The violent anti-Semitic views held by Wilhelm II were also held by many of his subjects. In 1892 the Conservative party adopted anti-Semitism as part of its political manifesto. They wanted the removal of Jews from important posts in the army and from the civil service.

### Why did power remain in the hands of the Kaiser/Old Elites?

#### Moderate Reforms

Socialist (SPD). They demanded social reform. They were a growing party. In 1890 the Kaiser had dropped the legislation which banned the SPD and by 1900 they were perceived as a big threat. But they were not actually as much of a threat as the political establishment made them out to be.

The Liberals (in particular the progressives). They wished for constitutional reform within the Reichstag and more parliamentary style of government. Previous to 1900 Bismarck had dealt with this tension by using a tactic of divide and rule by using foreign policy to split the Liberals. He had brought in tariffs in agriculture in 1879 which had pleased National Liberals but not the Progressives. Therefore if the Liberals could be kept divided then demands for constitutional reform could be kept to a minimum.

Centre Party wanted more power – they were resentful of the Kulturkampf policy that Bismarck had conducted and they could certainly prove to be quite a threat if they managed to get significant votes with which to hold the balance of power in the Reichstag

Von Bulow (1900-09): His strengths lay in Foreign policy although he did initiate some reforms helped by his Interior Minister. These reforms were intended to placate the Liberals and Socialists:

1899 - Increase in old age pensions

1900 – Accident insurance was extended

1902 – Tariff Law restored a higher duty on imported agricultural goods which resulted in higher food prices. This meant that in the 1903 election more votes went to the SPD and now the centre party had the balance of power.

1903 – Sickness Insurance Law was amended to give longer and more generous help to workers in poor health

1908 – Law to reduce the amount of factory work

Hollweg: He was rather unremarkable in domestic policy

1911 tried to please the workers. He introduced the Imperial Insurance code which consolidated all previous workers insurance laws and amended and extended their provisions. Certain groups were insured against sickness, old age and death

He also tried to reform the Prussian Voting System to make it fairer in 1910 but was defeated by Conservatives and had to drop his proposals.

He introduced a commission for Alsace Lorraine in 1911 to try to integrate the province with the rest of Germany.

1913: The SPD vote for an Army Bill to increase size of Army because money as to be raised directly from taxes on property (although you could argue they were more under pressure to not be labelled as unpatriotic?)

### Nationalistic foreign policies

**The policy of Sammlungspolitik under Von Bulow:** He aimed to build up an alliance of Conservatives, Liberals, Junkers and Industrialists which would present a broad front against Socialism and provide support for the political status quo. This would be done by following a policy of **Protectionism and a strong foreign and colonial policy (Weltpolitik)**. **Flottenpolitik** was an integral part of this in that it aimed to create a navy to rival that of Britain. A second navy Law sailed through the Reichstag in 1900 which proposed to build 38 battleships over the next 20 years. In 1906 a third Navy Law added six cruiser style ships to the programme.

The success of Flottenpolitik as part of Sammsungpolitik at this point was seen to have managed to soak up some of the tensions and provide a synthesis of popular pressure and got policy. Nationalism and patriotism had helped to soak up tensions.

But opportunities for colonial expansion under Bulow were actually very limited. Most territory had been seized by other European powers. Approval for German-Built Constantinople-to-Konia railways through to Baghdad kept imperialist dreams alive to an extent.

**Herero Uprising:** This demonstrated how Weltpolitik was actually also a force for political crisis not political unity. SPD were against spending money on imperialist adventures when they viewed social reform at home as more important. Prior to Herero uprising the Blue-Black Bloc (conservative and Centre) had been stable but it was torn apart by events.

Catholic Centre Party were horrified at events in Herero.

It highlighted lack of parliamentary power over colonial policy or the army – thus this increased opposition from the Centre Party and the SPD.

It increased demands for more parliamentary control over the financing of colonial affairs. (At the same time maybe the Herero uprising highlighted ultimate power of Kaiser?!....)

### **Hottenhot Election and Bulow Block:**

- Election called due to crisis because of Centre Party and SPD voting down plans for more investment in South West Africa.
- Bulow managed to gain a convincing majority by creating the famous 'Bulow Bloc' - he warned Nationalist/ Conservative and Liberal Groups (Conservatives, Free Cons, Agrarian League, Nat Libs, Progressives and Anti-Semites) that they had to unite on the issue of Nationalism otherwise risk facing a Red-Black victory (Centre and Socialist). He succeeded in frightening German voters into supporting Bulow-Bloc (what does this tell you about how powerful Nationalism was as a force for maintaining political status quo?)
- However Bloc broke up shortly after the election when Bulow needed to raise funds for more military spending and suggested a property tax or extension of the inheritance tax. This angered the Conservative Party who then allied with the Centre in opposition to the proposals.

**The 1912 election:** Here the SPD actually gained the most votes and became largest party in Reichstag with 110 deputies due to their alliance with Liberals. But in 1913 they voted for an army bill to increase size of army because they did not want to be labelled as unpatriotic.

### **The Constitutional power and support for the power of the Kaiser**

The Kaiser's constitutional position at the top (responsible for army, Chancellor answerable to him, Wilhelm II aims to be at the centre of power) was not challenged throughout the period, thus this lack of challenge helped to maintain political status quo

The power of the idea of Nationalism and Patriotism around the Kaiser as the figurehead at the centre of it all meant many people saw him as a pillar of strength within the disunity of the political parties of the Reichstag.

He was seen as symbol of power of German Reich – making it strong on an international and domestic level.

Daily Telegraph Affair 1908 and the Zabern Affair 1913 are both examples of this

### **Disunity of parties in the Reichstag**

1912 election – SPD did actually become a real potential threat but other parties would not work with them.

Fragmentation of **Right Wing groups too:** The fragmentation and radicalisation of right wing politics occurred because of the economic changes taking place and the fact that different groups wanted to protect their own interests. The Agrarian League became politically more important. There were new Middle Class groups. The Mittesland Association (1904) and the Mittesland League (1911) represented farmers and small shopkeepers. The lower middle class was organised into a range of groups from the socialist Association of Commercial Assistants (LEFT) to the right wing German-national Commercial Assistants' Association.

Nationalist groups were formed with the intention of lobbying in favour of national priorities. They campaigned from an anti-socialist viewpoint. They helped radicalise German politics.

The violent anti-Semitic views held by Wilhelm II were also held by many of his subjects. In 1892 the Conservative party adopted anti-Semitism as part of its political manifesto. They wanted the removal of Jews from important posts in the army and from the civil service.

## How did WWI affect the tensions of the Second Reich?

### Demand for Social Reform:

The socialists supported the war following its outbreak. They voted for war credits in 1914

Opposition from the SPD was minimal in 1914, thus their isolation was ended and they were no longer mistrusted. There were some lone voices who were against the war including one SPD deputy voting against war credits at the end of 1914 (Liebknecht) and 20 at the end of 1915.

In 1915, following the German announcement of a submarine blockade of Great Britain, the British government responded by ordering the Royal navy to seize all goods that were destined for Germany. This was a problem for a country that imported 25% of what it consumed. The government's response was to assume control for the relegation and distribution of food. The Imperial Grain Corporation (January 1915) was set up to administer the distribution and rationing of grain. This was followed by the creation of 40 different Imperial Corporations who competed with the government at every level to administer the food supply. This was a bureaucratic nightmare. To try and solve it the War Food Office was set up but it did not have the power to control all the organisations. This chaos meant that decisions were made that were counter-productive. For example in early 1915 a decision was taken to kill 9 million pigs as they consumed grain. The consequences were less pork and a damaging effect on food supply

In January 1915 the government introduced rationing. This led to Germans looking for substitute goods. Examples included Ersatz coffee (tree bark) and Ersatz sausages (no meat). There was a shortage of animal fats because the government needed them in the manufacture of glycerine, essential for explosives.

In 1915 a handful of radicals (Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg) argued that the only way to achieve peace was through revolution. Their impact was limited as they spent most of the war in prison

In May and June 1916 strikers in Berlin took to the streets carrying placards demanding 'Freedom, Bread and Peace'. In 1916 Liebknecht addressed a rally and was imprisoned for criticising the war. Thousands of workers went on strike in support of him.

This Hindenburg programme marked the beginning of Total War, the mobilisation of all resources within a nation:

- A new War Minister was appointed (Stein) to assume control of economic mobilisation

- The Supreme War Office was created to oversee this process
- The Auxiliary Labour Law was set up to mobilise all male labour which made it compulsory for all those between 17 and 60 to work for the war effort. As a gesture to the trade unions collective bargaining was introduced. This was basically forced labour

The strain that the Hindenburg programme placed on the economy, the long hours and the hunger of 1917 all fuelled resentment

The desperately cold winter of 1916-1917 made the shortage of fuel and raw materials worse. Coal production decreased. The freezing of rivers and railways led to transportation problems. Shortage of animal fats led to a soap shortage. Clothing was in short supply. To save fuel local authorities dimmed street lights and cut back on trams. Shortage of labour caused a reduction in the wheat harvest. Thus they relied more heavily on potatoes but the cold winter and damp spring led to a potato blight which devastated the harvest. This led to considerable hunger and psychological damage. Germans were forced to use the Turnip as an Ersatz potato. The winter of 1916-1917 became known as the 'Turnip Winter'. Local authorities set up soup kitchens but could not prevent rising levels of malnutrition

By 1917 the peasantry became alienated by the government. They were hampered in their work by lack of labour. State prices were low and did not take into account production costs. The peasantry were jealous of the Junkers (Aristocracy with land) who maintained their tax privileges until 1916.

In 1917 the working class resented state control, the lack of food and the Polonaise (the nickname for the food queue). The working class resented the black market on which 20-35% of food was sold. They blamed the middle class and in some cases the Jews

In January 1918 huge strikes gripped Berlin. They had been inspired by the USPD but because of their size the leadership of the SPD attempted to seize the initiative. They wanted an end to the war, more food and democratic rights

Prince Max began negotiation with the allies and the US. Ludendorff resigned. The prospect of defeat and peace sparked mutiny in the navy ports, sailors refused to fight the Royal navy. Councils of workers and soldiers were set up (Soviets). In November Kurt Eisner (socialist) led a revolt to the proclamation of a democratic and socialist republic in Bavaria. The allies agreed to an armistice if the Kaiser abdicated. The socialist members of Max's government enforced this. The leading members of the SPD withdrew their support from Prince Max's government and Ebert of the SPD became chancellor of a new government consisting solely of members of the SPD and USPD

### **Demand for Constitutional Reform:**

In 1914 huge demonstrations were held across Germany following the immediate outbreak. This changed once the government presented the campaign as a defensive one against Russian aggression as there developed a general consensus on the side of national duty and what was understood to be morally right. Thus there developed images of cheering crowds and the most

famous is the photograph of the crowds in Odeonsplatz in which Hitler was caught on camera cheering the outbreak of war.

The Kaiser summarised the feeling of national unity by saying that he knows no parties anymore, only Germans. Even the socialists fell in line and voted for war credits. The political divisions of the pre-war era seemed to be over. The Reichstag passed the Enabling Act (known as Burgfrieden). This meant that the Reichstag delegated all legislative power to the Bundesrat which was to rule the Home Front by emergency legislation

In 1914 the War Ministry took over the bureaucratic (administrative) function of running the war and corporations were set up to ensure the supply of raw materials. The War Committee for German Industry advised the bureaucrats on industrial policy.

Hindenburg was appointed head of the Supreme Army Command and Ludendorff was appointed Chief of Staff. This marked the beginnings of a semi military dictatorship. Ludendorff became the most powerful man in Germany. However the Kaiser still needed to be consulted, the bureaucracy ran the war effort and the Reichstag had control of the budget. From August 1916 Hindenburg and Ludendorff decided on the course of the war and their ideas were in contrast to Hollweg. They said that a negotiated peace was out of the question, that all available resources should be used to achieve a victory, that Russia should be knocked out of the war and subjected to a harsh peace settlement

By July 1917 the leaders of the SPD found it more difficult to support the war. Thus the Kaiser was persuaded by Hollweg to give a hope of reform. In April the Kaiser introduced the 'Easter Offer' which promised to end Prussia's three-class system of voting and reform the Bundesrat after the war was ended. This did not convince those both within and outside the Reichstag who wanted to negotiate a 'peace without victory' rather than wait for a 'victorious peace'

At the start of July 1917 in the vote on War Credits, the SPD and Centre Party tried to link more money to the search for a 'peace without victory'. Hollweg could not share this view and thus lost the confidence of the Reichstag. He had also lost the confidence of the military command. This he resigned. He was replaced by George Michaelis (Ludendorff nominee).

On the 19<sup>th</sup> July Erzberger (Catholic deputy) persuaded a majority in the Reichstag to vote in favour of a 'peace resolution' that promised peace without the annexation of land

On 29 September 1918 Ludendorff demanded that the government should enter into armistice talks with the Allies and US. In October Prince Max of Baden was chosen as Chancellor and he formed a coalition government which included members of the Centre, Progressive Party and SPD. The Kaiser was now prepared to concede constitutional change:

1. Parliament could consider foreign and military affairs
2. The vote of the Prussian parliament was to be democratic

### Demand for a more aggressive foreign policy:

On the 4<sup>th</sup> August 1914, the Germans unleashed the Schlieffen plan. The German armies made strong progress through Belgium, despite meeting unexpected fierce resistance, and they managed to wipe out the BEF. However the advance slowed as supplies could not keep up with the pace. In the east the German armies, under the command of Hindenburg and Ludendorff, won two great battles at Tannenberg and Masurian Lakes, victories that turned the commanders into folk heroes. At the Battle of the Marne in September the German armies were halted within shelling distance of Paris. They withdrew to the river Aisne and started to dig in. The following 'Race to the Sea' resulted in stalemate and hundreds of miles of trenches and around 650,000 German casualties on both fronts. The greatest opportunity for victory had passed.

In 1915 the Schlieffen plan had now failed and it was Erich von Falkenhayn's (new Chief Commander of the General Staff) responsibility to devise an alternative strategy. The problem was fighting a war on two fronts, which Germany could not win. The solution was to win a decisive victory on one. The decision was taken to act in the East and a hugely successful campaign saw the Russian army retreat over 250 miles. This was still not enough to knock Russia out of the war. On the Western Front the allies had suffered great losses trying to attack Germany's defensive positions and so Falkenhayn took the decision that the key to victory lay on the Western Front with the use of an aggressive submarine campaign. Following the German announcement of a submarine blockade of Great Britain, the British government responded by ordering the Royal navy to seize all goods that were destined for Germany.

In 1916 Falkenhayn came to the conclusion that the war could be won through attrition (winning by wearing the other side down). This was the philosophy behind the attack at Verdun. 700,000 casualties were lost on both sides for no gain. In May 1916 the German fleet engaged with the Royal navy at Jutland. The Germans managed to sink more vessels but then they had to disengage and return to port, thus the blockade continued. In July 1916 the western allies opened up an offensive at the Somme with equally murderous results. The Russians launched a successful attack against Russia. Thus Germany had to send reserves to shore up their armies. This stretched the German armies. They became even more stretched when the Romanians entered the war on the side of the allies. Falkenhayn fell from his position due to the failure of attrition.

The Hindenburg programme marked the beginning of Total War, the mobilisation of all resources within a nation. In January 1917 it was obvious to Hindenburg and Ludendorff that the allies outnumbered the Central Powers in all resources. Thus the decision was taken that the only way to defeat Britain was through submarine warfare. Hollweg objected to this as he thought it would bring America into the war. In April the Germans sank 875,000 tons of Allied shipping. However the British adopted a convoy system to stop this success being repeated. Thus was a system of grouping merchant ships together and providing warships to accompany them for protection. Britain was not knocked out of the war and in April 1917 the USA declared war on Germany. In March 1917 German troops moved to being two defensive lines known as the Hindenburg and Siegfried lines and German military commanders began to train their troops in a new kind of non static warfare. The Allies tried to break these lines (at Arras and Ypres) to no success and heavy casualties.

In 1918 the political initiative soon swung back to the military with huge annexation in the East as written in the Treaty of Brest Litovsk. It handed Poland, Lithuania, and Finland to Germany. They seized  $\frac{3}{4}$  of its coal and iron, all of its oil and cotton and  $1\frac{1}{3}$  of its population. All parties in the Reichstag, except the USPD, voted in favour of the treaty.

This meant that half a million troops could be transferred from the eastern to Western front in anticipation of a great offensive. The aim was to give a significant blow so that they would withdraw. The Germans launched their attack pushing the Allied troops back considerable distances. After advancing 80 miles they were exhausted. The Allies counter attacked and by September the German army was thrown back to the Hindenburg line

The armistice was signed

### **Radicalisation and polarisation of Politics:**

The Russian Revolution of 1917 provided an inspiration for all those that opposed the war and the following announcement of a reduction in bread rationing led to wide spread strikes in April 1917

Some workers formed workers councils, copying the Russians. They were not supported by the SPD in the Reichstag but they were supported by those who had been thrown out of the SPD for refusing to vote for war credits. They formed the breakaway party, the USPD. (Independent Socialists).

In 1917 polarisation gained pace. The Pope issued a peace note urging warring states to consider a seven point peace plan. The idea was ignored by Ludendorff but cheered by those that supported the 'Peace Resolution'. In September a new pressure group was founded. This was called the German Fatherland Party. It was supported by Ludendorff and promoted victorious peace through excessive annexation of territory. This prompted the creation of a rival pressure group. The Peace League for Freedom and Fatherland which prompted the idea of a moderate peace.

The entry of the USA in April 1917 polarised German politics as many people did not see the USA as a natural enemy. This was because the USA was a democracy and many wanted democracy in Germany

In August 1917 Kuhlmann became German Foreign secretary. He hoped to bring a negotiated peace without annexation but to extend German influence to the East. He was too moderate for Hindenburg who engineered his dismissal

In October 1917 Michaelis was sacked as the Reichstag passed a resolution supporting reform of the Prussian voting system. He was replaced by Count Hertling of the Centre Party. The Prussian Parliament continued to debate reform of their voting system although the Conservatives made it clear that they could not support it

By 1918 the USPD party had 100,000 members who campaigned for:

- An immediate end to the war followed by social reform
- An immediate repeal of the Auxiliary Service Law

- No more war loans

The expansion of the USPD was a clear example of polarisation

## Unit 2: To what extent was Germany responsible for WWI?

Factor:	Historians:	Evidence:
<p><b>Great powers slithered over the brink</b></p>	<p>1930s consensus: All the Great Powers were to blame. This resulted from the desire of the German authorities to push the blame onto others. David Lloyd George: all of the Great Powers had 'slithered over the brink into the boiling cauldron of fire'</p> <p>1951 Franco-German Historians' Commission: They accepted the views of the previous consensus, partly due to a desire to build peaceful and lasting relations between France and Germany</p> <p>Erdmann: A challenge to Fischer. Germany had slipped into war in 1914. This can be proven by the diaries of Riezler (Hollweg's private secretary) which show that Germany had not been planning for war. Some historians suggest that these diaries were tampered with.</p>	<p><b><u>The July Crisis:</u></b>            On 28 June 1914 the heir to the Austrian throne was shot (Archduke Franz Ferdinand) by Gavrill Princip. Princip was a member of the Serbian terrorist organisation (Black hand). Austria sought Germany's support for action against Serbia. They offered unconditional support in what became known as the 'Blank Cheque'. Austria issued an ultimatum to Serbia. Serbia would not allow Austria to take part in an enquiry about the assassination. Russia and France supported Serbia. Austria declared war on Serbia. Germany could not persuade the British into neutrality and could not convince Russia not to mobilise. The Schlieffen Plan was put into operation. Germany invaded Belgium and declared war on France. Britain declared war on Germany in protection of Belgian neutrality. Austria declared war on Russia</p>
<p><b>Aggressive Foreign Policy</b></p>	<p>Fischer (1961): Germany had gone to war to achieve European and worldwide domination and Germany hoped that the 'Blank Cheque' would result in war. The evidence is based partly on a document written by Riezler (Hollweg's private secretary) in which he outlines the Chancellor's plans for peace negotiations. He argues that these annexationist plans were the continuation of plans made before the outbreak of war.</p> <p>Blackbourn: Furthers Fischer's argument and says that these war aims were shared by civilian ministers, civil servants, liberal politicians and not just the military</p> <p>John Rohl: The war was calculated as the bringing of war through a Balkan crisis would bring three advantages: Austria-Hungary would not be able to wriggle out of its alliance commitments to Germany; the German population could be manipulated into believing that they were being attacked by 'barbarous' Russia and Britain might be persuaded to stay out of the war</p>	<p>In March 1890 Wilhelm II refused to renew the Reassurance treaty between Germany and Russia that agreed that each would not attack the other. Instead they signalled a warmer relationship with Vienna whilst Schlieffen (chief of the General Staff of the army) began to work on a plan which would mean Germany could fight a war on two fronts, by defeating France before Russia could mobilise. France was expected to fall in six weeks and once they had done so the German forces could transfer the forces to the Eastern Front.</p> <p>The Kaiser was the grandson of Queen Victoria and thus he both loved and loathed the country. In 1896 he antagonised the British by sending a telegram to President Kruger of the South African Republic congratulating him for the defeat of British raiders. After this a series of navy laws were a direct challenge to British naval supremacy and this led to a naval race. Relations were further antagonised by German support for the Boers in the Boer war. In 1901 Britain hinted that they wanted an alliance but this was disregarded because they would not commit to the Triple Alliance and it was believed that they would not find alliances elsewhere. This turned out to be incorrect and they allied with Japan (1902) and formed an Entente with France and Russia by 1907. This</p>

		<p>left Germany over reliant on Austria-Hungary.</p> <p>There was a demand for a more aggressive foreign policy but the reality was that they did not achieve much new territory. They had not gained their 'place in the sun' (same number of colonies as Britain and France)</p> <p>Bulow and Hollweg attempted to persuade the Kaiser to compromise on the naval race but he would not. In 1912 Lord Haldane travelled to Germany in the hope of improving relations. The Germans would only agree a limit to fleet expansion if the British agreed to neutrality in any future European land war. Britain said no and the Kaiser was committed once and for all to increasing the size of the fleet.</p>
<p><b>War as a method to solve internal problems</b></p>	<p>Fischer (1969): The German government used war as a solution to difficult internal problems. It was both to establish world dominance and to keep domestic peace. He uses the 'War Council' (between the Kaiser and top military advisors) of 1912 as evidence that the path to war had already been decided upon. At this council the Kaiser insisted that Austria-Hungary should be supported in her actions against Serbia, that it was not a problem if Russia decided to fight as it was inevitable anyway.</p> <p>Wehler: The destructive impact of industrialisation caused tensions in Germany's social and economic structure, including the tension for constitutional change and social change. These tensions were diverted outwards in order to maintain the status quo.</p> <p>Berghahn: War was used as a catalyst to stabilise the monarchy at home</p> <p>Joll: Both the positive pursuit of world power and the desire to solve internal tensions played a role.</p>	<p>The destructive impact of industrialisation caused tensions in Germany's social and economic structure, including the tension for constitutional change and social change. These tensions were diverted outwards in order to maintain the status quo.</p>
<p><b>Fear of Encirclement</b></p>	<p>Hilderbrand/Hillgruber/Schollgen: A challenge to Fischer. The war started because of a sense of encirclement in Germany, between 1909 and 1914 foreign policy was obsessively focussed on the need to break this encirclement. The reasons for going to war were defensive</p>	<p><b><u>The First Moroccan Crisis (1905-1906):</u></b>  Failure in this crisis combined with the forming of the Entente caused this fear of encirclement. The Kaiser visited Tangier which was in the French sphere of influence. The Germans demanded an international conference to discuss the future of Morocco, hoping to drive a wedge between Britain and France. However their attempts just drove them closer. At the Algeciras conference Morocco was confirmed in</p>

		<p>the French sphere of influence. Germany also attempted to prise the Russians away from their treaty with the French but this measure failed due to opposition from the French foreign office. In short the Entente had been strengthened.</p> <p>This whole episode was humiliating for Germany and the head of the Political office at the Foreign Ministry (Friedrich von Holstein) was forced to resign. The fear of encirclement of Germany was now very real.</p> <p><b><u>The second Moroccan Crisis (1911):</u></b>  In February 1909 the French and Germans signed an agreement to respect each other's interests in Morocco. In April 1911 there were disturbances in Fez and this led to the intervention of the French military. Germany claimed that this was against the act (Algeciras Act) and they sent a gunboat. Germany attempted to bully France in giving her the French Congo in return for Germany giving up all interests in Morocco. This was another attempt to prise the Entente apart. David Lloyd George (future PM) warned Germany against further aggression. In the end Germany gained two strips of land in the Congo and had to accept that Morocco was under French control.</p> <p><b><u>The Balkans:</u></b>  Following the decline of the Ottoman Empire both Russia and Austria-Hungary tried to stake a claim for dominance in the region. It also allowed nationalities like the Serbs to demand independence. The Serbs were allied to the Russians. The Austrians feared that a strong Serbia would lead to unrest and the breakup of her empire. In 1903 a pro-Russian dynasty came to power in Serbia; thus a more hostile relationship between the Serbs and Austria. In 1906 a trade agreement was not renewed and this led to a trade war known as the Pig war (because the Austrians blocked the import of Serbian pigs). The new Foreign Minister of Austria Hungary (Count Aehrenthal) believed that the best way to deal with the Serbs was to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina, which they did in October 1908. The Serbs and the Russian government were furious. Austria-Hungary forced Serbia and Russia to recognise the annexation and it did so by threatening war against Serbia. Germany, due to their close alliances, offered their full support to Austria-Hungary.</p>
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<p><b>Decisions made by the German military</b></p>	<p>Niall Ferguson: The military secured the mobilisation orders which unleashed the conflict. Fischer’s evidence is flawed because there is no evidence that Germany’s war aims as stated after the war were the same as German aims beforehand.</p> <p>James Joll: The detail of the plans to attack Belgium had been kept secret by the military, even from the Kaiser. Furthermore the success of the Schlieffen plan required war as soon as mobilisation occurred</p> <p>Rohl and Stachan: Challenge this view because Hollweg was not present and it was him that took centre stage in the crisis that led to war.</p>	<p>In March 1890 Wilhelm II refused to renew the Reassurance treaty between Germany and Russia that agreed that each would not attack the other. Instead they signalled a warmer relationship with Vienna whilst Schlieffen (chief of the General Staff of the army) began to work on a plan which would mean Germany could fight a war on two fronts, by defeating France before Russia could mobilise. France was expected to fall in six weeks and once they had done so the German forces could transfer the forces to the Eastern Front.</p> <p>The 1912 War Council insisted that Austria-Hungary should be supported in her war against Serbia, that it was not a problem if Russia decided to fight, that war with Russia was inevitable and that the navy needed a year to prepare. This council was between the Kaiser and his top military advisors. Tirpitz asked: ‘Should we speed up (the outbreak of war) or attempt to delay it?’</p>

## **Unit 3: The Weimar Republic (1919-1929)**

### **What threats did the Weimar Republic face (1919-1923)?**

#### **Revolutionary Left**

The most important task facing Ebert was political stability. On the 25<sup>th</sup> November 1918 a conference of representatives from all state governments agreed to elections for a new Constituent Assembly. However, the parties in Ebert's government were divided over the best way forward. The USPD were more revolutionary and did not want elections, they wanted a worker seizure of power. Members of the SPD wanted a more democratic Germany. They did not want a revolution. Huge numbers of the working class were hostile to the idea of a revolution. For example in 1918 the First Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils in Berlin refused to allow Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, known revolutionaries, to address them. In December 1918 the Spartacists broke away from the USPD. They were led by Liebknecht and Luxemburg. They wanted a revolution similar to that in Russia. They wanted a cancellation of elections for the new National Assembly. They wanted all power transferred to workers' and soldiers' councils. They would disband the police and army and set up workers' militias. This was a big threat from the left.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1919 held their first congress in Berlin and with the support of other left wing groups they created the German Communist Party, the KPD. This was followed by a revolutionary uprising in Berlin. The uprising was poorly planned and crushed by the army; Liebknecht and Luxemburg were murdered. The government had to use anti-democratic forces in order to maintain the democracy.

In February 1919 the murder of the USPD leader in Bavaria triggered a revolution in Bavaria which led to the declaration of the Bavarian Soviet Republic. In May 1919 it was crushed by the Army and the Freikorps.

In response to the threat from the Freikorps, workers in the Ruhr formed a 'Red Army' which was a workers militia. On the 15<sup>th</sup> March 1920 they seized power and set up a government with the aim of establishing a Soviet state. The government sent in the Freikorps to crush the revolution. Prisoners were taken and shot on the spot. The government used the same forces to protect them that had just tried to overthrow them in the Kapp Putsch. The Ruhr revolution failed.

People in Germany were terrified of a Communist revolution. They had seen attempts by the Spartacists in Kiel (November 1918), in Bavaria (April 1919) and in the Ruhr (March 1920). Revolution in Germany was a central element of Lenin's foreign policy. The people were also aware that the Soviet Red Army was almost successful in causing a revolution in Poland. The perception of the threat of the extreme left (the fear) never matched the reality. The revolutionary left was divided (USPD/KPD) and did not benefit from widespread worker support. In October 1920 many USPD members joined the KPD as the KPD joined Comintern but this was also counterproductive as large sections of the working classes did not support the KPD's close alliance with the Soviet Union.

The most important consequence of the false perceived threat of the revolutionary left was that it deflected attention from the most serious threat to democracy – the anti-Republicanism of right

wing nationalism. The perceived threat of left wing revolution made many believe (late 1920s) in the views of the right that the Republic was based on weak government and needed to be placed

### **Extreme Right and their political violence**

The actions of the Spartacists concerned the leaders of the SPD as they knew that they could not rely on the support of the army in the face of a revolt. Thus a deal was done with the right wing (the pre 1918 military, judiciary and civil service). A deal with General Groener (Ludendorff's replacement) said that Ebert would protect the status of the army against the idea of a workers militia and thus in return the army would put down any revolutionary activity. Thus the right resumed their influence.

Wolfgang Kapp was leader of the Patriotic Party and Luttwitz was leader of the Freikorps. In March 1920 the government ordered that the Freikorps disband in accordance with the Treaty of Versailles. Luttwitz refused and instead demanded the resignation of Ebert and new elections to the Reichstag. On the night of 12-13 March Luttwitz led his Freikorps into Berlin where they seized the government district of the city. The government ordered the act but the Head of the General Staff ordered his troops to stay in their barracks as they would not fire upon their own army. Luttwitz declared Kapp Chancellor. The government fled to Dresden and appealed to the workers to strike in defence of the Republic. A large General strike paralysed the capital and thus the Kapp regime collapsed. The Kapp-Luttwitz Putsch revealed the army's reluctance to support the Republic. It also showed how the government's survival depended on unreliable forces. Noske was forced to resign as Defence Minister. In Bavaria army officers sympathetic to the putsch forced the SPD elected government to resign and it was replaced with a government of the right.

The events of the Kapp Putsch convinced many on the right that the Republic was propped up by communist-inspired unions. Thus they joined secret organisations dedicated to a campaign of intimidation and violence. In the summer of 1921 Gareis (USPD leader) and Erzberger (Centre party politician) were murdered. In June 1922 the Foreign Minister (Walter Rathenau) was shot

### **Treaty of Versailles**

- Germany had to accept blame for starting the war
- Germany's army was reduced to 100,000 men
- Germany was banned from having any submarines or aircraft
- Germany had to pay a huge £6.6 million to pay for the damage they caused. Called REPARATIONS
- Germany lost Alsace-Lorraine to France
- The Saar land was taken away and run by the League of Nations
- Germany was forbidden from uniting with Austria
- Germany was split into two so Poland could have access to the sea

- A League of Nations was set up as an international police force.

Rather than accept the treaty Schiedemann's government resigned (20<sup>th</sup> June 1919). The new government was led by Chancellor Gustav Bauer of the SPD and Vice Chancellor Matthias Erzberger of the Centre Party. Both accepted, as did the German Parliament (based in Weimar), that Germany did not have the means to resist an allied invasion and therefore had no choice but to sign the treaty. It was signed on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 1919.

In November 1919 Hindenburg said that the Versailles treaty was a humiliating Dikat (dictated without negotiation), a shameful peace and one which should not have been signed. This was hypocritical considering it was him who asked for an armistice. According to Hindenburg the treaty was signed by a clique of anti-patriotic left wing politicians (November Criminals) who had founded the Weimar Republic. These criminals were also to blame for stabbing the armed forces in the back (Stab in the Back theory) because they had been undermined by these weak politicians.

These theories were useful for the anti-Republican right as they removed themselves and the military from any responsibility for the events of 1918 and they gained popular support due to their resentment of the treaty. This explains why the votes for the DNVP increased to 14.9% in June 1920. These myths (as a result of the Versailles treaty) caused one of the greatest threats to the Republic's legitimacy.

The elections of 1920 (to the first Reichstag of the Weimar Republic) were overshadowed by the disappointment of Versailles and the industrial worker unrest. The votes cast showed a swing of the balance of power from the 'Weimar Coalition' to the extreme left and extreme right. The old 'Weimar Coalition' received only 44.6% of the vote. The DNVP went up to 14.9% and the USPD to 17.9%. The SPD could not form coalitions with them.

### Weimar Constitution

The January 1919 elections were a triumph for those parties that supported the concept of parliamentary democracy. This was the Centre Party, SPD and DDP. The first Reich President was Ebert (leader of the SPD) and the first coalition cabinet was led by Schiedemann with ministers from the SPD, Centre Party and DDP. The USPD only received 7.6%; showing that the support for revolution from the left was weak. The DVP polled only 4.4% demonstrating the support of the liberal middle classes for democracy. The DNVP were the main party contesting the election and they only received 10.3% of the vote. This would suggest that a stable government had been formed.

In January 1919 a cross-party group was created to consider the possibilities of a new constitution for Germany. The decisions were made and adopted on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 1919.

<b>Reich Chancellor and Reich Cabinet</b>		<b>President</b>		<b>The Reichsrat</b>
This was the		The President was elected for		This represented the 17

government of Germany. They had to resign if they lost the Reichstag's confidence (Article 54)		seven years by the whole electorate. (Had to have over 50% of the vote). The President was head of the state and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. The President had emergency powers to take whatever measures necessary to restore order (Article 48)		states (Lander). States were represented in the Reichsrat by members of their state governments. It could block laws made by the Reichstag, but the Reichstag could override a veto with a 2/3's majority.
<b>The Reichstag</b>				<b>State Governments</b>
This was the law making body. They were elected for four years by Proportional Representation. Voters would vote for a list of candidates (representing each party). Every party received one seat for every 60,000 votes				There were 17 states each responsible for their educational, judicial and police system
<b>The Electorate</b>				
All Germans over the age of 20				

<b>STRENGTHS of the Weimar Constitution:</b>	<b>Weaknesses of the Weimar Constitution:</b>
The Chancellor and his Cabinet needed majority support in the Reichstag	The President had strong powers to counter-balance those held by the Reichstag
A Bill of Rights guaranteed individual rights such as freedom of speech and the right to belong to a union	The constitution was the product of a compromise between the parties that were most successful in January 1919. Yet they did not poll close to this number of votes again. Thus the constitution's base was un-representative
All political opinion was included, including those on the nationalist right such as the DNVP	Proportional Representation led to Coalition Governments that rose and fell and failed to establish themselves. In the period up to 1923 the longest lasted for 18 months

PR was accepted by most across the political system. The SPD were committed to it and opponents of the SPD saw this as a means to prevent the socialists having overall control	
PR allowed sectional interests – not related to class - (such as Centre for Catholics) to continue to be represented	
The President was elected directly by the people and thus could counterbalance any elected parliamentary dictatorship. This was why Article 48 was established.	

### Army and the Judiciary

Article 54 meant that the Judiciary maintained their independence. They misinterpreted the constitution and many judges showed bias against the Republic and towards those who tried to destroy the new democracy. This provided challenges with a veneer of legality

Erzberger was hated by enemies of the Republic because he had argued in favour of signing the Versailles treaty. In early 1920 Helfferich (leader of the DNVP) accused him of fraud and corruption. Erzberger accused Helfferich of libel and took him to court. The judiciary ruled against Erzberger and he was forced to resign. This decision was dubious at best

In June 1922 Rathenau (Foreign Minister) was shot. This resulted in the Law for the Protection of the Republic that set up special courts to deal with terrorists. The judiciary failed to use the law to the full and it was used against forces of the left

In October 1922 Fechenbach (secretary to the leader of the Bavarian revolutionary government in 1918) was given 11 years imprisonment for violating the Press Law. In contrast in 1924 Adolf Hitler (leader of the Munich Putsch) was given only five years for high treason

In 1923 the KPD tried to unleash a German 'October Revolution' in Saxony and Thuringia. It failed due to the prompt unleashing of army units

A month later in 1923, General von Seeckt initially failed to send in troops to deal with an attempted coup by the right in Munich. In this Munich Putsch did not want to order the army into battle against his comrades on the nationalist right. In the end the Putsch was put down by the Bavarian police

### Reparations

There were huge problems in coming to terms with economic readjustment and debt. Reparations made matters worse. By late 1922 their national debt was 469 milliard marks. In July 1922 the government asked for permission to suspend reparation payments. This request was refused by the French Prime Minister. Thus the German government printed more money to cover its debts. This

move was taken as sabotage to reparation payments. At the end of the year the Reparations Commission declared that they had failed to meet their Reparation promises.

The German defaulting on Reparations led to the Franco/Belgian occupation of the Ruhr in January 1923 with 60,000 troops. The German government encouraged the workers to offer passive resistance. This meant that the government had to pay millions of marks to those that lost income and it also led to less income from tax. Thus the government printed more money. The German government collapsed into hyperinflation. The savings of the middle class were destroyed and the working class saw their income drop.

### How stable were the Stresemann years? (The 'Golden Years')

#### Political Stability

The problems for the Republic's political system of coalition governments were made worse by the behaviour of the SPD. Between 1924 and 1928 they resisted becoming involved in coalition governments because they believed that coalition with 'bourgeois' parties would be a compromise of their ideals. This weakened the whole process of democracy as it contradicted the process of representation (as a result of votes cast to the Reichstag). This reluctance of the SPD was made worse by the election of President Hindenburg who tried to exclude the SPD from government; this made political consensus unlikely.

Hindenburg had a great influence in deciding who would be members of coalition governments and he worked tirelessly to make sure that the SPD were not. These exclusions made workable coalitions difficult. Even when they were included in government (for example the Muller government of 1928) the coalitions were not very successful because the DVP and the Centre Party shared Hindenburg's reluctance to allow SPD domination, despite them being the largest party in the Reichstag. Furthermore, whenever possible, Hindenburg insisted on the inclusion of the DNVP and thus the fourth Marx government of 1927 ruled out the possibility of a 'grand coalition' covering the political spectrum.

The May 1928 election was a turning point as the left made considerable gains (the SPD went from 22 to 53 seats) and the parties of the centre and right saw their share of the vote drop. Thus the SPD was now prepared to form coalitions but political polarisation now meant that forming a stable majority government became impossible; there was a rise in the support for splinter parties.

Muller's government of 1928 became known as the Grand Coalition but this was eventually brought down because the SPD rejected the compromise of the Centre Party regarding the contributions to unemployment benefits. The inability of the parties to agree was indicative of a narrowing of their interests which caused voters to look for extreme parties, which would seem to represent their wider concerns. The actions of the SPD in bringing down Muller's government was political suicide.

## Economic Stability

FOR	AGAINST
<p>Stresemann negotiated the Dawes Plan with America. It was introduced in 1924. In this plan it was agreed that the French would leave the Ruhr and that Reparations could be paid over a longer period of time. It was also agreed that Germany would receive an international loan (800 million Reich marks) to cover 4/5 of the reparations payments. This would help stimulate the economy. Annual reparation payments would remain at 1000 Reich marks per year and would only increase after 1929</p>	<p>It was very hard to get Reichstag support for the Dawes Plan. The main problem was that it accepted that Germany would continue paying Reparations. The collapse of the SPD vote in the May 1924 elections (and the divisions over the issue within the SPD) made the task of pushing through the agreement with a 2/3's majority even harder. It was eventually passed due to the support of the DNVP, the largest party in the Reichstag from the right.</p>
<p>The 1928 elections meant that the new government was once again dominated by socialists. A new 'grand coalition' was formed and this included members of the DDP, DVP, Centre Party and BVP. Their main task was to steer through the Reichstag the Young plan of 1929. It was formulated because Germany was worried about the higher annual reparation payment which was due to start in 1929. The Young Plan proposed increasing a larger timescale for payments, up to 1988. It proposed to reduce the new annual figure from 2,500 million marks to 2,000 million marks. If this was passed then the French would agree to evacuate the Rhineland. The Young Plan was passed by the Reichstag</p>	<p>In 1929 the leader of the DNVP formed the Reich Committee for a Referendum to oppose the Young Plan. The committee won the support of a range of anti-Republican groups, including the leader of the NSDAP – Adolf Hitler. The referendum was defeated and the Young plan was eventually passed in 1930. However it was overshadowed by the Wall Street Crash in 1929.</p>
<p>1924-1929 saw significant monetary stability and an end to hyperinflation. This was due to the establishment of a new currency – the Rentenmark.</p>	<p>The downside to the influx of foreign capital was that this policy had potential dangers. A downturn in the world economy would lead to the rapid withdrawal of such investment</p>
<p>1924-1929 saw significant monetary stability and an end to hyperinflation. This was also due to the influx of foreign capital. 25.5 billion Marks were sent to Germany between 1924 and 1930. This led to the reconstruction of German industry</p>	<p>The spectacular growth rates in industry meant that working conditions did not increase at the same pace. This caused some polarisation of employers and employees</p>
<p>The Dawes Plan meant that less money had to</p>	<p>There was industrial growth in this period but</p>

be paid each year in reparations. This meant that more money was available for growth in industry. Industry experienced spectacular growth rates	there was not agricultural growth. In 1922 food prices collapsed which led to widespread rural poverty
	A return to confidence in the mainstream parties of the Republic during the elections was not shown during the 'Stresemann years'. In fact the opposite is true. The DDP and the Centre Party saw a drop since 1919. The votes won by the DVP steadily declined over the Stresemann years
	Unemployment remained considerably high. In late 1928 those out of work stood at 3 million; 15% of the workforce

### Social Stability

<b>FOR:</b>	<b>AGAINST:</b>
Article 119 of the constitution put family at the centre of German life. It became the responsibility of adults to make sure that they protect and nurture their children	
Articles 135-141 of the constitution guaranteed religious freedoms. Freedoms included the ability to worship how, when and where people like	
Article 157 protected employees from being exploited by their employers	
The death of many soldiers in WWI left widows and orphaned children. All were financially helped by two laws passed in 1920. One was the Reich Relief Law and one was the Serious Disability Laws.	However many of these benefits were only at a subsistence level
The 1927 Labour Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance Law introduced unemployment insurance which protected people from job losses	

Article 155 committed the government to building quality housing. Public spending on housing grew rapidly throughout the 1930s and between 1927 and 1930 300,000 homes were either built or renovated.	
Better health insurance was introduced. This led to better medical provision and a reduction in deaths from certain diseases. This has included tuberculosis and pneumonia	
There was some small change in the jobs that women did and some gained a higher status. More women worked in the civil service, teaching or social work	The jobs that women did in the 1930s remained the same throughout the 1930s as it did before the Weimar Republic came into existence. Attitudes towards women remained generally conservative. The vast majority who had worked in men's jobs during WWII gave this work up once the war was over
	There was considerable debate during the Stresemann years over whether married woman should work. This increased after 1924 when the rationalisation of some businesses saw some men laid off and this criticism of women working became even sharper in the depression. In 1932 the Law Governing the Legal Status of Female Civil Servants was passed. This made possible the dismissal from the Civil Service of women who lived with a working man
The Weimar Republic tried to improve the upbringing of us children. The Reich Youth Law of 1922 claimed the right of all children to a decent upbringing.	This claim was difficult to fulfil in reality
Child criminals were helped by the Reich Youth Welfare Law of 1922 and the Reich Juvenile Court Law of 1923. This improved the rehabilitation of young offenders	

### Cultural Stability

Neue Sachlichkeit was a new unique style that developed during 1924-1929; it stressed objectivity and matter-of-factness and was manifested in a variety of cultural aspects. Architecture became

dominated by the Bauhaus movement and stressed the relationship between art and technology together with freedom from the past. The music of Schonberg and the development of new ironic literature (such as the writer Dobrin) mirrored this departure from tradition. The theatre and cinema became dominated by plays that represented social issues and numerous works based on WWI.

This culture represented the failure of the Weimar Republic to construct a viable new political system. This is best reflected in Ernst Toller’s ‘Hoppla Wir Leben’ in which a revolutionary is released from an asylum, only to find that politics and society have stagnated. This matter-of-fact style of culture exposed the weaknesses of the Weimar Republic and revealed disenchantment with its ability to reform.

The objectivity of Neue Sachlichkiet contrasted with the nostalgia, romanticism and escapism of traditional culture that the majority of the population preferred. Many right wing writers contributed to anti-democratic Germany literature and many wrote for and against the experiences in the trenches. The films of Charlie Chaplin in the cinema with its comedy, fantasy and nostalgia were in direct contrast to the modernity of Neue Sachlichkiet.

Thus there were huge cultural divisions which reflected the political and social polarisation of this period. These cultural divisions became part of the process by which the Weimar Republic was undermined. Neither of the two poles of cultural expression supported the regime but stood as opposites in antipathy to it. The cultural change and liberation associated with Weimar did not act as a foundation for stability.

**Stability resulting from Foreign Policy**

<b>FOR:</b>	<b>AGAINST:</b>
Fulfilment – Significant progress was made towards the revision of some of the articles of the Versailles treaty. By trying to fulfil the terms he could show unjust and how unworkable they were	Stresemann failed in his main foreign policy objective to completely revise the Versailles treaty
Stresemann achieved a greater understanding with France as reflected in the Locarno Treaties of 1925	There was no consensus on the best tactic to revise the Versailles treaty. Thus his diplomacy did not result in political stability
Stresemann achieved considerable success given the difficult international situation within which he was working	The treaty of Versailles and the ‘Stab in the Back’ theory continued to undermine the Weimar Republic. Fulfilment brought some relief but did not alter the humiliation felt in large parts of Germany. An example of this is 5.8 million people voting for the Freedom Law in opposition to the Young Plan
Germany worked towards agreement with the Soviet Union (Treaty of Berlin) which prompted	The first evacuation from the Rhineland does not represent a wholesale change in French

the Western Powers into a more systematic approach with Germany	attitudes. There was no political French will to withdraw
Soon after the Locarno Treaties the first evacuation of the Rhineland took place. This was a remarkable achievement considering the events in the Ruhr the year before	The issue of the Versailles Treaty plagued politics and caused disagreements between the DNVP and DVP/DDP – causing their 1925 coalition to collapse
Stresemann's policies resulted in Germany regaining diplomatic influence over the Allies and helped achieve a seat on the League of Nations' permanent council	The gradual approach to the restoration of German power meant that those who proposed more radical action were still able to act as a destabilising influence
The Young Plan rescheduled the reparation debt	
The Dawes Plan strengthened Germany's industrial base and fostered better relationships with the USA	

### Why did the Weimar Republic survive until 1929?

1. Fear of Communism (thus in the early days the right would protect the left wing coalitions against communist uprisings)
2. New Weimar Constitution
3. Revision of the Treaty of Versailles
4. Economic Stability
5. Social change
6. Foreign policy success

### 'Economic depression in 1929 highlighted the inherent problems of the Weimar Republic' How far do you agree with this judgement?

1. Fated constitution which could not provide political stability
2. Acceptance of terms of Treaty of Versailles
3. Legitimisation of anti-Republican Right
4. Fear of Communism
5. Cultural Issues
6. Social Issues

## **Unit 4: Rise of the Nazis**

### **How did the Nazis gain considerable support by 1932?**

*The September 1930 elections were a triumph for the Nazis who saw their representation in the Reichstag increase from 12 to 107 seats. The new Brüning cabinet governed with even less support and had to rely on the toleration of the SPD. The electoral success led to the joining of 100,000 new party members and saw a spectacular growth in sectional party organisations; most notably the AA which extended Nazi influence in the countryside. The July 1932 elections made the Nazis the largest party in the Reichstag.*

### **Propaganda**

In Munich in November 1923 the Nazis planned an uprising that would create a dictatorship with Ludendorff as President. The attempt was a shambles and led to Hitler being arrested for high treason. His trial was transformed into a propaganda coup as he was given a platform for his party's beliefs. He was imprisoned for five years and at this time wrote 'Mein Kampf' which outlined his world view.

In the late 1920s Goebbels developed the techniques of 'saturation' propaganda. The use of speeches, lectures, rallies and 'aeroplane campaigns' raised the profile of the party and increased the votes at elections.

The party was able to take advantage of the opportunity presented against the campaign against the Young Plan. The campaign was a failure but considerable national exposure had been given to Hitler and his Nazi rallies which had an immediate impact at the 1929 local elections.

The Nazis deployed propaganda effectively as a means of deceiving the political nation of their real intentions and significances of their actions

### **Party reorganisation and ideology**

By 1923 the party had 55,000 members, many of whom were attracted by the 'catch-all' manifesto and the radical nationalism of the movement

The party had an ability to expand and provide a political home for those discontented with their lives. In 1925, following a poor showing in the elections, the party was reorganised into a centralised and bureaucratic entity and an index of all members was created. A 1926 party conference introduced a new autocratic structure which stressed complete obedience to Hitler (Führerprinzip). In 1927 unsuitable Gauleiter were replaced and central bureaucracy was further reorganised.

The May 1928 election results were dismal and this prompted further party reorganisation. Nazi professional bodies were set up for Jurists, doctors, teachers and students. This allowed the party to transform into a mass movement. The setting up of groups to appeal to specific sections of the community gave the party a wide appeal; the AA drew into the party a largely discontented peasantry.

In the late 1920s the Nazis attracted the discontented peasantry into the movement (following the setting up of the AA)

The Nazis were successful in attracting the support of the young and in 1930 over 2/3's of the party were under 40.

The NSDAP had huge support from the Middle Class who were damaged by the economic uncertainty. The Nazis started to attract votes from the industrial working class. Their vote was actually weakest in urban areas. For significant swathes of the population a vote for the Nazis was a protest vote against the failures of the Weimar Republic; this explains the breadth of Nazi support.

The reason that the party was able to provide a political home for those discontented after the crash of 1929 was because of the flexibility of the party structure created and developed in the 1920s.

### **Economic depression**

The 1929 Wall Street Crash and the resulting unemployment further polarised German politics. This created the opportunity upon which Nazi propaganda would not fall upon deaf ears. Unemployment undermined confidence in the Weimar Republic as by 1933 one in three German workers was unemployed. Many believed that without political change that they too would suffer a collapse in living standards. Thus there was an increase in the popularity of those who offered radical solutions to the economic problems. This explains the acceptance of the authoritarianism of Hindenburg and the rise in the vote for the KPD. Germans were persuaded to break with their voting habits of the past and vote for a political movement that, if seemingly violent and extremist in parts, was reassuringly familiar in its message, for example to remove the Treaty of Versailles.

The effects of the Wall Street Crash were compounded by Brüning's economic policy which concentrated on removing the burden of reparations rather than reducing unemployment. This lack of initiative caused the banking collapse of 1931. This banking crisis crystallised the concerns of those who feared social collapse and disorder.

### **Veneer of Legality**

At the 1926 party conference Strasser failed in his challenge to Hitler's insistence that all action had to be dictated with the policy of 'legality'. This explains Hitler quelling of the SA and the reduction of their role to organising Nazi rallies.

In March 1931 the leader of the Berlin SA, Stennes, rebelled against the orders of Hitler to obey a decree requiring police permission for rallies. This rebellion failed and the fact that the leadership was seen to be dealing effectively with the revolts of radical party members gained confidence in Hitler's commitment to 'legal' methods of gaining power.

## Why was Hitler able to become chancellor in January 1933?

### Shift to a presidential style of government (use of article 48)

Bruning's government in 1930 (following the collapse of the 'Grand Coalition') was the first to be based on presidential and not parliamentary power. He was leader of the Centre Party but did not hold a majority in the Reichstag. Hindenburg made it clear that a vote of no confidence from the Reichstag in his government would result in the president's use of Article 48. Bruning's Financial Bill was defeated by the Reichstag in 1930 and this led to Hindenburg's dissolution of the Reichstag and the use of Article 48 to pass the Financial Bill. This showed the contempt that the President had for the Reichstag and marked a shift from a parliamentary to a presidential style of government.

Thus the process of the destruction of the democratic system started before Hitler became Chancellor and the political establishment were set on a return to a more authoritarian form of rule. Evidence for this can be seen in von Papen's coup d'état against the Prussian government in July 1932. This SPD dominated government was dismissed on the grounds that it had failed to keep the peace. Its removal was completed using Article 48 but its legality was highly questionable. The army was ordered to seize control and a new authoritarian regime in Prussia was created. The economic depression meant that this was widely accepted.

### Political intrigue

Von Papen and Hindenburg believed they could control the Nazi movement and this misjudgement is crucial in explaining why Hitler was able to come to power. This misjudgement was actually part of the intrigue and deals that was inherent of the time (as workable coalitions could not be provided). For example it was these deals that led to the removal of Bruning from office in July 1932.

The election results of 1932 did not give the Nazis an outright majority and thus von Papen refused to hand over the Chancellorship to Hitler. In August 1932 Hitler opened negotiations with von Papen about the conditions under which the Nazis would join any government and Hitler insisted that he would not accept any post other than Chancellor. The negotiations failed, the Reichstag was dissolved and new elections took place in November

The new elections saw a fall in Nazi support by 4% but they were still the largest party. There was political stalemate because Hindenburg refused to appoint Hitler as Chancellor without him achieving a majority in the Reichstag and the Nazi had the ability to vote down a government at will (for example in coalition with the Centre Party). In attempting a way out Hindenburg sacked von Papen and appointed Schleicher as Chancellor, this government lacked credibility as it did not have Nazi support.

From January 1933 von Papen and Hitler held talks about the composition of a future government based on a broad nationalist coalition. Von Papen conceded the role of Chancellor to Hitler as long as the cabinet was a coalition of the right. Hindenburg agreed because this would undermine the Weimar Republic, thus allowing the establishment of a more authoritarian regime peacefully. Hindenburg appointed Hitler Chancellor on the 30 January 1933 as he would be locked into a conservative dominated cabinet, with von Papen as Vice-Chancellor.

### **Brutality and Terror**

Violence had an impact upon these political developments and the negotiations between Hitler, von Papen and von Hindenburg in 1932 took place against the backdrop of well publicised acts of SA brutality. For example in August 1932 when these negotiations opened a savage murder of a communist labourer called Konrad Pietzuch in Upper Silesia was reported in the press

### **How did the Nazis consolidate their power by the end of 1933?**

#### **Brutality and Violence**

A decree in Prussia in 1933 resulted in the police being reinforced by 'volunteers'; i.e. the SA.

After the Reichstag fire the police were given the powers to detain suspects indefinitely without reference to the courts. The decree was used to justify the arrest, imprisonment and often torture of thousands of political opponents. The leader of the KPD (Ernst Thälmann) was arrested on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March and 25,000 political prisoners were in custody in Prussia alone by the end of April.

On 23 March 1933 Hitler presented the Enabling Act to an intimidated Reichstag; brown shirted SA packed the public gallery. The Reichstag passed laws which voted itself out of existence. The communists were barred from voting. The power to pass laws was now given to the Cabinet and they could change the constitution as they saw fit. This bought Hitler four years of a dictatorship.

Following the March 1933 election the Nazis could start the process of destroying the political opposition and in March in Bavaria Himmler (leader of the SS) set up a concentration camp in Dachau to house political opponents. The Nazis managed to use terror with efficient ruthlessness

After the Enabling Act was the destruction of local state government. Under the orders of Frick all state governments were dissolved and ordered to reconvene with membership that reflected the recent elections from which the communists had been barred.. By the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service (April 1933), Jews and political opponents of the Nazis were thrown out of the civil service.

In May 1933 SA members stormed the ADGB (huge socialist trade union organisation) and disbanded it. Other trade unions voluntarily disbanded or joined the German Labour Front. This violence led many leaders of the SPD to flee abroad and in June its party was officially banned. The 3000 that remained were arrested and a number were killed. In Kopenich 100 resisted arrest and were murdered in cold blood. In July the Nazi party were declared the only legal party.

#### **Fear, failure and exploitation of Communism**

The potential challenge to Hitler from the Communists was very real. In the two elections of 1932 the KPD had seen their votes increase from 14.3% in July to 16.9% in November. The Red Front Fighters' League matched the SA on the streets. The SPD won 24% of the vote in the November 1932 election

The widely perceived threat of a communist revolution explains why the Nazis were quickly able to undermine the constitution of the Weimar Republic and why many non-Nazi groups were willing to

go along with the process of Gleichaltung; the national community promised by Hitler did not include communists.

The Communists believed that Hitler's government would not last. They believed that his appointment as chancellor signalled a problem for capitalism that would eventually lead to economic collapse and the victory of communism. Thus their tactic was to do nothing and wait. This was despite clear provocation. The SA volunteers led to a wave of violence against communists and socialists in Germany.

In February 1933 Goring ransacked the Communist headquarters and announced that evidence had been discovered showing a Communist conspiracy to seize power. The Nazis created 'anti Communist hysteria' and for the Communists to react violently would play into Communist hands.

The split between Communist and Socialist parties further undermined their ability to oppose the Nazis

Hitler believed his own propaganda that the communists were planning to take over and concluded that the Reichstag fire was the first act in the long-awaited backlash. It gave the regime the legality to crush the communists. Hitler and the leadership ignored the initial evidence that the fire had been started by van der Lubbe on his own as retaliation to the oppression felt by the working class.

The Nazis passed the 'Decree for the Protection of People and State' which suspended the rights of freedom of speech, assembly and press. The police gained the power to detain suspects indefinitely and Goebbels propaganda machine meant that these acts were widely accepted. The collapse of the rule of law was given a legal veneer. This all paved the way for success in the March 1933 election. This was still only 43.9%. The banning of KPD members gave him a political advantage.

### Veneer of Legality

The Nazi leaders were pragmatic in their understanding that their revolution had to be achieved by legal means for it to be acceptable to the majority of the population. This explains Hitler's 'Appeal to the German People' broadcast on the 1<sup>st</sup> February which was very tame in nature

The decree following the Reichstag fire is a good example of how the Nazis were keen to ensure that there was a legal front to their activities despite the fact that in reality the decree signalled the collapse of law and order

The regime still needed to portray itself as respectability and so the opening of the Reichstag on Potsdam day showed Hitler wearing morning dress and bowing in front of Hindenburg. It was a propaganda masterpiece

On the 21<sup>st</sup> March 1933 the Malicious Practises Law banned criticism of the regime and its policies

### Collaboration with the conservatives/middle class

The centre Party gave the Nazis the 2/3's majority necessary to introduce the 'Enabling Act' which paved the way for the dictatorship.

Hindenburg had allowed himself to be fooled into thinking that Hitler could be contained. Conservative and nationalist leaders calculated that by allying themselves with the Nazis that they could moderate Hitler's idealism. They were then out manoeuvred.

To achieve the majority for the Enabling Act the Nazis needed the support of the Centre Party (Catholics) as they could present a significant voting bloc. Thus Hitler made reassurances that the act would not affect the church in any way.

After the passing of the act Hitler's priority was to eliminate the political role of the church but was prepared to compromise on its social functions for the time being. The result was the Concordat signed on the 20 July 1933. Catholic Church members could still assemble for worship.

### Propaganda

The Nazis deployed propaganda effectively as a means of deceiving the political nation of their real intentions and significances of their actions

For example after the Reichstag fire the Goebbels propaganda machine portrayed the decree as a necessary step in the battle against communism

In 1933 Goebbels moved quickly to seize control of all forms of communication and by the end of 1933 they had control of all forms of the media. Jewish, communist and socialist journalists were dismissed.

### 'The Nazi consolidation of power was complete by the end of 1933' How far do you agree with this judgement?

7. Control of political system
8. Removal of political opposition
9. Ideological dominance
10. Veneer of Legality
11. Collaboration with business/acceptance of independent church and lack of respect from army

## Why did the Weimar Republic fail by 1933?

1. Economic Depression
2. Constitutional weaknesses led to political stalemate
3. Problems with the constitution led to a more presidential style of government
4. Constitutional problems made political intrigue impossible
5. Treaty of Versailles
6. Fear of Communism
7. Undermining culture

## Unit 5: The Popularity and Efficiency of the Nazi Regime

### How popular was the Nazi regime?

<p><b>Gleichaltung</b></p>	<p>The widely perceived threat of a Communist seizure of power explains why many non-Nazi groups were willing to go along with the initial phase of Gleichaltung. This was the bringing into line of different elements of German life; Nazification of German society</p> <p>A general consensus for Gleichaltung was gained by the Nazis going out of their way to portray their regime as respectable; opposition to a legitimate state was unthinkable and propaganda portrayed this legal seizure of power. This was a two way process whereby the Nazis ensured coordination but mainly where Germans were happy to disband their institutions voluntarily or reform them under the Nazi banner</p> <p>A considerable number of Civil servants joined the party in the wake of the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service of April 1933. This cleared the way for the purge of the Civil Service of 'unreliable' political elements. The business community disbanded its representative institutions and created the Reich Corporation of German industry which immediately pledged loyalty to the regime. Women's groups were dissolved and reformed as elements of the Nazi Women's Front. Judges and lawyers supported this due to their conservative philosophy. There was no protest when the lawyers were coordinated into the Nazi Lawyers Association in 1933</p> <p>In Bavaria in March 1933 Himmler set up the first concentration camp at Dachau to house political opponents in 'protective custody'. All the other states fell into line and by early April the Nazis controlled the parliamentary assemblies of all regions.</p>
<p><b>Operation Hummingbird and the army</b></p>	<p>The SA now wanted a 'second revolution' in which the economic power of the middle class was challenged. They wanted no short term compromise with business. In June 1933 Rohm wrote a newspaper article in which he said he would carry out this second revolution whether he had the support of the leadership or not. On the 6<sup>th</sup> July Hitler made a speech in which he called for an end to the revolution. Middle class and conservative groups were uneasy about the growing threat that the SA posed. A group of Catholic conservatives in Vice-chancellor von Papen's office formed an opposition cell whose most striking moment was the Marburg speech of June 1934 in which they warned against the 'Second Revolution'. It was a rallying call for the army to act. This was a concern for Hitler who needed the collaboration of big business. The Security Service of the SS formed in 1931 under Heydrich was in competition with the SA to run state security. The SS and SD enjoyed a growing influence throughout 1933 and 1934 but it was clear to Himmler and Heydrich that their ambition to turn it into the most powerful organisation depended upon the destruction of the SA (despite them being part of the SA)</p> <p>Operation Hummingbird was the purge of the 30<sup>th</sup> June 1934 and was directed primarily at the SA leadership. Rumours of an SA plot had been fed to Hitler (by Himmler) and he was prepared to believe them. Hitler and a detachment of the SS travelled to Tegernsee (near Munich) where Rohm and leading SA members were staying. Rohm was arrested. Across the country as many as 200 people were killed. These actions were made legal with the introduction of the Law Concerning Measures for the Defence of the State. This law made murderous action legal as long as it was taken in self defence. Hitler justified the murder of so many leading political figures to the Reichstag on the 13<sup>th</sup> July. The events became known as the Night of the Long Knives.</p> <p>The removal of the SA pleased many leading army Generals and they now tied themselves closer to the regime. This explains why they ordered every member of the armed forces to take an oath of unconditional loyalty to the Fuhrer. It was preceded by the death of Hindenburg and Hitler declaring himself 'Fuhrer and Reich Chancellor'. 89.9% of Germans voted for this; a combination</p>

	<p>of violence and an image of respectability and legality.</p> <p>In 1937 at the Hossbach Conference Hitler clarified his thoughts on foreign policy. However leading members of the armed forces were sceptical about his plans including the Reich war Minister (Blomberg) and the Commander-in-Chief of the army (Fritsch). In their view Germany was not ready to go to war against Britain or France. In January 1938 the Gestapo tipped off to Hitler that Blomberg (recently married) used to be a Prostitute; he was sacked. There were rumours that Fritsch used to be involved with a rent boy; he faced military trial. Consolidation of power had been completed.</p>
<p><b>Nazi Propaganda</b></p>	<p><b><u>Purpose:</u></b></p> <p>To Hitler the message was more important than the substance. It must confine itself to a few points and repeat them time and time again; this will enable the masses to remember them. Its intellectual level must be adjusted to the most limited intelligence of those that it is addressed to. Goebbels' aim was to portray Nazism as a 'political religion'. The cult of the Fuhrer was to be developed alongside the desire for national rebirth. Hitler should be placed above the day to day hustle so that illegal actions could be attributed to subordinates (for example Kristallnacht). Propaganda allowed the Volksgemeinschaft to be formed as it re-enforced public prejudices rather than contradicted them. Propaganda was also to put down opponents, to indoctrinate, to enforce conformity and to convert all Germans to the historical task of regeneration. Many Germans were enthusiastic Nazi supporters who did not need any indoctrination. It may have won few converts but it rallied true believers and dulled the senses of the uncommitted. As a result of this, before 1945, most Germans did not blame Hitler for their problems but blamed the work of extremists. Even when facing defeat they believed that Hitler would find some miracle weapon.</p> <p><b><u>Methods:</u></b></p> <p>Political posters were common as they proclaimed ideas in a simple and inexpensive way. Prior to the March 1933 election they concentrated on urban unemployment and poverty, the plight of the farmers and the threats posed by the Marxists and Jews. After 1933 the posters concentrated on winning over Germans to the idea of a new community, for example posters celebrated national achievement such as the Autobahn. Goebbels concentrated on controlling the existing press. The 'Editors Law of 1933 called for racially pure journalism and thus Jewish and Communist newspapers were banned. The association of German publishers was purged of non-Nazis. In 1935 Amann was appointed its chair and shut down all non-Nazi publications. Goebbels realised that a sophisticated audience would not put up with a diet of crude propaganda and thus some liberal newspapers with mildly dissident views were allowed. To sustain the widest possible audience the government introduced the 'people's radio' which cost a little more than a weekly wage. They allowed Hitler to command authority whilst establishing a fireside intimacy with his people. After 1933 the Nazis enforced communal listening in factories, schools, offices and shops. Loudspeaker pillars were erected in public places. The cinema offered an ideal medium to propagate its ideology. The excitement of the big screen was cleverly exploited. Triumph of the Will (1935) showed the Nuremberg Rally and Olympia (1938) showed the Olympic Games. Hitler only appeared sparingly to preserve his myth like status. Reports suggest that the working class became bored by the flood of propaganda. There was no enthusiasm for the Anschluss as few wanted war and thus did also not support actions in the Sudetenland. Most were appalled by Kristallnacht which forced Hitler into acting more secretly in the future</p> <p><b><u>Events and Rituals:</u></b></p> <p>The first propaganda event was the ceremonial torch lit march through the Brandenburg Gate to celebrate Hitler's appointment as Chancellor and thus a new order of discipline after the Weimar years. The regime skilfully managed the events of the Reichstag fire which condemned the Communists and led to their leaders being arrested. It projected an image of a legal seizure of power which allayed conservative misgivings Potsdam Day consolidated Hitler's alliances with the moderate conservatives. The success of the Olympic Games was the masterpiece of Nazi propaganda. The anti-Semitic programme was suspended and the games were held in an atmosphere of political stability which impressed thousands of foreign visitors. Holy days were</p>

	<p>replaced with celebration days (Anniversary of the Munich Putsch etc) and this softened radical side of the regime with a veneer of celebration. Nazi ritual became so commonplace that it ceased to be identified as propaganda, the best form of propaganda. Many Berliners remained unmoved by the strutting columns of the SA and many were horrified by the parade to celebrate his appointment; believing him responsible for the Reichstag fire. Some were unmoved by Potsdam day believing it a put up job.</p> <p><b><u>Youth Propaganda:</u></b> Jewish teachers were dismissed and a new syllabus was enforced. RS was marginalised in favour of extra PE. History concentrated on the 'stab in the back theory' and warned about Communism. Boys were trained to be soldiers in the Hitler Youth and girls were taught to be loyal and prolific mothers in the League of German girls. These were made compulsory in 1936. Adolf Hitler schools trained the leaders of the future</p> <p><b><u>Cultural Propaganda:</u></b> In 1937 Hitler claimed the rebirth of Germany to be impossible without the rebirth of German art and culture. Music made Germans feel superior and invincible. Jewish composers were banned. Beethoven and Wagner was the preferred music. An exhibition was held of de-generate art in 1937 but it attracted embarrassingly large numbers. Artists were encouraged to glorify the nation and the family. Architecture was designed to be the symbol of Nazi power. Many public buildings were adorned by gigantic muscled figures of Aryan heroes. Propaganda convinced Germans of what they wanted to believe.</p>
<p><b>Terror State</b></p>	<p>One interpretation of the Gestapo was that it was powerful and extremely effective in arousing terror and horror, it saw the movement of every German. It was fed information by an extensive network of informers. However it was only 32,000 strong and was often short staffed. Most prosecutions were the result of reporting from hostile or jealous neighbours rather than by investigations by leather-clad agents. However it did strike fear into all aspects of society. In 1935 the courts ruled all police actions carrying out the will of the leadership to be legal</p> <p><b><u>Himmler:</u></b> Head of the SS, the Armed SS and was Chief of the German Police  <b><u>SS:</u></b> The SS had control over the Security Police (SD) and the Gestapo (Secret State Police)  <b><u>Armed SS:</u></b> These were units that guarded concentration camps  <b><u>Police:</u></b> They were in charge of the Regular police and had some control over the Gestapo  <b><u>Regular Police:</u></b> They had control over the ordinary uniformed police, the Rural police and the Fire-fighting police  <b><u>Gestapo:</u></b> They were the secret state police  <b><u>SD:</u></b> They were the Security Police</p> <p>Himmler was head of the SS, Armed SS and German Police. From his sprawling headquarters he controlled an army of desk bound bureaucrats, torturers, policeman, spies and informers who spread into every town, factory, school and house in Germany. This explains why so many Germans were willing to support the Fuhrer at local level. Countless thousands of Germans were interrogated, tortured and imprisoned</p>
<p><b>Types of Opposition</b></p>	<p><b><u>Trade Unionists and Socialists</u></b> The Trade Unions rushed to support the new regime due to the lack of opposition from the Communists. They believed if they supported Hitler then they would be rewarded with existence. In May 1933 they were crushed and co-ordinated into the German Labour Front There were a few examples of opposition (Elser who planted a bomb in 1939 in a room where Hitler was due to speak) but these were few and far between. Most Socialists remaining in Germany kept their heads down. An SPD report of 1936 claimed that the abolition of collective bargaining had destroyed worker solidarity. Workers felt increasingly isolated and threatened by spies and informers. Another report of 1938 concluded that workers were afraid of saying too much</p> <p><b><u>Workers</u></b> Historians are divided over the impact of the Nazi regime on the working class. Some argue that it was minimal and say that much of Nazi ideology was empty rhetoric and that far from loosening social hierarchy, the regime strengthened class divisions by favouring the interests of</p>

big business. Others argue that they did dislocate existing class structure which can be described as revolutionary.

Some skilled workers were enthusiastic about being converted to the regime and SPD reports speak about the desertion of their class struggle. A 1935 SPD report referred to worker compliance to the regime as the 'real mystery in Germany'. It can be explained by economic recovery

#### **Protestant Church**

The protestant church was sympathetic to the Nazi revolution as they had always been enshrined with the state and thus were attracted by national revival. They believed Weimar to be un-German and resented the rise of the Centre party. They had been tricked by the appearance of legality. Many believed the anti-Semitic programme as evidence of God's curse of the Jews. The churches remained silent when Kristallnacht took place. The German Christians (branch of Protestantism) advocated the wholesale restructuring of German Protestantism to embrace Nazi ideology. Muller led the German Christians and he was Hitler's nominee for national bishop, he thus won widespread support. He coordinated 28 Protestant churches into a single Reich church and incorporated 700,000 members of Protestant youth groups into the Hitler Youth.

Dissident Protestants formed the Confessional Church led by Pastor Niemoller and Pastor Barth. They were not opposed ideologically to Nazism; they just wanted to remain independent. In any case leading dissidents were imprisoned and over 700 priests were arrested in 1935 for condemning the teaching of paganism in schools

#### **Catholic Church**

The Catholic Church was more resilient as it had an internationalist following led by the Pope, its interests were also defended by the Centre Party. This party had been crucial in allowing Hitler to consolidate his power and the concordat had agreed that they could maintain social control in return for giving up political control. Thus the party dissolved itself. Tensions grew as Hitler broke the Concordat: crucifixes were banned from schools in 1935 and youth groups were banned in 1936. However once again dissent was not caused by an objection to Nazism but by a desire to exist and remain independent. There were many examples of Catholic support including for the Anschluss and the seizure of the Sudetenland.

#### **Army**

Many generals welcomed Hitler's denunciation of the Treaty of Versailles and his promise to restore the army to their previous status. Doubters were calmed by the apparent legality of the revolution and further collaboration was encouraged by Potsdam Day.

The army enthusiastically took part in the Night of the Long Knives and in the wake of this the army were happy to swear an oath of personal allegiance to Hitler, following the death of Hindenburg.

Between 1934 and 1938 the army became subordinated to the regime and one reason for this is that soldiers considered politics to complex to get involved with. Fritsch argued that they cannot change politics and thus must do their duty silently.

Further subordination was gained by the destruction of the Communist threat, the vast rearmament programme and the events in the Saarland and Rhineland.

Suspensions remained as a result of the Hossbach conference but this was dealt with during the Blomberg-Fritsch affair. By wartime the army had become a subordinate.

Opposition is active resistance to the regime. Some historians have attempted to include passive resistance within this. For example women wearing make-up and young people listening to jazz. This shows dissent from the regime without gaining a reaction from the security forces. This could also include the level of grumbling throughout the 1930s. In the 1930s Brozat termed dissent and non-conformity as Resistenz. He argued that this indifference limited the authority and impact of the regime.

This concept has been questioned by some historians and says that this indifference only existed because they were indifferent to politics as a whole. Women wore make-up not because they dissented from the regime but because they wanted to look good. Mallmann and Paul have instead coined the term 'Loyal reluctance'. The non conformity that existed did not challenge the regime or mean disloyalty to the regime. Discontent did not lead to rebellion. For example the peasants and working class who were primarily interested in day to day economic issues.

	<p><b><u>Communists</u></b> The communists believed the rise of the Nazis to be a signal of the imminent collapse of Capitalism and thus would lead into a workers revolution to bring about communism. Thus they decided to nothing and wait. This was a gross misjudgement and by the time they decided to reverse their stance, it was too late following the Reichstag fire. Communist opposition did not disappear completely. In 1934 the authorities seized 1.25 million communist leaflets and Gestapo figures suggest that there were 5000 active Communists in Berlin in 1935. Gleichaltung prevented this from turning into active opposition. Up until 1935 anti-Nazi material was still distributed; this was mainly the 'Red Flag' newspaper</p> <p><b><u>Conservative Elites</u></b> Few chose to actively oppose the regime. A group of Catholic conservatives (including von Papen) did form an opposition group. Their most decisive action was the Marburg speech of June 1934. This was a rallying call to the army to act against the 'second revolution'. Within days the regime crushed the circle and the purge of the SA satisfied the majority of any opposition.</p>
<p><b>Economic Recovery</b></p>	<p><b><u>Working Class</u></b> June 1933: Law to reduce unemployment set up work schemes to produce jobs. This included the building of the autobahn The Labour Service and Emergency Reliefs schemes put thousands back into work Between 1932 and 1935 5 billion Reich marks was poured into work creation schemes A 'Battle for Work' meant that the government lent money to private companies so that they could provide jobs In 1935 conscription was reintroduced which reduced the number unemployed Training schemes were set up for the unskilled workers 6 million jobs were created which attracted working class support Unemployment fell from 25.9% in 1933 to 7.4% in 1936</p> <p><b><u>Peasantry</u></b> In September 1933 the Reich Food Estate was created which took over the planning and organisation of agriculture In 1934 the regime launched a 'Battle for Production' to increase the production of grain. This was not successful due to the lack of machinery and labour</p> <p><b><u>Economy</u></b> In 1934 Schacht introduced the New Plan which gave the government extensive powers to regulate trade and currency transactions. This would solve the problem that one main cause of the Depression was the over reliance on foreign capital Mefo Bills were introduced. These were issued as payment for goods. They earned 4% interest each year that they were not exchanged for cash. They solved the problem of a lack of capital.</p>
<p><b>State Paternalism</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hitler wanted a disciplined workforce that would not challenge his dictatorship or threaten rearmament with excessive wage demands.</li> <li>• In May 1933 Trade Unions were put under Nazi control – within the German Labour Front – led by Robert Ley</li> <li>• Workers were compensated for their loss of rights by state paternalism</li> <li>• Beauty of Labour: Persuade employers to improve working conditions. This was done by promoting better lighting, cleanliness and the benefits of good meals</li> <li>• Strength through Joy: Rewarded loyal workers with evening classes, theatre trips, sporting competitions and package holidays</li> <li>• Winterhelp: Offered charity to the unemployed</li> <li>• Days of National Solidarity: Leading party members would collect money for the party</li> <li>• The promotion of cheap housing and the production of mass produced goods (people's radio and people's car) was the attempt to embrace all classes</li> </ul> <p>Kershaw argues that the grumblings of material dissatisfaction did not signify a rejection of Nazism which stood outside this day to day normality. He refers to this as the 'Hitler Myth'. Peukert agrees and says that this grumbling increased as time went on as Hitler was exempt from this criticism. Burleigh argues that state paternalism provided enough compensation for the exploitative capitalist bosses.</p>

<b>Women</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Women's Front was created by Ley in 1933. All 230 women's organisations in Germany were expected to expel their Jewish members and integrate into the Women's Front or face being disbanded.</li> <li>• Most women's organisations were happy to become part of the Women's Front as they were pleased to support a regime that was nationalistic and supportive of the traditional role of women</li> <li>• Teachers were encouraged to join the National Socialist Teachers' Alliance</li> <li>• By 1937 97% of 320,000 teachers had joined the NSLB</li> <li>• The NSLB took responsibility for indoctrinating teachers in Nazi ideology.</li> <li>• 15% of women teachers lost their jobs</li> </ul>
<b>Youth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boys were trained as fearless soldiers in the 'German Young People' (10-14) and the Hitler Youth (14-16)</li> <li>• By 1935 60% of all young people belonged to the Hitler Youth and it was made compulsory by the Hitler Youth Law (1939)</li> <li>• Girls were taught to be loyal, submissive and prolific mothers. At age 10 they joined the 'League of Young Girls' and at 14 the 'League of German Girls'. Membership became compulsory in 1936 and an oath of allegiance to Hitler had to be sworn from 1939</li> <li>• A minority of young people rebelled against the brutality of the regime. Working-class dissidents joined pirate groups such as the 'Edelweiss Pirates'. Disillusioned middle-class groups joined 'Swing groups' to celebrate American style culture</li> <li>• The school curriculum was amended to place an emphasis on racial theory, physical education and history</li> <li>• In 1937 the elite school system was set up. The Adolf Hitler Schools were established to train the political leaders of the next generation. The students were given military and political instruction to prepare them for leadership in the Third Reich</li> <li>• The majority of Germany's youth remained loyal to the dictatorship</li> </ul>
<b>Gleichaltung</b>	<p>The widely perceived threat of a Communist seizure of power explains why many non-Nazi groups were willing to go along with the initial phase of Gleichaltung. This was the bringing into line of different elements of German life; Nazification of German society</p> <p>A general consensus for Gleichaltung was gained by the Nazis going out of their way to portray their regime as respectable; opposition to a legitimate state was unthinkable and propaganda portrayed this legal seizure of power. This was a two way process whereby the Nazis ensured coordination but mainly where Germans were happy to disband their institutions voluntarily or reform them under the Nazi banner</p> <p>A considerable number of Civil servants joined the party in the wake of the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service of April 1933. This cleared the way for the purge of the Civil Service of 'unreliable' political elements. The business community disbanded its representative institutions and created the Reich Corporation of German industry which immediately pledged loyalty to the regime. Women's groups were dissolved and reformed as elements of the Nazi Women's Front. Judges and lawyers supported this due to their conservative philosophy. There was no protest when the lawyers were coordinated into the Nazi Lawyers Association in 1933</p> <p>In Bavaria in March 1933 Himmler set up the first concentration camp at Dachau to house political opponents in 'protective custody'. All the other states fell into line and by early April the Nazis controlled the parliamentary assemblies of all regions.</p>

**How efficient were the Nazi regime?**

	<b>INTENTIONALISM</b>	<b>STRUCTURALISM</b>
<b>Definitions</b>	<p>At the heart of the Nazi state was the ideology, personality and leadership of Hitler</p> <p>Hitler had a clear world view and the aims of it were defined in Mein Kampf</p> <p>He remained consistent to these aims throughout his political life</p> <p>There were moments when there was deviation from Hitler's programme but they were only for pragmatic reasons</p> <p>Hitler was all powerful and central to all events from 1933-1945</p> <p>All political decisions were made by Hitler; the Nazi state was a monocratic state</p> <p>There was political infighting and chaos but this was a deliberate policy of divide and rule</p>	<p>The key to explaining domestic and foreign policy developments was the context within which Hitler and other decision makers operated</p> <p>There were agencies, power blocs and individuals that competed in a chaotic structure</p> <p>This chaos existed because Hitler was unwilling to create an ordered system of government and because there was a lack of clear planning and direction</p> <p>This chaotic competition explains the radicalisation of policy up until 1945</p>
<b>Hitler's Bohemian Lifestyle</b>		<p>Hitler was by instincts an artist and from 1935 he lived in a way that did not conform to normal patterns</p> <p>He spent next to no time on administration of the government</p> <p>When in Berlin he would take lunch and then meet with dignitaries for no more than an hour in the afternoon. He would then take a walk, eat supper and watch films (his favourites included Disney cartoons).</p> <p>Guests would often be subjected to a lengthy monologue on Hitler's favourite themes before he retired to bed, sometimes as late as 2am.</p> <p>Hitler did not like Berlin, preferring the mountain air and sensational views from his retreat in Bavaria. There his routine was none too strenuous. He would emerge just before noon to read extracts from the</p>

		<p>newspapers. A lengthy vegetarian lunch would be followed by an afternoon walk down the hill for tea and cakes, before the same evening and night time routine as in Berlin.</p> <p>During the day he would occasionally deal with matters that were brought to his attention, but they would often be trivial, for example deciding on the punishment of traffic offences.</p>
<b>Economy</b>	<p>Intentionalists would explain the events with regards to the management of economical changes by saying it was part of the policy of 'Divide and Rule'</p>	<p>Hitler allowed Schacht free reign from 1933-1936 to reduce unemployment. However Hitler undermined him when he sanctioned the Four Year Plan led by Goring. The aim was to make Germany self sufficient with regards to raw materials</p> <p>Goring undermined Schacht so much that he resigned from his post in 1937. He was replaced by Funk who was willing to subordinate the Ministry of Economics to the Four Year Plan</p>
<b>Party vs State</b>	<p>Intentionalists would explain the events with regards to the struggle between the party and the state by saying it was part of the policy of 'Divide and Rule'</p> <p>Hitler was prepared to intervene and side with those most effectively interpreting his world view, for example in 1936 when he put Himmler in charge of the German police.</p>	<p>When Hitler became Chancellor the Civil Service remained intact. This then became increasingly challenged by the emergence of National Socialist agencies that ran in parallel to the traditional state. From 1935 Hess and Bormann were successful in asserting the dominance of the party over the state civil service. From 1937 all state officials were made responsible to Hitler and in 1939 it was compulsory for all civil servants to be members of the party.</p> <p>Hitler was not concerned to protect the interests of state or party. He was happy to support the civil service as it provided the legitimacy his regime needed and at the same time he allowed party organisations, such as the SS, to develop. These became mini-states and their influence depended on their ability to interpret the Fuhrer's will. Agencies were allowed to fight amongst themselves and the strongest</p>

		prevailed.
<b>Hitler and the Gauleiter</b>	Gauleiter were unquestioning in their support of the Fuhrer, they fought off all local opposition and thus were the backbone of Hitler's power.	<p>In 1934 the Law for the Reconstruction of the Reich meant Frick tried to put the newly created Reich Governors under his control as head of the Ministry of the Interior; thereby centralising control. It did not work because most of the governors were also Gauleiter with large local power bases. In the end Hitler agreed to place them nominally under Frick's control but in reality they could appeal directly to the Fuhrer.</p> <p>Rauschning was one of Hitler acquaintances up until 1934. To him Hitler was not a dictator but depended on the Gauleiter for his power; he said that he never had an opinion contrary to their wishes. It must be remembered that Rauschning fell out of favour with the regime and this would have clouded his views.</p>
<b>Hitler's Decisions</b>	Hitler's power as head of party, state and military was unassailable. The 'Triumph of the Will' showed him as a demigod worshipped by the German people and it was this propaganda that distanced him from the need to be involved in day to day decisions. The crucial peacetime decisions were made by Hitler; most notably the Night of the Long Knives.	From 1934 Hitler showed little interest in decision making. The number of cabinet meetings declined from 72 in 1933 to none in 1938. Hitler rarely read important documents before making a decision and disliked signing official papers. Instead subordinates sought a verbal agreement or a nod of the Fuhrer's head. (Fuhrer's orders). Sometimes contradictory orders led to confusion, for example when contradictory orders were given for and against Jewish emigration in November 1935.
<b>Foreign Policy</b>	<p>Hitler made all the key foreign policy decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear explanation of aims in Mein Kampf</li> <li>• Pragmatic diplomacy between 1933 and 1935 which support to revise the Versailles treaty</li> <li>• Introduction of rearmament and</li> </ul>	

	<p>conscription which strengthened Germany's position by 1935</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reoccupation of the Rhineland in 1936</li> <li>• Anschluss with Austria in 1938</li> <li>• Negotiation of the gaining of the Sudetenland with Britain and the seizing of Czechoslovakia between 1938-1939</li> <li>• The decision to invade Poland in 1939</li> </ul>	
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**Working towards the Fuhrer:**

- Hitler had a world view
- Hitler hated bureaucracy and saw himself above the day to day politics
- In failing to focus on routine matters he left a vacuum for others to fill
- Therefore power and influence was up for grabs
- You gained this power and influence if you successfully worked towards the world view in the right way for that particular time
- This led to cumulative radicalisation as Hitler (one of the most radical Nazis) would increasingly prefer and accord power to those that adopted an increasingly more radical position
- Hitler was a strong dictator in a state where all were 'working towards the Fuhrer'
- This explains how policies emerged

**This can evidently be seen in how the policy towards the Jews and disabled developed:**

- Following Hitler becoming Chancellor in 1933 there was spontaneous attacks against the Jews on the streets
- Streicher demanded a boycott of Jewish businesses in response to the American and European threat of a boycott in response to the violence. Hitler decided that it could only last a day as he was worried about international backlash.
- The unease about street violence resulted in the decision to introduce discriminatory laws instead. Ministers framed laws including Frick who framed the 'Law for the Restoration of the Civil Service' which prohibited Jews. 'On the hoof' racial policy continued because on the same day a law banned Jewish lawyers.

- Spontaneous violence broke out again in 1935. Once again it was still deemed necessary to adopt a legal approach to the Jewish question instead; thus in August Hitler ordered an end to the random attacks. In September Wagner (Reich Doctors' lawyer) made a speech indicating that a law banning mixed marriages was imminent. Civil servants presented four drafts to Hitler and Hitler chose the most conservative (Draft D) which made marriage between Jews and Aryans illegal. This was followed by a law that removed citizenship from German Jews and both of these became known as the Nuremberg Laws
- The Anschluss with Austria incorporated 195,000 extra Jews into the Reich. This caused a resurgence of street violence, much worse than had been seen before. This was followed by Goering's law that demanded Jewish property to be valued and registered to the state. In this atmosphere agencies competed to draft further legislation and in June 1938 Jewish doctors were forbidden from treating Aryan patients. Hess claimed credit for the January 1939 law which forced all Jews to adopt the names Israel and Sarah and for their passports to be stamped with a 'J'. In 1938 Eichmann created the 'Central Office for the Emigration of Austrian Jewry.
- By 1938 Goebbels had fallen out of favour due to his affair with the Czech actress and thus he used his position as Gauleiter of Berlin to cause agitation against the Jews, in order to gain approval. Shops in Berlin were attacked with ferocity. In November 1938 an official in the Germany Embassy in Paris was shot by a Polish Jew and the press seized upon this as evidence of a nationwide Jewish conspiracy. This gave Goebbels the green light for further radicalisation and violence against the Jews on Kristallnacht was widespread and extreme. Hundreds of Jews were murdered, 8000 businesses and synagogues were destroyed and over 30,000 Jews were arrested and sent to concentration camps. Himmler and Heydrich were not aware of the pogrom and Goering was angry due to the effects on the economy. Goering chaired the November 1938 meeting to discuss the next measures and it was decided that to pay for the damage that a huge fine would be levied on the Jewish community and the Jews were forbidden from economic life.
- By January 1939 Goering had set up the Reich Central Office for Jewish Emigration
- In early 1939 a father of a severely disabled child petitioned the Fuhrer asking that he allow his son to be killed. Hefelmann (an official responsible to Bouhler in the Reich Chancellery) took the petition to Hitler. Out of this was born a policy of child 'euthanasia' under the direction of Bouhler. The organisation to be responsible was nicknamed Aktion T4. The result was the death of up to 90,000 children.

## **Unit 6: Life in Germany during WWII**

### **How did WWII affect moral in Germany?**

#### **Response to victory**

Germans fought patriotically for their fatherland and celebrated the 1939 victories

On 8<sup>th</sup> November 1939 Georg Elser attempted to assassinate Hitler by exploding a bomb when Hitler was making a speech. The bomb exploded but not when Hitler was in the hall. Public opinion was relief and propaganda blamed the British

In June 1940 there was elation over the victory over France and this was replaced by frustration at Britain's refusal to submit

Morale was further damaged when Hess flew to Scotland in May 1941 to seek peace

#### **Response to defeat**

In June 1941 the war against the Soviet Union provoked concern especially when an appeal was put out for winter clothing for the troops

The failure to win outright victory in the east straight away led many to question Nazi ideology for the first time

Despite the bleak fortunes after Stalingrad propaganda was used to exploit patriotic defiance. Goebbels Total war speech (Feb 1943) rallied many.

As German forces were defeated in North Africa, the Soviet Union, the Atlantic and Italy, there emerged greater contempt for the Nazi leadership

Hitler's increasing isolation in his bunker in Berlin meant that the Fuhrer was prone to great criticism and jokes.

The defeat at Stalingrad clearly marked a turning point in morale.

Goebbels continued to offer hope in the form of a secret weapon – perseverance which generated a spirit of resistance

Once it became clear that the Allies could not be thrown back and that the V1 and V2 bombs (launched at the south east of England) would not have the required impact, morale sank to an all time low.

As the reality of defeat loomed, Nazi propaganda became less effective

#### **Response to rationing**

The regime was highly sensitive to the issues of rationing and shortages on the home-front. They wanted to avoid a repetition of the scarcities in basic foodstuffs and clothing that caused widespread unrest during the war

The consumer did not make considerable sacrifices until 1942 and the 1939 rationing system was fair and sufficient

For a predominately meat eating nation the ration of 500 grams a week was perceived as difficult but following conquest of Europe, there was an improvement in the supply of general foodstuffs.

The most serious reduction in rations was in April 1942 when the meat ration was cut to 300 grams per person. This caused unrest and so the ration was raised by 50 grams in October

Extra rations were given for those undertaking strenuous operations.

Propaganda stunts masked any rationing difficulties

Clothing became scarce in 1941 but this was a result panic buying at the beginning of the war

By 1942 there were shortages of soap, permits were introduced for furniture and household goods were rationed in 1943

### **Response to bombing**

The bombing campaign undertaken by the RAF and USAF was partly aimed at destroying the German war industry but also at undermining morale on the Home Front

The bombing caused widespread death and destruction. 305,000 Germans were killed and nearly 2 million homes destroyed.

Firestorms caused by the bombing of Dresden and Hamburg killed at least 80,000 civilians between them

The state attempted to provide bomb victims with alternative accommodation but demoralisation (especially in the Rhineland) was unavoidable.

The sense of impending doom was made worse by the knowledge of the approach of the Soviet armies

## **What was the opposition to the Nazis during WWII?**

### **The church**

There were a few signs of outwards resistance but were times when 'loyal reluctance' was pushed to the limit. Such an example involved the Bavarian Catholics as in 1941 the Gauleiter announced that all crucifixes in Bavarian schools should be removed. Wagner's order was met by a storm of protest and thus the order had to be reversed. The Bavarians were not expressing a dislike of the regime but wanted to defend their regional culture.

In August 1941 Bishop von Galen challenged the Nazi policy of killing asylum patients as part of the T4 programme and was spurred on to do so by the closure of local monasteries. Thus Hitler called off the campaign to close the religious institutions and ended the T4 programme. Once again this was not a philosophical objection to Nazism but an attempt to maintain independence and integrity.

Dissent was individual and not institutional and this explains why the Catholic Church did not publically condemn the extermination of the Jews.

### The Communists

Communist opposition was undermined by the Nazi-Soviet Pact. After 1941 opposition did not come from a single and united movement but from individuals and underground groups. The KPD and SPD formed small groups, published reports and maintained contact with exiled leaders.

Resistance cells were set up in factories and were coordinated by Robert Uhrig. In the summer of 1941 there were 89 factory cells of opposition in Berlin alone. They produced papers and pamphlets and called for acts of resistance. In 1942 the resistance was united under the leadership of Wilhelm Knochel. The weakness of this resistance was that it was vulnerable to Gestapo infiltration. In 1943 Knochel's movement was broken up and he was arrested.

Disillusioned by the inactivity of their leadership the SPD formed splinter groups including 'Red Patrol' and 'Socialist Front' who championed a more assertive policy.

### Youth

Disillusionment set in by 1939 and accelerated as Germany's fortunes in the war changed by 1942. It resulted from the regimentation of youth groups and as the military training intensified. The absence or loss of a father encouraged drinking, smoking and promiscuity amongst the youth.

A minority actively opposed the regime. Disaffected working class youths formed the Edelweiss Pirates who attacked members of the Hitler Youth. Hans and Sophie Scholl led Munich students in the White Rose Group which distributed anti-Nazi leaflets and sought to sabotage the German war effort. In 1943 the Scholls led an anti-Nazi demonstration in Munich which resulted in their arrest, trial and execution by the Gestapo

### Conservative opposition

From 1941 Goerdeler created a loose group that drew in a range of conservative and military opponents. Prominent in the group were officials in the Foreign Office who were disgusted by the violence used against the Jews. Thus by 1943 they tried to draw diplomatic links with the Allies. Most joined this group out of conscience.

In 1941 the Kreisau Circle was formed which appealed to the intellectual from a range of backgrounds. Their aim was to discuss the political and social landscape after the Nazi regime had fallen. The generation gap meant that there was a strained relationship with Goerdeler's group but all wanted to see the restoration of human rights and freedoms, an end to the war and a restoration of law and order. The Kreisau Circle was discovered by the Gestapo in 1944.

The numbers of conservatives who opposed the regime was not great but there were some individual acts of courage and conviction.

## The Army

In 1943 a serious nationwide opposition movement, led by dissident generals, emerged. They felt that the political interference by the SS had become intolerable, they were shocked by the atrocities against the Jews and realised that Germany was losing the war.

In 1944 Stauffenburg (linked to the Kreisau Circle) offered to assassinate Hitler by a bomb with a timing device. This was code-named Operation Valkyrie and its aim was to trigger a rising throughout the Reich which would oust the Nazi regime and replace it with a new order. This new government would then make peace with the Western Allies and end the war before Russia invaded eastern Germany. On 20 July 1944 the bomb was left in a briefcase by Hitler in a briefing room. . Hitler survived the blast because the briefcase was moved three places away, he was leaning over a heavy oak table that deflected the explosion and the wooden building dissipated the full force of the explosion.

Hitler's revenge was severe and hundreds of suspected conspirators were arrested, tortured and sentenced to death. Political officers were appointed to root out dissent in the army.

Overall army resistance was confined to a few individuals; its leadership was too naive and isolated to pose a sustained threat

## How efficient was the German war economy?

### War Production

In September 1939 the responsibility for the planning of the war economy was shared among competing agencies. The Ministry of War led the armaments programme and this rivalled the Ministry of Economics (led by Funk) and the office of the Four Year Plan (led by Goring)

Ironically between 1939 and 1940 (in order to maintain morale) output in the arms industry fell by 12.5% and output in the consumer industry rose by 16%

In March 1940 confusion with regards to war production was ended as a Ministry of Munitions was created under Fritz Todt

Operation Barbarossa in 1941 rapidly increased military expenditure on production for the war

From 1939 to 1942 the economy was not fully mobilised for war. Instead it fought a series of quick wars (called Blitzkrieg) which did not place great demands on production. Thus strains in the economy inevitable grew.

The lack of workers demanded increased efficiency. In February 1942 Speer was appointed Minister for Weapons and Munitions who developed plans for the rationalisation of industry

By 1943 Germany was struggling on the Eastern Front, thus a campaign of total war was launched. The plan was to improve production and productivity by closing all non essential businesses. This was reinforced by the appointment of Speer as Reich Minister for Armaments and Production. This gave him responsibility for all industrial output and raw materials.

From 1943 onwards Speer introduced a variety of labour, time and space saving methods to boost production. These included promoting the better use of floor space (increased the number of planes), reducing the number of tank models, centrally controlling raw materials, reducing the amount of aluminium needed in guns and the setting up of production lines (increased the number of tanks)

There was an impressive improvement under Speer in war production but there was still a lack of coherency due to the competing agencies/power blocs in forming policy

### **Raw Materials**

In 1939 Germany lacked the natural resources (iron, coal, oil) that it needed for a sustained war effort. Above all other it lacked high quality iron-ore. Goring tried to counter this by developing the production of low grade ore but it would never meet the demand of expanding military needs

Germany needed to annex other nations so that they could control their natural resources so that they could sustain a war. From 1942 Blitzkrieg started to fail and thus these resources were not forthcoming. For example Germany had a limited supply of oil, steel and coal.

The supply of high quality iron-ore increased as the war went on. There were imports from the neutral Sweden and the annexations of Europe provided high quantities.

### **Labour**

In the early days of the war there was a shortage of labour (3.5 million fewer workers in 1940 than in 1939) and this was made up for using mainly French prisoners of war. There were 2 million extra foreign workers but this was not enough to cover the numbers being drafted into the army

Foreign workers were treated appallingly and this lowered their productivity. For example from 1940 Polish workers suffered numerous restrictions, including being forced to wear a yellow bade marked with a P and not being able to use public transport

The shortage of workers in the early days of the war produced urgent measures. In August 1942 Fritz Sauckel issued a compulsory labour decree for all occupied countries. Thus by the end of 1942 there were some 6.4 million foreign workers in Germany

Between 1939 and 1944 only 2000,000 extra women joined the workforce and this was despite the labour shortage. This was due to Hitler's refusal to allow the conscription of women and the previous propaganda. Also the benefits paid to the wives of soldiers were a great disincentive to work. Also many women already worked in other jobs and the majority of these worked in textiles and agriculture – essential for the war

In 1944 there were attempts to increase production by improving the situation of all workers with regards to pay and overtime. In March 1944 all eastern workers were given the same pay and benefits as other foreign labourers

Attempts to improve conditions from 1944 for foreign workers were too little too late. Thousands died on projects such as the V2 rocket production for want of basic food, shelter and sanitary provision

## What caused the emergence of the Final Solution?

### Start of WWII

September 1939: WWII caused circumstances to emerge where the removal of the Jews could take place. The conquest of Western Europe in 1940 brought millions more Jews under direct Nazi rule. In October 1939 Himmler ordered the deportation of Jews from parts of Poland (to be administered by Hans Frank) and in January 1940 Jews were used for slave labour and confined to ghettos in many Polish towns.

Summer 1940: By this time Heydrich suggested that the three and a quarter German Jews under Nazi control be moved to suitable territory. The Foreign Office suggested Madagascar; Hitler was openly enthusiastic about the scheme. This plan was really one of annihilation as Madagascar could not sustain the Jewish population of Europe. The weakness of the plan was that it relied on gaining control of the seas.

### Invasion of the Soviet Union

June 1941: The invasion of the Soviet Union further increased the number of Jews. The invasion of Russia was justified by propaganda that referred to it as a 'racial war'. Thus the invasion of Russia is a reason for the Holocaust and not just a stage to it because the insistence on war between races was necessary to convince the public of the need to invade Russia and gain Lebensraum. Thus the need to destroy the Jews became a consequence of the policy to gain this living space. As Nazi troops swept across the Soviet Union, SS Einsatzgruppen were authorised to exterminate Jews; 700,000 were murdered in eight months.

### Failure in WWII

Autumn 1941: The shooting of Jews was not a realistic option for the millions in German-dominated Europe because it was messy. Deportation to Madagascar was also not really an option due to failed attempts to gain control of the sea. Hitler also dithered over the fate of the Jews because he saw them as potential hostages in dealings with the USA. The turning point came when Stalin deported ethnic Germans from the Volga region and when Roosevelt ordered that the US navy should order German warships on sighting.

Each Gauleiter in Poland became anxious to remove their Jews but as one deported another would have a greater number. Hitler and Himmler met in September to discuss deportations to the east. This decision taken brought the Final Solution a massive step further. It led to initiatives from numerous local and regional leaders as Jews arrived in their areas. For example in Lublin in Poland gassing facilities were set up for those incapable of work and in Lodz Jews were shot and gassed in vans

In November, in response to Goebbels prompting, the Fuhrer demanded that Berlin be rid of Jews and propaganda stirred up hatred. In late November invitations were issued to discuss the Jewish Question in Wannsee.

### Chaotic nature of the Nazi state

The final turning point was the declaration of war against the USA. On 18 December Hitler told Himmler that the 'Jews were to be exterminated as partisans'. A clarification of policy seemed to have been made.

In January 1942 the Wannsee Conference was chaired by Heydrich. At the conference Buhler asked that his area have its Jews removed as quickly as possible. By the spring work began on concentration camps. In the next few months Jews were deported to the ghettos in the east and then on to death camps.

Some within the SS wanted to fully exploit the labour resource. The SS employed Jewish labour in and around the concentration camps and were allowed to do so under the compromise that they worked them to death. At Auschwitz over 6 million Jews were murdered.

In the fulfilment of the Final Solution everyone from the army to the civil service was willing to 'work towards the Fuhrer'. Hitler authorised rather than directed but at times was decisive. Part of the pressure for a 'solution' came from below for example Frank who was concerned that his area was being used by Heydrich as a dumping ground for Jews. Thousands became trapped by 'working towards the Fuhrer'. The war allowed the cumulative radicalisation to continue at an even more alarming rate.

### 'WWII highlighted the inherent weaknesses of the Nazi regime' How far do you agree with this judgement?

1. Morale
2. War Production
3. Final Solution
4. Opposition