Edexcel History

Modern Depth Study: ***Weimar & Nazi Germany, 1918 to 1939***



Revision Guide

Questions on the exam

Question 1: ***Making inferences*** *(4 marks)*

* **Question 1** focuses on inferences - reading **in-between the lines of a source** to find its message …
* You should only spend **5-6 minutes** on this question.
* The sources could be **propaganda posters**, **accounts from people at the time**, **photographs**, or any **written** or **visual source** that is *from the period.*

***Example Questions:***

1. *Give* ***two*** *things you can infer from Source A about propaganda in Nazi Germany*
2. *Give* ***two*** *things you can infer from Source A about how Hitler kept power*
3. *Give* ***two*** *things you can infer from Source A about the stability of the Weimar Republic*
4. *Give* ***two*** *things you can infer from Source A about the Gestapo*
5. *Give* ***two*** *things you can infer from Source A about the Catholic Church in Nazi Germany*

How to answer the question

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| ***Step*** | ***What to do*** |
| ***1*** | Read in-between the lines of the Source *(****What is the message****).* Explain your first inference. Start by using the phrase, *“This Source suggests …”* |
| ***2*** | **Support your inference** using either **a quotation**, **paraphrasing** from the source, or making a **valid comment** about the source or its content … |
| ***3*** | **Repeat** for your second inference. |

Note:

* *The* ***detail you use*** *to support your inference* ***must come from the source****. You will gain no marks for adding your own information not included in the source.*
* *A quote from the source is* ***not*** *an inference - it is just telling the examiner what you have learned.*

Synonyms of the word: **Inference**

* *Extrapolate, insinuation, deduction, conclusion, reading …*

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| Sample answer**Q: Give two things you can infer from Source A about the stability of the Weimar Republic** |

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| **Sample: Source A****A confidential report on the Nazis by the Interior Ministry, July 1927.***A numerically insignificant…radical-revolutionary splinter group incapable of exerting any noticeable influence on the great mass of the people and the course of political events.* |

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| *(i) What I can infer:* The Weimar Republic had a lot of supporters.Details in the source that tell me this: “The great mass of people” were not persuaded to support extremist groups. *(ii) What I can infer:* Opposition to the Weimar Republic existed.Details in the source that tell me this: The source mentions “this radical-revolutionary splinter group” and such groups opposed the nature of the Republic. |

Make a valid inference Supports points with detail from the source

Question 2: ***Explaining causes*** *(12 marks)*

* **Question 2** is a causation question and is worth 12 marks. It is the same style as **Q4.** on the **Crime and Punishment**, and **Q5(b)** on the **Elizabeth** paper.
* **CAUSATION** means *explaining why something happened* and **assessing the importance** of these causes …
* You should spend **15-18 minutes** on this question …
* You will need to develop **AT LEAST *three clear points*** and **explain the importance** of **EACH** of them.

***Example Questions:***

1. *Explain why unemployment fell in Germany between 1933 and 1939. You may use the following in your answer:*
	* *National Labour Service (RAD)*
	* *Autobahns*

*You* ***must*** *also use information of your own.*

1. *Explain why the Nazis wanted women to focus on home and family life. You may use the following in your answer:*
	* *Marriage Loans*
	* *Birth rate*

*You* ***must*** *also use information of your own.*

1. *Explain why there was increased support for the Nazis in the years 1929-32. You may use the following in your answer:*
	* *Unemployment*
	* *Goebbels*

*You* ***must*** *also use information of your own.*

1. *Explain why there were changes to the lives of young people in Nazi Germany in the years 1933-39. You may use the following in your answer:*
	* *Nazi ideals*
	* *Education*

*You* ***must*** *also use information of your own.*

How to answer the question:

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| ***Step*** | ***What to do*** |
| ***1*** | Include a **short introduction** (**2 sentences**). Explain the **key theme of the question** and suggest the **key areas** you are going to cover. |
| ***2*** | Introduce your **first reason.** This could be from the **bullet point prompt** *OR* your **own point**. *“One important cause…”,* *“The first reason why…”* |
| ***3*** | **Fully explain** this reason. Use **your own knowledge of the period** to **support your answer** with **specific examples**. (c.**5-6 sentences**) |
| ***4*** | Introduce **your next reason**. This could be from the **bullet point prompt** *OR* your **own point**. *“Another important cause…”,* *“A further reason why…”* |
| ***5*** | **Repeat step 3** |
| ***6*** | **Repeat step 2** and **step 3** for your **third reason**. |
| ***7*** | Include **a conclusion** that rounds off your argument and answers the question directly. *“Overall, …”* |

*Note:*

* ***Explaining why*** *involves looking at the* ***key features of something*** *and thinking about* ***its causes****. Key features are* ***accurate & relevant knowledge****. Causes are what led to a situation/change happening.*

Synonyms of the word:  **Explain**

* *Make clear, give reasons for, account for, spell out, give an explanation for, justify …*

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| **Sample answer****Q: Explain why living standards improved between 1933-38. You may use the following in your answer:*** ***The Labour Front (DAF)***
* ***Rearmament***
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| Living standards improved in German society between 1933 and 1938 for many reasons. Firstly, the Nazis embarked on policies designed to reduce unemployment. For example, the RAD (National Labour Service) provided work for the unemployed. From 1935, it was compulsory for all young men to serve for 6 months and numbers reached 422,000 at its peak. This meant that young men received wages for work which improved their living standards. Spending on public works, such as autobahns, also increased rapidly, from 18bn to 38bn marks in 5 years. This also helped create jobs which in turn, gave people more spending money so that their standard of living improved. Secondly, the Nazis created organisations intended to improve people’s quality of life. The Labour Front (DAF) provided some protection for workers. Strength Through Joy (KDF) provided leisure activities, such as sports, events, outings and foreign holidays for Germans. These measures made life better for many Germans, particularly those who worked and their families. However, living standards did not improve for certain sectors of society. The Nuremburg Laws and other anti-Jewish legislation made life much more difficult for German Jews. For example, Jewish doctors were no longer able to treat non-Jewish Germans. Women were strongly discouraged from working once married and in some cases, forced to resign from their jobs. In this way, living standards for some Germans deteriorated because of Nazi policies between 1933 and 1938. |

Makes relevant points

Supports points with evidence

Links points to the question

Question 3 (a): ***Evaluating usefulness*** *(8 marks)*

* **Question 3(a)** is a **UTILITY question** and you must **analyse various aspects** of ***two sources.***
* You will need to assess the **provenance** of each source. This means the ***Nature****,* ***Origin*** *and* ***Purpose****,* sometimes abbreviated **NOP**. How does the **provenance** affect the usefulness of a source?
* You will also need to include **your own knowledge** to **support your assessment** of the **usefulness of sources**.
* You should **spend 15 minutes** on this question.

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| NOP Means |
| N | *Nature of the source*What type of source is it? A speech, a photograph, a cartoon, a letter, an extract from a diary? How will the nature of the source affect its utility (usefulness). For example, a private letter is often very useful because the person who wrote it generally gives their honest view. |
| O | *Origins of the source*Who wrote or produced the source? Are their views worth knowing? Are they giving a one-sided view? When was it produced? It could be an eyewitness account. What are the advantages and disadvantages of eyewitness accounts? |
| P | *Purpose of the source*For what reason was the source produced? For example, the purpose of adverts is to make you buy the products; people usually make speeches to get your support. How will this affect the utility (usefulness) of the source? |

***Example Questions:***

1. *Study Source B and C. How useful are Sources B and C for an enquiry into why people supported the Nazis? Explain your answer, using Sources B and C and your own knowledge of the historical context.*
2. *Study Source C and D. How useful are Sources C and D for an enquiry into the way Hitler came to power? Explain your answer, using Sources C and D and your own knowledge of the historical context.*
3. *Study Source B and C. How useful are Sources B and C for an enquiry into the Reichstag fire? Explain your answer, using Sources B and C and your own knowledge of the historical context.*
4. *Study Source B and C. How useful are Sources B and C for an enquiry into the effects of Nazi policies towards women in the years 1933-39? Explain your answer, using Sources B and C and your own knowledge of the historical context.*

How to answer the question:

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| ***Step*** | ***What to do*** |
| ***1*** | **Explain** the value of the **content of the source**. *“Source C is useful because…”, “Source C states…”* |
| ***2*** | Add **contextual own knowledge** when you **make a point**. *“This is supported by my contextual knowledge …”* |
| ***3*** | **Explain the value** of the **nature**, **origin** and **purpose** (**NOP**) of the source. |
| ***4*** | **Repeat step 2** |
| ***5*** | In your ***second paragraph***, **repeat steps 1-4** for the **second source**. |

*Note:*

* *Some sources you will study* ***will be propaganda*** *and may* ***also be biased****. This* ***does not*** *mean these sources* ***aren’t useful****. On the contrary, these sources can help historians understand the priorities of the authorities and the messages they wish to convey.*

*Tip*

* ***Highlight*** *or* ***underline*** *the* ***keywords for the provenance*** *(****NOP****) in the source that show either the utility (usefulness) or the limitations.*
* *When practising analysing sources for this question, you could copy the grid below. Write down any relevant content (value) contained with a source that can* ***help you assess its usefulness****.*

Sentence Starters

* *Source 1 is useful because it suggests (contents)…*
* *This is supported by my contextual knowledge…*
* *Moreover Source 1 is also useful because of (NOP)…*
* *This is supported by my contextual knowledge…*

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| ***Source 1*** | ***Value*** | ***Contextual Knowledge*** | ***Source 2*** | ***Value*** | ***Contextual Knowledge*** |
| *What does the source tell you?* |  |  | *What does the source tell you?* |  |  |
| *What view does the source give?* |  |  | *What view does the source give?* |  |  |
| *Nature* |  |  | *Nature* |  |  |
| *Origins* |  |  | *Origins* |  |  |
| *Purpose* |  |  | *Purpose* |  |  |
| *Content* |  |  | *Content* |  |  |

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| **Sample answer****Q: *Study Sources A and F. How useful are Sources A and F for an enquiry into the reasons for the formation of the Weimar Republic.*** |
| Source F is useful because it provides evidence that there was a high level of tension in Germany in 1918, with large numbers of rebellious workers carrying arms. With such tension, Germany’s political leaders wanted to set up a new government quickly to prevent further disorder. The source is an eye-witness account of the workers’ marches, by an observer who was very involved in the cause of the workers, so she would have known exactly what was going on.The author was herself a communist leader so she would have wanted to write an account which was positive towards the workers and hostile to the bourgeoisie. This means her account may not accurately reflect the size of the workers’ demonstrations and the extent of opposition towards them. The source is accurate because on 7 November 1918, workers declared a general strike in Munich and announced that Munich would break away from the rest of Germany and have their own government. Source A is useful because it suggests that Germany’s former government had totally collapsed and a new government was required to stop anarchy. The source is also useful because it suggests that Germany was in a state of crisis immediately after the First World War with multiple problems, such as starvation and despair. This makes it a useful source because it links the formation of the Weimar Republic clearly with the fall of the Kaiser, which was a direct result of the end of the First World War. |

**Makes relevant points Supports with evidence Links points to the question**

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| **Sample: Source A****From the papers of Jan Smuts, a South African politician who visited Germany in 1918***…mother-land out civilization [Germany] lies in ruins, exhausted by the most terrible struggle in history, with its peoples broke, starving, despairing, from sheer nervous exhaustion, mechanically struggling forward along the paths of anarchy [disorder with no strong authority] and war.* |

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| **Sample: Source F****From a description by Rosa Levine-Meyer of events she saw in the streets of Munich in April 1919. Levine-Meyer was a communist leader who set up workers’ councils in Munich in 1919 to replace the local government.***The streets were filled with workers, armed and unarmed, who marched by in detachment…Lorries loaded with armed workers raced through the town, often greeted with jubilant cheers. The bourgeoisie (the middle classes) had disappeared completely.* |

Question 3 (b): ***Identifying and explaining differences*** *(4 marks)*

* **Question 3(b)** is an **interpretation question** asking you to ***identify and explain*** one **main difference** between **TWO interpretations**.
* Analyse and look for the **important** OR **key differences**, not just the surface differences.
* Allow **10 minutes for this question** to give yourself time to read the extracts.

What is an Interpretation?

* ***Questions 3(b), 3(c) and 3(d) all deal with the same two interpretations*** of a past event or person so it is important to have a good grasp of what an interpretation actually is. Equally, **questions 3(b), 3(c) and 3(d)** will all feature the same theme/topic.
* An interpretation is a **historian’s account** or **explanation** *based on evidence.*
* Unlike sources, interpretations are written ***after the time period*** or ***event****.*
* There are different interpretations about a past event or person **because the writer could focus on** *or* **give emphasis to a different aspect of a past event or person**, or may have **consulted different sources** from the past.
* The writer will **carefully choose words** and select or omit (exclude) certain details to **emphasise this view**.
* The fact that there are two interpretations **does not necessarily mean that one of them is wrong**. The two writers might simply have **used different sources** or they **might have used the same sources**, but ***reached different conclusions***.

***Example Questions:***

1. *Study Interpretations 1 and 2. They give different views about the German public’s support for the Nazis. What is the main difference between the views? Explain your answer, using details from both interpretations*
2. *Study Interpretations 1 and 2. They give different views about the way Hitler came to power. What is the main difference between the views? Explain your answer, using details from both interpretations*
3. *Study Interpretations 1 and 2. They give different views about the effects of Nazi policies towards women in the years 1933-39. What is the main difference between the views? Explain your answer, using details from both interpretations*
4. *Study Interpretations 1 and 2. They give different views about the extent of German recovery in the years 1924-29. What is the main difference between the views? Explain your answer, using details from both interpretations*

How to answer the question:

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| ***Step*** | ***What to do*** |
| ***1*** | Identify the ***main*** view that interpretation 1 has. *“Interpretation 1 suggests …”* |
| ***2*** | Include **evidence from the interpretation** to **support this view**. |
| ***3*** | **Repeat step 1 and step 2**. *“On the other hand, interpretation 2 suggests …”* |

Definitions of the word: ***Interpretation***

* The action of explaining the meaning of something
* An explanation or way of explaining
* A way of interpreting
* A particular point of view

*Tip:*

* *Try to use specific language in your answer such as: ‘argues’, ‘claims’, ‘states’, ‘on the other hand’. These phrases help produce a better answer because they show you are analysing another person’s judgement or opinion about something …*
* *When practising analysing interpretations for this question, you could* ***copy the grid below****.*

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|  | *What view does it give on the [Insert Question topic]?* | *What evidence from the interpretation supports this view?* |
| ***Interpretation 1*** |  |  |
| ***Interpretation 2*** |  |  |

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| **Sample answer****Q: *Study Interpretations 1 and 2. They give different views about the reasons for the formation of the Weimar Republic. What is the main difference between these views? Explain your answer, using details from both interpretations.*** |
| A main difference is that Interpretation 1 emphasises that ordinary people, such as workers and soldiers, wanted a big change to the way Germany was governed. They wanted ‘far-reaching political change.’On the other hand, Interpretation 2 focuses on ordinary people voting for the ‘3 moderate democratic parties’. Therefore, they did not want any radical change, but a moderate, democratic government. This does not match the view of Interpretation 1. |

**Identifies view of interpretation Analyses both interpretations Supports comments**

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| **Sample: Interpretation 1****From *The Weimar Republic* by John Hiden, published in 1996**In the face of such pressure, existing order virtually collapsed. The rapid spread throughout Germany of workers’ and soldiers’ councils confirmed that people were attracted to the prospect of far-reaching political change. |

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| **Sample: Interpretation 2****From *The Coming of the Third Reich* by Richard J. Evans, published in 2004**Fear and hatred…gun battles, riots and civil unrest…ruled the day in Germany at the end of the First World War. Yet somebody had to take over the reins of power…Radical elements looked to the workers’ and soldiers’ councils. [But] instead of revolution, Ebert wanted parliamentary democracy…Many ordinary electors in Germany saw voting for the three moderate democratic parties as the best way to prevent the creation of a communist revolution. Not surprisingly, therefore, [in January 1919] the Social Democrats, the Democratic Party and the Centre Party gained an overall majority in the elections to the Constituent Assembly. The constitution which it approved in July 1919 was just a modified version of the [old German constitution] established nearly half a century before. |

Question 3 (c): ***Suggesting reasons for different views*** *(4 marks)*

* **Question 3(c)** is an **interpretation question** asking you to **explain WHY two interpretations DIFFER** …
* This question **continues on from the previous one** and uses the **SAME two interpretations**.
* You need to offer and explain an idea about **why there are differences between two interpretations**.
* You need to show you understand that historical interpretations are judgments and opinions based on evidence and that, as a result, different views can exist
* Allow **5 minutes** for this question.
* You **do not** have to refer to the sources if you do not want to. You **will not lose marks** if you **don’t mention them**.

***Example Questions:***

1. *Suggest one reason why Interpretations 1 and 2 give different views about German public support for the Nazis. You may use Sources B and C to help explain your answer.*
2. *Suggest one reason why Interpretations 1 and 2 give different views about how Hitler came to power. You may use Sources C and D to help explain your answer.*
3. *Suggest one reason why Interpretations 1 and 2 give different views about the effects of Nazi policies towards women in the years 1933-39. You may use Sources B and C to help explain your answer.*
4. *Suggest one reason why Interpretations 1 and 2 give different views about the extent of German recovery in the years 1924-29. You may use Sources A and B to help explain your answer.*
5. *Suggest one reason why Interpretations 1 and 2 give different views about the standard of living of German workers in Nazi Germany. You may use Sources A and D to help explain your answer.*

How to answer the question

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| ***Step*** | ***What to do*** |
| ***1*** | Provide a clear reason why the interpretations differ. *“The interpretations may differ because…”* |
| ***2*** | Analyse and explain the **emphasis of interpretation 1**. *“Interpretation 1 emphasises that …”* |
| ***3*** | **Strengthen your explanation** by **referring to the sources** or *detailed* information of your own. *“For example, Source C describes…”, “This supports interpretation 1…”*  |

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| ***4*** | **Repeat step 2** and **step 3** for **interpretation 2**: *“On the other hand, interpretation 2 states…”, “…supports interpretation 2”, “…as supported by Source B”* |

*Note:*

* *One reason why interpretations may differ is that* ***historians have different focuses*** *and have* ***chosen to give weight to different evidence****. If you use this reason, you* ***should*** *refer to both sources in the question to support this (for example, the evidence from the period differs).*

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| **Sample answer****Q: Suggest one reason why interpretations 1 and 2 give different views about the reasons for the formation of the Weimar Republic** |
| The interpretations may differ because the authors have used different sources of information to support their claims. Interpretation 1 claims that order had collapsed and the workers‘ councils were gaining influence. That information is backed up by Source A, where there is talk of anarchy, and Source F, where we learn that armed workers were driving through Munich and were very popular (“…often greeted with jubilant cheers”). Interpretation 2 mentions moderate Germans who supported voting for a new government. This interpretation does point out that radicals looked to the workers’ and soldiers’ councils, which links to what is covered in Source F, however, it goes on to talk about how many ordinary Germans voted for moderate parties and that is not mentioned in the sources. |

**Identifies a reason for difference between the interpretations**

**Uses sources to support comments**

**Uses interpretations to support comments**

Question 3 (d): ***Evaluating interpretations*** *(16 marks + 4 SPAG marks)*

* **Question 3(d)** is an **interpretation judgement question** asking you to *make a judgement* **on a viewpoint given by one of the interpretations**.
* You need to **give a balanced answer** which agrees ***and*** disagrees with the interpretation using **evidence from the interpretation** as well ***as your own knowledge***.
* You should give **detailed knowledge** of the context and wider issues.
* Ensure you use **both** interpretations in your answer, ***NOT just the one stated in the question***.
* You should spend **30 minutes** on this question.

***Example Questions:***

1. *How far do you agree with Interpretation 1 about the way Hitler came to power? Explain your answer, using both interpretations and your knowledge of the historical context.*
2. *How far do you agree with Interpretation 2 about German public support for the Nazis? Explain your answer, using both interpretations and your own knowledge of the historical context.*
3. *How far do you agree with Interpretation 2 about the effects of Nazi policies towards women in the years 1933-39? Explain your answer, using both interpretations and your own knowledge of the historical context.*
4. *How far do you agree with Interpretation 2 about the extent of German recovery in the years 1924-29? Explain your answer, using both interpretations and your own knowledge of the historical context.*

How to answer the question

* *Note: This particular step-by-step guide is presented on the basis the questions asks: “How far do you agree with* ***Interpretation 2*** *…”*

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| ***Step*** | ***What to do*** |
| ***1*** | Provide a clear line of argument. State whether you agree or disagree with the interpretation referred to in the question. For example: *“I agree/disagree with the views in interpretation 2…”, “I strongly agree/disagree…”, “I agree/disagree to an extent with…”* |
| ***2*** | **State the view given in interpretation 2** using *evidence from the interpretation itself*. *“Interpretation 2 supports the view that …because …”* |
| ***3*** | **Agree with the view presented in interpretation 2** using your own knowledge. You should provide **several examples** using precise terminology and ***own knowledge***. *“From my own knowledge…”* |
| ***4*** | **Disagree with the view given in interpretation 2** ***using evidence from interpretation 1***. You should provide several examples to support your line of argument. *“Interpretation 1 challenges the view that…”, “However, Interpretation 2 does not take into account…”* |
| ***5*** | **Disagree with the view given in interpretation 2** using ***your own knowledge***. *“However, Interpretation 1 does not show …”, “The key reasons I do not support interpretation 1 is …”* |
| ***6*** | Make a **final judgement** on the view given in interpretation 2 *(the question’s interpretation).* *“Overall, I agree/disagree with Interpretation 2 because…”* |

*Tip:*

* *Be clear in your own mind what your judgement is and what your line of argument will look like. Highlighting key points in the interpretation can help you focus on the precise arguments you need to evaluate to make your judgement.*
* *Remember there are 4 marks awarded for Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) as well as the use of specialist and appropriate terminology. This includes keywords that could include the names of political parties, the names of key figures or facts during the time period outlined in the question.*

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| **Sample answer****Q: *How far do you agree with Interpretation 2 about the reasons for the formation of the Weimar Republic? Explain your answer, using both interpretations and your knowledge of the historical context.*** |
| … Interpretation 2 suggests that there was a high level of unrest in Germany in the immediate post-war period, but that German society was generally moderate, feared communism, and wanted a democratic government based on the traditional principles of the old German constitution, which led to the formation of the Weimar Republic. There were communist uprisings in the post-war period, such as the Spartacist Revolt. It is also true that ordinary electors preferred the moderate, mainstream parties because in the National Assembly elections of 1919, the three moderate parties gained 77% of the seats. However, Interpretation 1 suggests that “far-reaching political change” was the driving force behind the formation of the Weimar Republic, not moderate views. This suggests Interpretation 1 is wrong. Although communist rioters did rush the streets of Berlin before the announcement of the republic in November 1918, moderate politicians in the Social Democratic Party were able to take control of Germany and set up the Weimar Republic. They did this by making agreements with the army to protect the new republic and by suspending the old parliament until a new constitution was agreed. Therefore, Interpretation 1 is still valid.Although Interpretation 1 suggests Interpretation 2 may not be correct, I do agree with Interpretation 1 about the reasons for the formation of the Weimar Republic. The first elections for the Weimar Reichstag produced a governing coalition, which represented moderate views (made up of about 45% of seats). However, the radical parties took about 20% of votes on the left and 20% on the right. So, there may be something in Interpretation 1’s differing view. However, the majority of the evidence seems to suggest that Interpretation 2 is correct. |

**Identifies view of interpretation**

**Analyses interpretation with factual knowledge**

**Reaches clear judgement**

**Substantiates judgement with specific evidence**

Revision Topic Checklist: Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39

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| **Topic** | **R** | **A** | **G** |
| ***Key topic 1: The Weimar Republic 1918-29*** |  |
| The legacy of the First World War |  |  |  |
| The abdication of the Kaiser, the armistice and revolution 1918-19 |  |  |  |
| Setting up the Weimar Republic. Strengths and weaknesses of the new Constitution |  |  |  |
| Reasons for the early unpopularity of the Republic, the ‘stab in the back’ theory |  |  |  |
| Key terms of the Treaty of Versailles |  |  |  |
| Challenges to the Republic from the Left and Right: Spartacists and Kapp Putsch |  |  |  |
| Challenges of 1923: Hyperinflation and the French occupation of the Ruhr |  |  |  |
| Reasons for economic recovery, including the work of Stresemann |  |  |  |
| The Rentenmark, Dawes and Young Plans, American loans and investment |  |  |  |
| The Locarno Pact, joining the League of Nations, the Kellogg-Briand Pact |  |  |  |
| Changes in standard of living, including wages, housing, employment insurance |  |  |  |
| Changes in position of women in work, politics and leisure |  |  |  |
| Cultural changes, including developments in architecture, art, literature and the cinema |  |  |  |
| ***Key topic 2: Hitler’s rise to power, 1919-33*** |  |
| Hitler’s early career: joining the German Workers’ Party (DAP) and setting up Nazi Party |  |  |  |
| Early growth and features of the Party. The 25-Point Programme |  |  |  |
| The role of the SA |  |  |  |
| The Munich Putsch: reasons for, events and consequences |  |  |  |
| Reasons for limited support for the Nazi Party, 1924-28 |  |  |  |
| Party reorganisation and Mein Kampf, The Bamberg Conference of 1926 |  |  |  |
| The growth of unemployment – its causes and impact. |  |  |  |
| Failure of Weimar governments to deal with unemployment 1929-1933 |  |  |  |
| The growth of support for the Communist Party |  |  |  |
| Reasons for growth of Nazi Party, appeal of Hitler and effects of propaganda and SA |  |  |  |
| Political developments in 1932, roles of Hindenburg, Bruning, von Papen and Schleicher |  |  |  |
| The part played by Hindenburg and von Papen in Hitler becoming Chancellor in 1933 |  |  |  |
| ***Key topic 3: Nazi control and dictatorship, 1933-39*** |  |
| The Reichstag Fire, Enabling Act and banning of other parties and trade unions |  |  |  |
| Threat from Rohm & the SA, Night of the Long Knives, Death of Hindenburg, Fuhrer |  |  |  |
| The Police State: role of Gestapo, the SS, the SD and concentration camps |  |  |  |
| Nazi control of the legal system, judges and law courts |  |  |  |
| Nazi policies towards Catholic & Protestant church, including Reich Church & Concordat |  |  |  |
| Goebbels and Propaganda: Nazi use of media, rallies, sport and Berlin Olympics of 1936 |  |  |  |
| Nazi control of culture and the arts, including art, architecture, literature and film |  |  |  |
| The extent of support for the Nazi regime |  |  |  |
| Opposition from the Churches, including the role of Pastor Niemoller |  |  |  |
| Opposition from the young, including Swing Youth and the Edelweiss pirates |  |  |  |
| ***Key topic 4: Life in Nazi Germany, 1933-39*** |  |
| Nazi views on women and the family |  |  |  |
| Nazi policies towards women: including marriage, family, employment and appearance |  |  |  |
| Nazi aims and policies towards the young: The Hitler Youth and League of Maidens |  |  |  |
| Nazi control of young through education, including curriculum and teachers |  |  |  |
| Nazi policies to reduce unemployment: labour service, autobahns, rearmament, |  |  |  |
| Nazi racial beliefs: policies and treatment of minorities |  |  |  |
| Persecution of the Jews: Boycott of Jewish shops, Nuremberg Laws and Kristallnacht |  |  |  |

Revision Notes - Overview

*Part 1:* **Weimar Germany, 1919-1929**

By the end of 1918 Germany was facing defeat in the Great War. On 11th November the German government surrendered to the Allies. In June of 1919 the controversial **Treaty of Versailles** was signed. The Treaty formally ended the war but left many in Germany very angry and caused great problems for the German government which signed it.

The Treaty was widely condemned in Germany but, particularly by the Nationalists who called it a ***diktat*** and described the politicians who signed it as traitors and criminals who had 'stabbed the German Army in the back' *(****dolchstoss****).*

Germany had become a Republic on 9th November 1918 *(known to history as the Weimar Republic because the government was forced to meet in Weimar as a result of the unrest in Berlin),* and the new government faced many problems, not least of which was the burden of the Treaty of Versailles.

In addition to opposition from right wing Nationalists, the Socialists who formed the first government also had to deal with an attempted Communist (**Spartacist**) revolution in January 1919. This was defeated with the help of the former soldiers, the ***Freikorps***, but they were no great supporters of the Socialists and led their own uprising - the **Kapp Putsch** - in March 1920. This was far more dangerous as the German Army, the *Reichswehr,* refused to fire on the Freikorps, and was only defeated when the Socialists called on the workers to strike in Berlin.

The Constitution would cause many problems for the governments of the new republic. There were many positive, democratic features of the constitution, and some even called it the **most democratic** in the world, but it had several **fundamental weaknesses**. The president had the power to **appoint and dismiss the Chancellor**. If he considered that there was an **emergency**, he could use **Article 48** to suspend democracy for a time and **rule** by **issuing decrees** or **laws**. *This was to prove decisive in the* ***breakdown of democracy*** *in Germany after 1930.*

In addition, because of **proportional representation**, no party ever had an **overall majority** in the Reichstag. This meant that all governments were **coalitions**, which had to be put together from **several parties**. This, in turn, often led to **weak governments** that could *not agree on policies.* It proved disastrous in times of crisis, such as **1929-30**. Proportional representation also encouraged the growth of **extremist parties** such as the **Communists** and **Nazis**.

The Treaty of Versailles not only caused great political problems for the Weimar Republic, but also a grave **economic crisis**. Reparations demands of £6,600 million to rebuild Belgium and France almost crippled the German government, and when in January 1923 it claimed it could not pay, French troops invaded the Ruhr. Passive resistance to the occupation and the printing of masses of German banknotes led to the financial catastrophe of **hyperinflation** and the collapse of the Germany economy. Thousands were ruined by the disaster and this in turn created further resentment towards the government which would ultimately prove advantageous for the National Socialist Party of Adolf Hitler. In the short term though, Hitler and his extremist message remained unpopular, as the total failure of his **Munich Putsch** demonstrated in November 1923.

This proved to be the peak of the Weimar Republic's early problems. Largely due to the activities of **Gustav Stresemann**, the governments' fortunes improved, and with the help of huge loans from the USA under the **Dawes Plan** of 1924, the economy recovered so that by 1929 Germany was once again Europe's leading economic power. In foreign affairs, Germany's position had also improved as the **Locarno Pact** had led to Germany's admittance to the **League of Nations** in 1926. The situation was dramatically better than the bleak days of November 1923 and has been described as the **Golden Era** of the Weimar Republic's short life. However, disaster was never very far away, and the German economy, dangerously reliant on continued American loans, was plunged into chaos as a result of the **Wall Street Crash** in October 1929.

The Nazi Party had begun life in 1920 when Hitler took control of a small right-wing group in Bavaria with limited appeal and turned it into something more noticeable in a Germany awash with tiny, extremist groups. In 1919 on his discharge from the army Hitler had gained work as an informant for the military authorities and one of his first assignments had been to report on the activities of the **German Workers’ Party**. He soon took control of the party and renamed it the **National Socialist German Workers’ Party** (shortened to **Nazi Party**). Hitler’s message was anti-Versailles and anti-Semitic, but it also contained socialist ideas to appeal to Germany’s workers. To begin with Hitler did not raise much of an eyebrow outside Bavaria. However, with Germany seemingly in a state of near collapse in November 1923 he sensed an opportunity. With his **Brownshirts** (**SA**) he attempted a *putsch* in Munich with the help of the right-wing Bavarian Commissar, **Gustav von Kahr** and General Ludendorff. The **Beerhall *putsch*** was a complete failure, several Nazis were killed and Hitler was arrested and put on trial. And yet, Hitler did manage to make some gain - he was given an opportunity to criticise the Republic and the government at his trial and became a national figure due to the publicity his speeches received. He also received a very lenient sentence of fove years despite the seriousness of his crime.

On release from prison, Hitler set about rebuilding the Nazi Party, having realised that they didn’t yet have enough support to seize power by force. Instead they would work to build up support democratically and gain power through legal means. This tactic did not appear to be working in the 1920s as German voters turned away from the Nazis. The prosperity of the Stresemann era meant that they had no need of a ‘catch-all party of protest’. The Nazis’ electoral performance - 14 seats won in 1924 and 12 in 1928 - reflected this. However, there were signs of success as the party’s membership grew enormously during this period, with over 100,000 members by 1928.

*Part 2:* **Hitler’s Germany, 1929-1939**

Germany was dragged into the Depression, and by 1933 over 6 million Germans were out of work. Unemployed, starving and homeless Germans were quick to blame the Weimar politicians again - they had never forgotten the trauma of 1923 - and they began to turn in their millions to Germany's extremist parties, the Communists and the Nazis.

Hitler's message which had been largely ignored by prosperous Germans in the 1920s was now listened to, sometimes by 100,000s of people in huge open-air rallies. Hitler preached that Germany's problems were the fault of the weak, treacherous Weimar politicians, the 'November Criminals', Jews and Communists who had no love for the Fatherland (Germany), illustrated best by their betrayal of Germany at Versailles. Hitler promised the German people that he would rid them of Versailles, and the Jews, he would return Germany to greatness, and perhaps most persuasively he claimed he would create millions of new jobs.

Clearly the German people heeded Hitler's often hysterically delivered message and voted for the Nazis in their millions. From a mere 12 seats in 1928, the Nazi Party claimed 107 seats in 1930, and rose to a massive 230 sets in July 1932 to become the largest party in the Reichstag.

However, power still eluded the Nazis mainly due to the crude activities of their armed thugs, the SA, who fought running street battles with their Socialist and Communist rivals. Fear of a **Communist takeover** was an important reason why many Germans, particularly the middle-classes, voted for the Nazis and in **January 1933** Hitler finally achieved power as the government seemed helpless to improve the desperate plight of millions of Germans without the support of the Nazis.

Hitler was appointed **Chancellor** on 30th January, and within two months had assumed almost full power as a result of the **Reichstag Fire**, March election and the highly significant **Enabling Act**. The latter allowed Hitler to act as a dictator and his first significant act was to ban Germany's **trades unions**, replacing them with the Nazi-run German Labour Front (**DAF**). **Political parties** soon followed (July 1933) and Germany became a 'one party state'.

Germany quickly became a **totalitarian police state** as-the lives and even thoughts of ordinary German citizens became increasingly controlled by the government. Hitler's political police and most dedicated followers, the **SS**, led by **Heinrich Himmler**, kept a close watch over the activities of the German people, informed of all anti-Nazi behaviour by the secret state police, the ***Gestapo***, and for determined opponents of Nazism the **concentration camps** soon claimed them.

All Germans were subjected to an almost constant barrage of Nazi propaganda, directed by the Minister for Enlightenment and Propaganda, **Josef Goebbels**. All forms of media - film, radio, newspapers and literature were censored to project the Nazis in a good light, and even education was tailored to suit Nazi objectives - Goebbels had famously said, *"the object of Nazi education policy is to produce dedicated Nazis."*

Meanwhile, even more unpleasant developments had been taking place concerning Germany's **Jewish population**. In April 1933, the Nazis had organised a nationwide boycott of Jewish shops and businesses, and from there it became progressively worse as Germany's Jews were gradually stripped of their German citizenship, it even being made unlawful for Jews to have sexual relations with non-Jewish Germans after the **Nuremburg Laws** of September 1935. The Nazis' anti-Semitic acts culminated in the wholesale devastation to Jewish properties caused on **Kristallnacht** in November 1938.

The Nazis had gained power largely as a result of their claims that they were Germany's **'Last Hope'** and promises that they would create millions of jobs.

To a certain extent they carried out these promises and by 1939 unemployment had been reduced to under half a million, However, though Nazi schemes were often impressive - new *autobahnen*, *Volkswagen*, Olympic and other stadia, grand rebuilding of Berlin and other German cities Nazi propaganda again disguised the real story. 'Invisible unemployment' Jews, women, un-married men under the age of 25, part-time workers accounted for much of the reduction.

And were the Germans better off? Millions had new jobs and Strength Through Joy and Beauty of labour gave Germans better working conditions and more leisure time, but real wages had fallen, standards of living for most Germans but especially Jews and women had also declined since the Weimar Republic, and ultimately the German people lost their most precious asset of all - their freedom.

More Detailed Notes - Depth

*Key topic 1:* The Weimar Republic 1918-29

**Kaiser Wilhelm II**

The Kaiser was the King or Emperor of Germany. He was the grandchild of Queen Victoria. He ruled Germany from 1888 to 1918.

Wilhelm was a power hungry leader who longed for Germany to have a great Empire similar to that of Britain or France. His ambitions regularly brought him into conflict with Britain and France such as the Agadir Crisis. This ambition led to an alliance with the Austro-Hungarian Empire which would ultimately plunge the world into the First World War after the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand.

Throughout the First World War, Wilhelm proved ineffective as a leader and left much of the decision making to his top generals. When it became quickly apparent that the war was lost, **Wilhelm abdicated the throne** and fled to the Netherlands. **Wilhelm became the last Emperor of Germany**.

**The First World War**

The First World War was a global conflict which Germany had fought in alongside her ally Austria-Hungary. Germany had faced the allied powers which included Great Britain, The United States, France, Italy and Russia. Despite defeating Russia in 1917, Germany ultimately lost the war. The war drained and exhausted Germany not just financially but also in terms of population too.

The war had **cost Germany around 2 million soldiers**, and more than double that injured. In addition to these losses, the **people of Germany were equally war weary**. In the later years of the war, the British had **blockaded** Europe ensuring that food supplies were cut off. This forced many in Germany into **starvation**. Germany lost the war of attrition at home and then subsequently lost the war in the trenches.

The war was **causing significant problems** for the German Government **as unrest spread across the countries** with strikes and rebellions taking hold.

**Creating the Weimar Republic**

The Kaiser abdicated on November 9th 1918, after it became clear that he could no longer command any authority in Germany. Many politicians in Germany realised that in order to keep order and prevent any revolutions a **new government** would **have to be formed quickly**.

As the largest party in the Reichstag, the **Social Democratic Party** (**SPD**) set about forming a government. The leader of the SPD **Friedrich Ebert** became leader of Germany and the following day he agreed with the army to work together to keep communists from taking power. To create change quickly, Ebert suspended the Reichstag and created a Council of People’s Representatives. It was this council that would govern until the new country was up and running. The council was filled with people who were seen as being in the middle, and who did hold extreme political ideas such as the communists.

Another early act of the new government was to **sign the Armistice** with the Allied Powers to end the fighting of the First World War. Whilst for Germany this was the right thing to do, it quickly became clear that the **peace treaty would prove problematic for Germany** and **encourage bad feeling** to spread among the German people.

The Council and Ebert could not set up the new country on their own so required help to do so. Ebert made sure that many of the parts of the German state were kept together. Civil servants were encouraged to stay in post and work to build a new Germany. Ebert realised the importance of these people as they ensured that public services operated and that crucially taxes continued to be collected.

Ebert **won the support of the Army**, who would in return for no reforms, ensure that the government was protected and that revolutions and rebellions were suppressed. Together with the reassurances to industry this brought some control and stability to Germany after the abdication of the Kaiser.

**The Spartacist Revolt**

The Spartacist Revolt was an **uprising of the extreme left** designed to establish a communist state in Germany and destroy the Weimar Republic. It was led by the Spartacist League which was a group within the German Communist Party. The Spartacist League was led by **committed communists Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht**. Both hoped to bring about the end of the Weimar Republic and establish a Soviet state similar to what had happened in Russia during the First World War. Indeed, the Soviet Union was a large supporter of the German Communist Party.

Early in January 1919, Friedrich Ebert sacked the popular head of the police Emil Eichhorn. Eichhorn was popular among many in Berlin and as a result of his sacking, workers protested in the streets. Upon seeing this action, the Spartacist League took the opportunity to rebel and bring down the government. Following on from the protest over the sacking of Eichhorn, a general strike was declared on January 6th 1919. Over 100,000 workers were involved in the action and rebellion. During the strike the Spartacists seized key government buildings including the telegraph offices.

The Weimar government found the revolt difficult to deal with and had to call in the **Freikorps**. The Freikorps put down the rebellion, with most workers and rebels being cleared by January 13th 1919. The ring leaders **Luxemburg** and **Liebknecht** were **arrested and killed by the Freikorps**.

**Political Violence 1919-1923**

Throughout the period 1919-1923 there was significant political unrest in Weimar society, be that in the form of assassination, judicial bias and the creation of private armies all **caused political unrest in the Republic.**

To counter the unrest that existed, political parties created private armies which would help defend their meetings and protect their leaders and members should they need help. These private armies were made up of former soldiers. These groups often caused as much violence as they prevented. This is because those groups who defended would also cause damage to those people who they saw as opponents. It was not uncommon for right wing paramilitary men to beat up communists and vice versa.

In addition to this street violence, there was also a significant number of **political assassinations** of **high profile Weimar politicians**. **Walther Rathenau** as foreign minister was assassinated in 1922, as well as members of the Council of People’s Representatives. In total during the period there was 376 assassinations and murders of mainly moderate or centrist politicians. When it came to trying those guilty of carrying out the murders, left wing assassins were almost always convicted, whilst **those on the right tended to get away with it**. This judicial bias existed in the courts as many of the judges were right wing themselves.

**The Freikorps**

The Freikorps were a **group of former soldiers** who had fought in the First World War but due to the military restrictions placed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles **were out of work**. When they had been disbanded from the army when the war ended, many had simply held onto their weapons.

Many of these former soldiers were **still loyal to the Kaiser** and **supported right wing parties**, meaning that they **hated the communists**. When the Spartacist Revolt broke out, they were organised by Ebert and told to suppress the uprising. After the Spartacist revolt there were about **250,000 Freikorp members**.

**Challenges from the extreme right**

The Republic faced **challenges** from the **right wing of German politics**. This did not simply mean the **Nazis** but also parties such as the **National Party**. Many of these right-wing groups hated the Weimar Republic and wanted to bring back the Kaiser. They were strong believers in nation over person and were enthusiastic backers of law and order, capitalism and traditional ‘family’ values.

Inside the Reichstag, the extreme right managed to achieve around 20% of the seats, similar numbers to the extreme left. This meant that the extreme right and extreme left could frustrate the moderate parties who were hoping to form a government. This is something that the Nazi party did well in the later years of the Weimar Republic.

Outside of the Reichstag there were significant challenges from the right of the political spectrum with the **Kapp Putsch in 1920** and then the **Munich Putsch in 1923**.

**Challenges from the extreme left**

Those **parties on the extreme left** did not support the Weimar Republic at all and as such were keen to challenge the new Republic. The extreme left did this both inside the Reichstag and on the streets. The main party which symbolised all of this was **the Communist Party** (**KPD**) who wanted to get rid of capitalism and create a Communist State for the benefit of the workers.

Inside the Reichstag, the extreme left managed to obtain around 20% of the seats. This was a similar figure to the extreme right. With around 40% of the seats between them they could cause significant problems for the governing moderate parties who often struggled to create coalitions in the Reichstag due to the large number of small parties.

Outside of the Reichstag the **Communists also challenged the Republic** through the use of private armies to protect the party but also through rebellion such as the **Spartacist Revolt**.

**Strengths of the Weimar Constitution**

The Weimar Republic was designed to be one of the most democratic systems in the world and this was seen as a major strength in the Constitution. Democracy was ensured through several different methods. Firstly, there was universal suffrage, meaning anyone who was over the age of 21 could vote. When German citizens went to go and vote they did so under a system of proportional representation. Proportional representation was a system designed to fairly represent the wishes of the German people when they voted in elections. If a party received at least 60,000 votes then they would receive one member or deputy in the Reichstag.

The entire system was created to spread power between all the different parts of the government and make sure that no one part had too much power. The system during its design borrowed from the system used in the United States which had a system of Checks and Balances.

The President chose the Chancellor based on the elections to the Reichstag. The President could also call elections to the Reichstag and he too was elected for seven-year terms. The Reichstag was powerful as it controlled money in the Weimar Republic, but the Reichsrat also voted on laws which meant that if they did not agree then they could slow down the passage of laws.

This was a basic form a checks and balances that existed and was a good example of people attempting to create a democratic system which would thrive after the abdication of the Kaiser.

**Weaknesses of the Weimar Constitution**

Despite being one of the strengths proportional representation was also one of the largest weaknesses of the system. Proportional representation resulted in the formation of coalition governments often made up of a number of parties. This meant that there were often differing ideas about how Germany should be governed. When parties disagreed it often meant that the government collapsed and they needed to have fresh elections.

This problem of governing was often made worse through the frequent use of the emergency powers. Emergency powers were established in the constitution under Article 48. Article 48 resulted in the President being able to rule by decree rather than consulting the Reichstag. This meant that the Chancellor would present laws to the President who would then simply issue them. This power was often used in a time of crisis when swift and decisive government was needed. However, in practice, it was often used simply when the Reichstag couldn’t agree.

Linked to the idea of emergency rule was revolts and rebellions. There were many rebellions and revolts against the government, including some supported by the political parties represented in the Reichstag such as the National Socialists. When in a time of crisis, the government of the Republic had used the armed forced and independent militias such as the Freikorps to suppress rebellion, which had caused bad feeling to spread among those opposed to the Republic.

**The Treaty of Versailles**

The Treaty of Versailles was the treaty which settled the terms of peace after the First World War. Germany was not present at the Paris Peace Conference where the victorious allied powers decided these terms.

The Treaty ended up punishing Germany for the war and finding Germany guilty of starting the war. As well as war guilt, Germany was forced to pay £6.6 billion in reparations to the allies and had their army reduced to 100,000 soldiers. In addition to this, Germany was not allowed any tanks, submarines nor aeroplanes. The size of the navy was restricted further to ensure Germany could not start another war.

If this wasn’t enough, Germany lost all her overseas colonies and had land taken off her in continental Europe. Alsace-Lorraine was given to Germany, the Polish corridor was created and the German city of Danzig was made a free city. The total percentage of land lost was 13% which equated to 12.5% of their population. Further punishments were included in the Treaty such as the demilitarisation of the Rhineland which bordered France and the prohibition of union with Austria.

Germany saw the Treaty of a dictated peace and gave it the name ‘diktat’. Many Germans blamed the Weimar Republic for betraying Germany with their agreement to such harsh terms.

**The Kapp Putsch, March 1920**

The **Freikorps** grew in strength after the Spartacist Revolt in 1919, however in March 1920, the government of the republic attempted to disband the Freikorps. It was at this point that the Ebert government lost control of the Freikorps which they had previously controlled. The former soldiers who made up the Freikorps did not want to become unemployed again as they had after the First World War. It was during **March 1920** that **the Freikorps turned against the government**.

When the Freikorps turned up in Berlin, Ebert initially **ordered the German army to stop the rebellion**, however, the army **refused to do anything** as they did not wish to go against former soldiers. In face of this lack of opposition, the Freikorps managed **to take over Berlin** and declare new government. The new government was headed up by **Wolfgang Kapp** who invited the Kaiser to return from the Netherlands to retake his post as Emperor of Germany.

The **Weimar government** had fled Berlin and in an attempt to stop the putsch, **encouraged the workers of Berlin to go on strike**. This strike brought Berlin to a standstill and meant that it was very difficult for the new government to do anything as all essential services were stopped. This resulted in the **collapse of the putsch** after only **four days**. Wolfgang Kapp was caught and arrested and the Weimar government returned.

**The Occupation of the Ruhr**

The Ruhr was an industrial region of Germany close to the border with France. The Ruhr was also home to a number a coalfields, vital to Germany’s industrial capacity. Germany relied on this industrial capacity to help it pay reparations.

As part of the Treaty of Versailles, Germany was required to pay reparations to the allied powers. In order to do this, Germany would sometimes pay reparations in kind, in the form of coal and goods, however at times, Germany could not pay the reparations. During December 1922, Germany stopped paying. As retaliation, the French invaded the Ruhr region and started to seize goods and factories to make up for the lack of payment.

Germany could not respond with force as they were too weak and had a military that was **severely restricted by the Treaty of Versailles**. In response to the occupation by the French, the German government ordered workers to **resist the occupation**. This was known as **passive resistance**. As part of the resistance, the workers in the Ruhr went on strike and refused to assist the French occupiers. The French did not take kindly to the strikes and proceeded to arrest anyone who was unhelpful to the occupation and ultimately the French brought in workers from France to assist.

Overall, **the occupation** of the Ruhr **caused huge problems for Germany**. Much of the country’s raw materials were located there and now this was in the control of the French. One of the central consequences of the occupation was a rise in prices due to the lack of goods and raw materials. This rise in prices is known as inflation. Another consequence of this was that the government **collected less tax money**. This was due to the unemployment in Germany as unemployed people cannot pay tax. To tackle this shortage, the government **decided to print money**.

**Causes of Hyperinflation**

The Occupation of the Ruhr, lead to significant shortages for goods and food. In order to ration the shortage of goods, it meant that prices rose. A general rise in prices is referred to as inflation. As a result of this, it meant that people had to spend more of their pay packets on essentials.

The Weimar Republic was struggling with the reparations repayments after the First World War, and was receiving far less money from taxes than it had initially done due to the rise in unemployment. If people are unemployed it means that they are not earning and therefore not paying taxes. In order to resolve the problem, the government decided that printing the money it needed would be the best solution.

The printing of money created further problems for the government. As more money was printed, it meant prices rose quickly, this situation of rapidly increasing prices is known as hyperinflation. For example, the price of bread increased from 1 mark per loaf in 1919 to 200,000 billion marks in 1923.

**Effects of Hyperinflation**

As with any economic situation there were winners and losers. Under hyperinflation, whilst **there were some winners** there were on the whole **more losers from the economic situation** in the Weimar Republic.

*Firstly,* the **shortages experienced** during the occupation of the Ruhr **became worse**. The more money that the government printed the more the money became worthless. This meant that when other countries exchanged their money to Reichsmarks it wasn’t worth anything, as a result imports to Germany fell and the shortages became worse. Germany could not import the goods they needed for survival.

*Second*, **daily life became difficult for many in Germany**, hyperinflation created a situation in Germany whereby **prices rose** **almost hour by hour**. People were paid twice in a day and often had to take piles of money to the shops in wheelbarrows. Shopping stopped becoming about paying for goods with money but started to develop into an exchange economy whereby goods were swapped for each other, e.g. food for toiletries.

As the **money became worthless**, people with savings suddenly found that their **savings were now worthless.** For example, if you had saved 500 marks prior to hyperinflation, this amount did not increase as prices did. The value of these savings stayed at 500 marks.

There were **winners however**, anyone with debts sound that they were easily repayable as the value of these debts did not increase either.

**Causes of the Munich Putsch**

The **Munich Putsch** had a number of causes, both long and short term which led to the putsch being carried out in November 1923. Long term causes are those which happen over a period of time, normally years or decades, they ‘bubble’ away in the background. Short term causes, sometimes referred to as triggers, occur right before the main event which often are seen as being a direct cause.

**Long Term Causes**

The Nazis built their support around people who were patriotic Germans, who also agreed with Hitler that those who had signed the Treaty of Versailles were criminals and had betrayed Germany. Therefore, as a result many of the people who supported the Nazis detested the Weimar Republic and what it stood for. The more problems that the government had such as hyperinflation or unemployment, the more members the Nazis attracted. Therefore this hatred and resentment had been building since the end of the First World War. The Munich Putsch was an outlet for this anger.

**Mid Term Causes**

The idea of marching on a city and taking power was not new, certainly not in Germany which had seen uprisings by the Spartacists and the Kapps. Hitler drew inspiration from these but also from the events in Italy. Mussolini had marched on the Italian capital with his Fascist Movement and taken power, much in the same way Hitler wanted to do. Hitler was able to learn from the failures of the Spartacist and Kapp revolts and gain inspiration from the events in Italy.

**Short Term Causes or Triggers:**

In the months leading up to putsch, Germany was gripped by the **Hyperinflation crisis**. Money became worthless, savings wiped out and prices rising. Linked to this was the invasion of the Ruhr by French forces as a result of the Weimar Republic stopping paying the war reparations. These events showed the Republic and incapable and weak. The Nazis and their supporters capitalised on these and launched the Putsch, hoping that they could bank on the dislike of the Republic by ordinary people.

**The Munich Putsch, November 1923**

The Munich Putsch was an armed rebellion and attempted take over by the Nazis to establish a dictatorship in the **Bavarian city of Munich** in November 1923. The aims of the putsch was the **overthrow the Weimar Republic**.

On the 8th November 1923, the leaders of the regional Bavarian Government were speaking at a **beer hall in Munich**. Hitler and the Nazis took over the beer hall claiming that they had taken over the government and would use the putsch as a means to take Berlin and **take over Germany**. Hitler used his connections with **General Eric Ludendorff** who would become head of the German Army in Hitler’s new Germany.

Whilst Hitler was subduing the leaders of Bavaria, **Rohm and the SA** had taken over the the headquarters of the police and army. However, the Nazis had neglected to take control of the barracks which provided support for the Bavarian government. Ludendorff undermined the putsch by letting the leaders of the government go home. Hitler attempted the following morning to take the streets of Munich, however the release of Bavarian leaders meant the regional government were prepared for the Nazis and used the army to **suppress the putsch**.

Hitler had **miscalculated the support that the Nazis would have in the putsch**. Many locals did not support the Nazis and he had failed to get the army to support him. The putsch ended with a stand off between the local army, police and the Nazis. **Gunfire was exchanged and the putsch defeated**. Hitler escaped but was found on 11 November and arrested for the putsch.

**Consequences of the Munich Putsch**

The Munich Putsch had **several initial consequences** for Hitler and the Nazis, but like the causes there were **longer term consequences** as well.

**Initial Consequences**

In the ***first instance*** the Nazi Party **was banned from operating** in Germany. Those who remained loyal to the party found other ways of keeping national socialist ideas alive and ensuring the party stayed around. Some formed the **German Party** which was essentially the Nazi Party by **another name**.

***Second***, Hitler was **sentenced to five years in Landsberg Prison** on the charges of treason. Hitler got off lightly as **many of the judges were sympathetic to Hitler’s ideas**. Whilst in prison Hitler has access to a secretary and lived in relative comfort. It was during his stay in prison which Hitler wrote his work ***Mein Kampf****.*

Finally, **Ludendorff** was **let off completely**, again down to the sympathy of the judges involved.

**Long Term Consequences**

**Nazis Using Democracy**

It became apparent to Hitler that the Nazis could not take power by force, and that he should use the mechanisms of the Weimar Republic to take power instead. It should become the Nazis main aim to use elections to win seats in the Reichstag and Hitler become leader of Germany.

**2. *Mein Kampf*** *(****My Struggle****)*

Whilst in prison, Hitler wrote his political ideas into a book titled ***My Struggle***, perhaps better known as Mein Kampf. In this detailed his ideas and beliefs which would form the core text for the Nazis. It would eventually be given as a gift to all couples getting married.

**3.** Eventually the **ban on the Nazis was lifted** and they competed as a party once again in elections.

**4.** **The trial of Hitler** was published in newspapers helping gain national coverage for his views and opinions.

**The Dawes Plan, 1924**

The Dawes Plan 1924 was an **agreement signed between the Allies and Germany**. It was devised by a banker from the United States called **Charles G. Dawes**. The need for such a plan came about as the Allies were fed up with Germany not paying the reparations.

The basic idea behind the plan was to **make it easier for Germany to pay the reparations**. In order to do this, there were two strands to the plan.

* **Reparations reduced** in the short term **to 50 million pounds per year**;
* the United States would **give loans to Germany** to be used on their industrial capacity. The loans totalled **$25 billion**.

As a result of the signing of the deal, the reparations payments were resumed, and **the occupation of the Ruhr came to an end**.

These measures took steps to **improve the German economy**. As a result of US loans Germany industry thrived and employment increased. The government also saw tax revenues increase as a result of the increased employment.

**The Locarno Pact, 1925**

The **Locarno Pact of 1925** was an **agreement** signed between Britain, France, Belgium, Italy and Germany. It was signed on 1st December 1925. Stresemann believed that through signing the Pact, it would increase confidence in Germany from her own people but also other European powers. The pact had three main aims.

The **first aim** of the Locarno Pact was to **secure borders of the nations of Europe** after the First World War. Germany agreed to the border with France, and as a result of this France agreed that they would be in a state of peace with Germany.

The **second aim** of the Pact was to ensure the **permanent demilitarisation of the Rhineland**. This was a key condition argued for by France. France had been invaded a significant number of times in the previous century by Germany so the French were understandably weary about German military force.

The final agreed action from the Locarno Pact was that negotiations would start to **allow Germany into the League of Nations**.

Stresemann signed the Pact as he believed it would **make a conflict in Europe less likely** to occur between the European powers. As a result of the work Stresemann had done for Germany in developing her foreign relations, **he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1926**.

As well as personal glory for Stresemann, the signing of **the Locarno Pact showed that Germany was starting to be treated as an equal partner in foreign affairs**. The agreement was made with Germany and not forced upon them like the Treaty of Versailles. As a result of this many moderate Germans had greater confidence in Stresemann and the Republic. However, extremist parties such as the Nazis and Communists till detested the Republic and saw the Locarno Pact as further betrayal of Germany as it confirmed many of the points of the hated Versailles peace deal.

**Stresemann and Recovery**

Stresemann had sought to make Germany a respected country both by its own people but also by those foreign countries who at won the First World War. In order to do this, Stresemann needed a strategy that would win respect for Germany abroad but not remove support from home and allow extremist parties into power.

The **Dawes Plan**, **Young Plan**, **Locarno Pact**, **League of Nations** and **Kellogg-Briand Pact** meant that moderate Germans had boosted confidence in the country and her leaders. It was clear in elections that this confidence existed as **support for extremist parties** such as the National Socialists **fell away** and **moderate parties** such as the Social Democrats and Centre Party **made gains**. These gains ensured that when crisis struck in 1925 after the death of the President Friedrich Ebert. Ebert was replaced by Hindenburg who was led the Army during the First World War. He was a strong figurehead and ensured that Stresemann’s and Ebert’s work was continued.

However, **this rise in confidence did not last**. Stresemann had a heart attack in **October 1929**. This loss to Germany combined with the **global economic crisis** that came three weeks later, ensured the erosion of moderate support and the **increasing support for extremist parties** such as the Nazis.

**Living standards in the Weimar Republic**

Living standards refers to the **quality of life which people have in a country**. Living standards **can get worse** when the economic circumstances are poor such as **high unemployment**. They **can, however get better**, when **economic circumstances are good** when **wages rise** for example.

In the Weimar Republic, after the First World War, **living standards were poor** due to the economic difficulties which the country faced such as hyperinflation. After 1924, living standards started to improve as a result of actions carried out by the Weimar Republic. Many of the **actions of Stresemann** are linked to the increasing living standards.

**Unemployment:**

Unemployment stood at 4% in 1924, however from this point onwards unemployment began to fall. Before the economic difficulties set in during the global depression, unemployment **stood at 1.3 million**. In addition to the fall in unemployment, there was an increase in help for those who became unemployment. The government passed the **Unemployment Insurance Act** which took 3% of worker’s wages and **provided a form of unemployment benefit** to those who were out of work.

**Employment & Pay**

As well as employment increasing, **standards of employment and pay did improve also**. The total number of hours in a working week fell and despite the fall, **wages increased by 25%** between 1925 and 1928.

**Housing**

After the war and the early post war years the **housing stock in Germany** was of **poor quality** but also **was in short supply**. In order to improve this, the government announced that rent would have a tax placed upon it totalling 15% which would fund house building. **Housing Associations** build the majority of new houses. **Sixtyfour thousand new homes** were build this way and half as much again were built by companies. Significant progress was made by those building houses, however **in 1928** there was **still a shortage of houses**.

**Significant improvements** were also made in the **treatment of war veterans** and in the **provision of education**.

**Women in the Weimar Republic**

Compared to other countries **the rights of women in the Weimar Republic were advanced**. When the new constitution was created for the Republic, Women were given the **right to vote** and the **ability to stand for election**. Women responded to the changes well with high turnout in elections and by 1932 **112 women had been elected** to the Reichstag.

In addition to the political rights that were created, **women received further rights that were protected under the constitution** including equal rights with men, the right to enter any employment and marriage becoming an equal partnership.

Like Britain, women in Germany **worked in factories** and **other war work** during the First World War. When the war ended a majority of women were working, this amount dropped as the Weimar Republic developed. This is potentially down to the fact that **men simply picked up the jobs from women** when they returned from war.

Women **did not receive equal treatment** in work despite the protections in the constitution. They were often paid less, expected to give up work when they got married and many women still not occupy positions in the top positions of the country.

Women did not lose out completely, retail jobs saw an increase as did jobs in sectors such as education.

*Key topic 2:* Hitler’s rise to power, 1919-33

**Creating the Nazi Party**

The Nazi Party was originally called the **German Worker’s Party** which had been founded in **February 1919**. The party was led by **Anton Drexler**. Hitler was sent by the German Army to report on the German Worker’s Party. Hitler attended his first meeting in September 1919 and eventually joined having been won over by the party’s ideas.

Hitler was a **fantastic orator**, and his appeal **helped him gain control of the party**. By 1921 he had **replaced Drexler as leader** and established his iron grip over the party. Hitler stamped his mark over five key areas of the party. He reshaped the party’s policies, organisation and leadership. He also created the ***Sturmabteilung*** (**SA**), as the Nazi private army or **Brownshirts**.

Hitler started his control slowly building his powerbase through differing roles including being responsible for the party’s propaganda. With Drexler he developed the **25 Point Programme** for the German Worker’s Party.

**Hitler’s Personal Appeal:**

Hitler attracted many to the meetings of the German Worker’s Party **through his speeches.** He practiced his speeches and his speaking style in order to make it the most persuasive they could be. He made use of tone and gestures for maximum effect to persuade people to join the party and follow the ideals. As a result of his speeches **membership soared to 3,000** in 1920.

**Party Organisation:**

HItler as propaganda lead for the party, Hitler suggested some major changes which made the party into the one we are often familiar with.

Hitler suggested a new name for the party, designed to embrace the party’s major policy areas of **nationalism** *and* **socialism**. The idea was to link the three areas of nationalism, socialism and workers. The ***new name*** of the party became the **National Socialist German Worker’s Party** (**NSDAP**) or **Nazi Party**.

Hitler also suggested **a new logo** and **salute for the party** which now consisted of *a black swastika in a white circle with a red background.* The colours were chosen as they were the colour of the former Imperial Germany.

Hitler also **professionalised the party** by employing an administrator who could manage the party well. This vital step ensured that party **saw its membership and revenue increase**.

A final tactic by Hitler also saw the party buy **a newspaper** called the **People’s Observer**. This ensured that the views of the Nazi Party were being read all over Munich, Bavaria and Germany.

**Hitler Takes Total Control**

Hitler **took complete control of the Nazi Party** in **January 1922**. During a conference, Hitler persuaded members that election of the leader was a mistake and that the Nazis did not need this. He also banned debate on the party policy.

This crushed any democracy that existed within the party and ensured that he had total control over the entire party.

**The 25 Point Programme**

The 25 Point Programme was drawn up by Hitler and Drexler to plan out their vision for a perfect Germany. It was based around the ideas of Nationalism and Socialism and wove the ideas of anti-semitism into their policies. The 25-point programme included:

*The unity of all German-speaking peoples into one greater Germany; the destruction of the Treaty of Versailles; only Germans can be citizens. No Jew can be a German; people in Germany who are not citizens must obey special laws for foreigners; citizens are entitled to a job and a decent standard of living; no immigration of non-German must be allowed. Anyone who has come to since 1914 must be removed; all citizens have equal rights; all unemployment benefits should end; all profits made during the war must be shared; large companies must share their profits with the workers; pensions must be improve; help for small shops and businesses; large department stores must be closed down to support this; property reform to give small farmers land; criminals and profiteers must be punished by death; reform of the law to make it more German; abolition of the Army, and a new People’s Army in its place; German newspapers must be free of foreign influence; strong government with unrestricted authority over Germany.*

**The *Sturmabteilung* (SA)**

The Sturmabteilung or SA were a method of control over the Nazi Party. After Hitler took control of the party in July 1921, he set up the SA as the **Nazi Private Army**. Munich had many soldiers who had been demobilised after the First World War who then struggled to get employment. The SA was the answer for many and they **recruited heavily from** those **soldiers who were now out of work**.

The SA had a **brown uniform** and hence developed their nickname of the ‘**Brownshirts**’. The SA were instrumental in the control of the party. They paraded around the streets with flags and songs showcasing the power and control of the Nazis. They **protected meetings of the Nazis** from other extremist parties and squashing any opposition to Hitler. When not marching or protecting the Nazis sent the SA to **break up opposition meetings** such as that of the communists or other right-wing groups.

The result of this was that the **Nazis had a strong show of force** that conveyed organisational ability and control. **The SA** **strengthened** the party and **the power of Hitler over the party**.

**Wall Street Crash, 1929**

Events in America resulted in significant effects on Germany, which were started with the Wall Street Crash in October 1929. The chain reaction from this event leads to **economic turmoil in Germany** for the second time in around a decade. **Much of the strong economic foundations laid by Stresemann were undermined** and, in some instances, destroyed completely.

In the Wall Street Crash, **share prices fell quickly** which meant **many investors lost money** with the fall in value of shares. This meant that others wanting to minimise their losses were quick to sell their remaining shares. The quick selling resulting in the price of shares dropping further still. A week after the share price began to fall **$4,000 million** had been lost by investors.

**Effect of the Crash in Germany**

Despite the crash being in the United States, **Germany lost out heavily in the crash**. German Banks had been large investors in US Shares and as a result had lost lots of money in the crash. This huge loss of money caused a banking crisis in Germany.

When a bank loses money in significant quantities, savers begin to worry about access to their money saved in accounts, after all this is what banks loan out and use as investment. If many people in one go start to remove their savings, this is known as a run on the bank. If the bank runs out of money as too many people have withdrawn money, and their investments have not returned money, then they will go bust. Several banks in Germany went out of business this way.

In desperate attempts to avoid going out of business **German banks started to recall loans from businesses**. However, businesses often needed the money they had been loaned by the banks and then **went out of business**. This reaction to the crash **brought about economic collapse in Germany**, with **many people becoming unemployed**.

This **rising level of unemployment** **caused more problems**. When people are unemployed, they no longer purchase goods and services in the way the once did, this results in businesses selling and providing fewer goods and services, which leads them to cut back on staffing, or go out of business altogether. The **cycle is then repeated over and over**.

**Increasing Support for Extreme Parties**

Economic difficulty causes an increase in support for the parties on the political extremes. In Germany, this was the **Communist Party** (**KPD**) on the left, and **the Nazis** on **the right**. This switch occurs because the voters become more frustrated with the government's efforts to deal with the unemployment problem. They are attracted by bold action promised by the extreme parties and at election time turn out to support them.

Between May 1928 and July 1932, the **Nazis increased their number of seats** in the Reichstag from 12 to 230, and the Communists increased their seats from 54 to 89. The **KPD** managed to **increase their vote share from 10% to 15%,** equivalent to a million extra votes.

Success for the Communists came about for two main reasons, all brought on by the economic crisis from the Wall Street Crash. The crash had brought on a huge increase in unemployment, and unemployed people found the Communist’s message promising jobs appealing. Linked to this was, the falling wages. As economic crisis deepened, wages were cut as businesses could not afford to keep wages high.

**Increasing support for the Communists** **worried many in German society**, and as a result many who opposed the Communists, such as the upper and middle classes **wanted to support the Nazis**. It was the Nazis who were seen as the **best chance of defeating the Communists**.

**Reasons for the increase in Support for the Nazis**

The economic crisis brought on by the Wall Street Crash meant that **many people began to support the Nazis**. There were **several factors** to this increase in their success:

**1. Hitler**

Hitler **himself was a reason that support for the Nazis increased**. Hitler portrayed himself as a **strong leader who would save Germany**. Compared to the Weimar Republic which was undermined by political problems, Hitler looked like he would solve Germany’s problems. Hitler was perhaps the Nazis greatest asset. He toured the country during the Presidential Election campaign in 1932. Hitler was also able to persuade the wealthy and businesses to donate money to the party.

**2. The SA**

Law and order had broken down in Weimar society, and the **police were often ineffectual** in dealing with the fights which broke out between differing political groups. The **SA protected Nazi meetings** but **also disrupted other parties’ meetings**. This showed that the Nazis were good at suppressing dissent and keeping members of the party safe. This **emphasised Hitler as a strong leader**.

**3. Appeal to Different Sections of Society**

In order to be successful, the Nazis **tailored their message** to **different parts of German society**. For example, the party **promised jobs for the unemployed**, **bread for the poor**, **farmers were promised that their land** would be protected from the communists. For the wealthy, they promised they would **smash the communists**, and for business they promised they would **deal with the trade unions**.

**4. Whole Nation Policy**

The Nazis placed a huge importance on the **success and importance of Germany**. As a result, they could have been supporting the entire nation. This was a step change from other political parties in campaigning which divided the electorate into different groups and targeted them.

**Hitler becomes Chancellor**

**President Hindenburg** disliked the Nazi Party. He refused to make Hitler Chancellor in July 1932, even though the Nazis had the most seats in the Reichstag. But, by January 1933, Hitler was Chancellor anyway.

**Bruning's Failure to Cope with Unemployment**

After the Wall Street Crash and then throughout subsequent economic problems in Germany, **Heinrich Bruning was the Chancellor of Germany**. He governed Germany from 1930-1932. Due to the high levels of unemployment in Germany, the voters wanted the government to step in and help solve the problem.

Bruning’s **first solution was to increase taxes**. The idea was simple, increase taxes to pay for unemployment benefits for those who have lost their jobs. However, as many people were unemployed, tax income was lower than it was previously, meaning the burden of tax fell upon those still in employment. Bruning realised that this policy of **paying unemployment benefit was unpopular** so placed restrictions upon the benefits to attempt to appease some of the people.

However, **this policy was deeply unpopular** across the political spectrum. The left of German politics, rejected the restrictions placed upon benefits as this was against what they believed in. The right-wing were equally opposed as they deplored the payment of benefits to those who were unemployed. The nail in the coffin for Bruning’s policies came when the moderate Social Democrats refused to support the payment of unemployment benefit. The lack of support in the Reichstag meant that government was ineffective at dealing with the problem.

As a result of the failure of the government to get things done, Bruning began to **rely on the emergency powers given to the President of the Republic** to govern. Bruning would submit laws to the President who would pass them as emergency decrees.

In July 1932, **Hindenburg** used his **powers as President** to make a member of the smaller Centre Party (**Franz von Papen**) Chancellor.

November: Hindenburg was warned that the army would not accept von Papen and might act against the government. So, in December 1932, Hindenburg appointed as Chancellor a politician the army favoured, **Kurt von Schleicher**. But, von Schleicher could not get support in the Reichstag. So, in January 1933, **Hindenburg was forced to make Hitler Chancellor**.

Hindenburg tried to control Hitler by making **von Papen** Vice-Chancellor and putting von Papen's supporters in the government. Hitler accepted this in order to become Chancellor. As soon as he was Chancellor he **called an election**, hoping to win more seats and take complete control of the Reichstag.

**Hitler’s steps to the Chancellorship**

There were several steps towards Hitler becoming Chancellor of Germany. The steps to the Chancellorship begin with the Presidential election in 1932. The diagram below shows the steps in Hitler’s rise to the Chancellorship.



Key topic 3: Nazi control and dictatorship, 1933-39

**The Reichstag Fire**

The Reichstag Fire was the burning of the German Parliament on the **27th February 1933**. At the scene a **Dutch communist Marinus van der Lubbe** was found and blamed for starting the fire. Hitler used this as justification for the instigation of **Article 48** which **granted emergency powers**. Hitler persuaded President Hindenburg that Germany was on the brink of a communist rebellion and that Hitler should be able to pass the **Reichstag Fire Decree**.

This decree **allowed Hitler to remove the Communist Party** of Germany (KPD) as a party, have its leaders arrested and imprison or execute them. This was the beginning of **a police state in Germany**. Hitler continued to rule using Article 48 and Hindenburg to slowly remove opposition to his Chancellorship.

In the **March 1933 election**, Hitler and the Nazis managed to **win 288 seats** in the Reichstag, which failed to achieve a majority of seats but **together with other right-wing groups managed to achieve a majority.** This new majority and the removal of opposition allowed Hitler to start the legal transformation of Germany into **a dictatorship**.

**The Enabling Act, March 1933**

With the election of March 1933, Hitler and the support of other right-wing parties such as the Nationalists and DNVP, they **passed the Enabling Act**. This in essence meant that **Hitler was able to make laws** without consulting the Reichstag.

When the Reichstag convened, other parties were very aware of the fate of the Communist Party and became concerned that opposing Hitler would result in their banning and potential imprisonment. On the **23rd March 1933**, the Reichstag, mindful of the Communists, **passed the Enabling Act** which suspended the right of the Reichstag to have a say over the laws which Hitler wanted to pass.

The passage of the act is significant because it **marks the final nail in the coffin of the Weimar Republic**. The Enabling Act ensured that Hitler could rule as a dictator of all Germany and not have political opposition get in the way. **Many Historians** point to the Enabling Act as the **moment Germany slid into dictatorship**.

Under the terms of the Enabling Act, **political parties other than the Nazis were banned and leaders arrested**. **Trade Unions** were **made illegal** and Nazis were installed in all German state governments. The Nazi organisations such as the SA were able to promote a culture of fear and intimidation to ensure that the Nazi view held strong.

**Removing Opposition**

The Enabling Act had allowed Hitler to rule without the consent of the Reichstag. This Hitler was free to do what he wished. Hitler was **swift in his removal of external opposition** to the Nazis.

***First*** among these were the **Trade Unions**. It was the opinion of Hitler that the Trade Unions were influenced by the Communists and this was dangerous, especially as the Communists had been banned after the Reichstag Fire. To prevent this, Hitler prohibited trade unions from operating. To complement this, trade union officials were arrested by Nazi security forces and sent to concentration camps.

The ***second wing of opposition*** to Hitler were **other political parties**. Hitler dealt with these quickly and issued a decree **banning all political parties** except for the Nazis (**14th July 1933**).

**The Night of the Long Knives**

The **Night of the Long Knives** was the term given to the process whereby Hitler, in 1934, **purged the Nazi Party of all those who were a threat to Hitler**. The result was that it **was made Hitler the undisputed leader of the Nazis** and by extension Germany.

The **biggest threat** to Hitler was **Ernst Röhm**. Röhm was the leader of the **Nazi Brownshirts**, the SA. Under his leadership the SA had grown to three million people, who were all loyal to Röhm and not Hitler. Röhm was also more socialist than other members of the party, and disagreed with Hitler over some of the nationalist ideas. Hitler also listened to German Generals who were worried about the SA too. The Treaty of Versailles limited the size of the German Army, and the SA were a threat. The tipping point in events came when Hitler was warned about a possible coup by the SA. Hitler had Röhm and other leaders arrested and shot.

Hitler used the Night of the Long Knives to **remove internal threats to his leadership** and this extended to members of the Government. Von Papen was placed under house arrest and members of his staff were killed. Hitler justified the kills to Germany by stating that they were plotting to overthrow him and that the killings were in the interests of Germany.

**The Death of President Hindenburg, August 1934**

Hindenburg was the President of Germany, but by the 1930s he was well into his 80s. He was old and frail and **on August 2nd 1934, he died**.

Hitler used the death of the President to **merge to offices of Reich President with that of Reich Chancellor**. He announced that he was now **Führer** and all soldiers must now **swear an oath to Hitler**. This move was supported by **a public vote** in mid-August which confirmed Hitler’s decision . 90% of Germans approved of this, but the voters faced significant propaganda from the Nazis, and SS troops were near polling stations to encourage a positive vote.

The removal of the office of President and Hitler has Chancellor marked **the end of the Weimar Republic** and the **beginning of the Third Reich**.

Key topic 4: Life in Nazi Germany, 1933-39

**The Nazi Police State**

A **police state** is term given to a country that *is heavily controlled by the state through the use of the police force.* In a Police State the organisation responsible for controlling the population is often known as **the secret police**. History is full of examples of these and Nazi Germany was no exception.

The secret police **controlled all aspects of people’s lives**. They controlled what people did, what people said and where people went. Anything which was against the ideals of the Nazi party was dealt with by the police forces and anyone breaking rules was to be punished severely.

Hitler came to power in 1933 and the Weimar Republic had a functioning police force, however its job was to uphold the rule of law in the Republic and was controlled by the government. However, Hitler could not get the national police force to enforce Nazi ideas or get it to protect the Nazi Party without the creation of many laws. Therefore, Hitler **created his own security forces** which were run by the party and not the government. This meant that their only role was the secure and protect against any threats to Hitler or the Nazi Party.

Within Nazi security forces there were **three main divisions.** The **SS**, the **SD** and **the GESTAPO**. Whilst initially they were separate institutions with their own remits, Nazi reorganisation created a hierarchy for them with the **SS being the lead organisation** and the SD and Gestapo reporting to them. **Heinrich Himmler** was responsible for the **Reich Security forces** (**RHSA**).

**SS *(Schutzstaffel)***

**SS** stands for ***Schutzstaffel*** which means **Protection Squad**. Their original focus was the protection of Hitler and were formed in 1925. Hitler placed colleague Heinrich Himmler in charge of the group and its recruitment. From 1929 they were given the infamous black uniforms which helped to separate them from the Nazi stormtroopers of the SA.

During the **Night of the Long Knives**, it was the SS which was trusted to **eliminate opponents within the Nazi Party** including the leaders of the SA. Whilst Hitler increased his power and became leader of Germany, the SS was expanded to include 240,000 men and were made responsible for all the other security forces in Germany.

Heinrich Himmler wanted the SS to be a model for German greatness and recruited many who matched the German ideal man. All recruits were to be racially pure, and they were expected to live the life of Nazi ideals. Therefore, they were expected to be physically fit, and marry racially pure wives and have many children who would also be racially pure.

**The Gestapo**

The Gestapo were the **secret police of Germany**. The full name was ***Geheime Staatspolizei*** or the State Secret Police. There were initially created in 1933 by Herman Goering. Goering’s rule over the Gestapo was short when it was given to the SS to control. Himmler placed Heydrich in charge of the Gestapo in 1936.

The Gestapo worked alongside SS and SD to protect the Nazi government. They would use intelligence and espionage to find out those who were opposing the government. Alongside phone taps and mail reading they relied on a network on informants to provide information. The Reich Government authorised the use of **torture when interviewing suspects**.

Unlike members of the SD and SS the **Gestapo members were plain clothed**. This added a new level of fear to the Gestapo unmatched by other agencies. It became increasingly difficult for the German people to tell them apart from other citizens. The Gestapo would imprison with trial and send those accused to concentration camps. Fear spread further through the use of early morning arrests and rumours of conditions in concentration camps.

In reality the fear of Nazi security forces was exaggerated with such small numbers of officers being employed. However, they provided the illusion of control over a population terrified of being found out and arrested.

**Concentration Camps**

Concentration Camps were **makeshift prisons** set up **to hold opponents and prisoners of the Nazi Regime**. Many of those who were imprisoned were classed as being **in protective custody** rather than being tried and convicted of crimes. This meant that none of those placed in concentration camps had had any form of court proceedings or had had a chance to fight their cases.

When the Nazis came to power there were huge numbers of people who were arrested or placed into protective custody and as such the Nazis needed new makeshift prisons called Concentration Camps. The camps were staffed by members of the SS rather than the conventional police forces.

The **first camp** to be opened was in **Dachau in 1933**. Many different inmates were placed in camps including Jews, political prisoners such as communists, minorities such as **Gypsies**, **Jehovah’s Witnesses** and **social undesirables** including **homosexuals** and **prostitutes**.

The Nazis built a huge network of camps, often located away from urban areas to keep secret the goings on in the camps. As the number of prisoners increased there were several changes to the concentration camp programme. The Wannsee Conference created the Final solution whereby Jews were to be exterminated. This led to the creation of Death Camps which sole purpose was to eliminate enemies of the Nazi State.

**Reducing Unemployment**

The Nazis had been brought to power with a **promise to reduce unemployment**. Hitler and the Nazis needed to prove that they could tackle the problem. The Nazis used a method of public works programmes to address the problem. The **National Labour Service** was essential for this.

One such was of reducing unemployment was the **Autobahn project**. This ambitious project planned to build a modern road network of motorways across Germany. In all there would be **7000 miles of road.** Such was the importance of this project that Hitler was personally involved. Much of the network they built is still in place today, however, the Nazis only managed to construct around half of the total planned network before the Second World War broke out.

The **war economy** was also a method of **reducing unemployment**. The Nazis were open with their plans to rearm Germany in defiance of the Treaty of Versailles. This meant that **the Nazis required huge numbers of people to join the armed forces** and **huge numbers of people to work in the factories** producing the arms required. This war footing for the economy meant that large numbers of people were **provided with jobs which hadn’t existed before under the Weimar Republic**.

**The National Labour Service (RAD)**

The **National Labour Service** was a form of **employment for the unemployed**. It was created in **1933** and fulfilled a key Nazi promise to bring employment. The National Labour Service, provided the workforce for the **huge public works programme** which the Nazis were implementing. The projects which the National Labour Service completed included road building and other projects which were good for the Reich.

Membership of the Labour Service was **made compulsory in 1935** for all young men. Service to the Labour Service was for six months. The Labour Service was **run like the military**, a similarity to many other Nazi organisations. Members lived in camps near the projects and **wore a special uniform**. The pay was low, but as far as the Nazis were concerned, the projects were for the good of the Reich.

**The German Labour Front (DAF)**

The **German Labour Front** was set up to **protect the rights of workers**, especially as the Nazis had banned Trade Unions due to their political work. Therefore, to appease the workers, and as a method of control, the Nazis set up the German Labour Front.

The German Labour Front protected the rights of workers and dealt with issues of pay and working hours. Contained within the Labour Front was the **Strength Through Joy** movement and the **Beauty of Labour programme**.

Whilst under the protection of trade unions, workers had their hours protected and could collectively bargain for improvements in pay and conditions, under the German Labour Front, they could not. The Labour Front acted as the arm of the Nazi Party in employment, ensuring that workers were producing goods for the nation. The Labour Front’s allegiance was to the Reich and not the people it represented.

**Strength Through Joy**

**Strength Through Joy** was an organisation set up by the Nazis to promote employees’ rights in the work place. It was designed to appease workers as the Trade Unions had been banned in Germany, but it was still an organisation that was controlled by the Nazis. It was set up as a division of the German Labour Front.

The **purpose was to inspire the German workers**, to encourage them that the work they were completing was **for the benefit of the nation**. Therefore, Strength Through Joy, attempted to **provide activities for the workers of the Reich to enjoy**. In order to enjoy these activities, workers had to join the Strength Through Joy programme. Typical activities included **film screenings** and **trips to the theatre**, and **attendance at sports events**. They also offered **holidays** and **cruises** to some workers.

Strength Through Joy also attempted to improve the people’s access to consumer goods. The Nazis promoted **the Volkswagen** or ‘**People’s Car’**. It was **designed to be affordable for all Germans**. Strength Through Joy encouraged people to give five Reichsmarks per week to pay for their car. However, the factories producing the cars became weapons factories during the War.

**The Beauty of Labour**

The **Beauty of Labour** was **a strand of the Strength Through Joy programme** with the mission to **improve working facilities for ordinary Germans**. They wanted employers to improve their facilities for workers and would give employers help with the cost of making the changes.

Despite this help, employers used their employees to improve the facilities, **without pay**, and often after they had finished for the day. Employers would look to improve the conditions in toilets, canteens, and showers for their employers. The Nazis **wanted the conditions for the German worker to be of excellent quality**.

**Hiding the Levels of unemployment**

The economic crash of 1929 to 1933, caused huge rises in unemployment, and the Nazis were popular throughout the crash by **promising that there would be large amounts of jobs for people**. When the Nazis were in power, they **provided jobs for the people.** However, the Nazis did **hide levels of unemployment in Germany**.

**One such way** in which the Nazis **hid unemployment** was through the armed forces and the war economy. The war economy meant that factories needed to have large numbers of staff to produce the huge numbers of weapons which were required. In addition to this the Nazis recruited many in the armed forces. In **normal economic circumstances**, these roles would not have existed. The Nazis also recruited many into Nazi paramilitary organisations such as the SS and Gestapo, had the totalitarian state not been in existence, thee role would not be needed.

**Another** was in which the Nazis **hid the levels of unemployment** was through exclusions and arrests. Women and Jews were excluded from the unemployment figures, which reduced the figures significantly, and the thousands of people in concentration camps did not count in the figures either.

The Nazis also used the **public works programme** to **lower unemployment statistics,** but many of these roles were only temporary. Linked to this was membership of the Labour Service. Anyone who was in the Labour Service did not count in the unemployment figures either. Finally, the Nazis also changed the calculation method for unemployment and included those who were not employed full time.

**Anti-Semitism**

Anti-Semitism is the term used to describe **hostility towards Jews**. The Nazis did not invent Anti-Semitism, and Anti-Semitism has been present throughout history for a variety of reasons. During the 1930s, **anti-Semitic feelings were running high** in Germany.

Anti-Semitism was strong in Germany for several reasons. **Many Germans blamed the Jews for the loss of the First World War and the imposition of the Treaty of Versailles**. Linked to this Jews were also blamed for the economic crash from 1929 to 1933 in which many Germans and Jews lost out. Many of these views were peddled by **nationalist politicians**, with Hitler being one of them.

The Anti-Semitic feeling was **strengthened throughout Germany** through the **use of propaganda** which **portrayed Jews as evil** and that it was patriotic to defeat the Jews.

**Eugenics**

Eugenics is the term given to the **scientific theory of selective breeding**. Scientists used the ideas of natural selection and evolution to attempt to explain that this could be used within human beings. The **best parents would then breed and produce the best possible children**.

These ideas became fashionable in society around 1880s and the Nazis took these ideas and created policies to create the **German Master Race**. Applying the ideas of Eugenics, the Nazis embarked on a programme of forced sterilisation for those not conforming to the ideas of the Master Race to ensure that those people could not breed.

**Persecution of the Jews**

Persecution of Jews **came in many differing forms in Nazi Germany**. Whilst there were direct forms of persecution such as the implementation of laws, there is also more discreet and indirect forms of persecution such as **indoctrination of the populations**.

Through the **control of education and media**, the Nazis were able to **spread their anti-Jewish message** and beliefs to the people of Germany. This was an indirect form of persecution towards Jews, and the resulting effect is hard to quantify. However, the Nazis did take more direct steps to persecute Jews including:

* *Banning forms of employment from Jews including being civil servants*
* *Removing Jews from the Army*
* *Restrictions on what Jews could inherit*

The Nazis also organised a boycott of Jewish businesses during 1933. Nazi Stormtroopers were stood outside businesses to dissuade Germans from using the business and they wrote Jude on the outside of businesses run by Jews.

In 1935, the Nazis passed the **Nuremberg Laws**.

After the Nuremberg Laws there were further developments in the persecution of Jews. In March 1938, laws required **all Jews to register their possessions with the Nazis**. This was followed by the issuing of **identify cards** to all Jews in July.

**The Nuremberg Laws**

The Nuremberg Laws were laws which were passed by the Nazis that **targeted Jews and placed restrictions upon their movements, rights and lives**. They were passed on **15th September 1935**. Among the wider changes to German society, there were **two laws** which **specifically targeted Jews**:

**The Reich Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honour**

The Protection of German Blood and Honour surrounded the issues of marriage and childbirth. Under this law, Jews were prohibited from marrying Germans, and were also prohibited from engaging in sexual relationships with them.

**The Reich Law on Citizenship**

Perhaps the more significant of the two laws, this law stripped Jews of their German citizenship. Jews were defined as subjects of the Reich rather than citizens, and the law backed this up with the statement that those having German blood were entitled to be citizens. This linked to Nazi ideas about clean and dirty blood. This law also **required Jews to wear the yellow Stars of David**.

**Kristallnacht**

**Kristallnacht** was the response by the Nazis to attack Jewish homes, businesses and places of worship during November 1938. The Nazis had used **an attack on a German diplomat by a Jew in Paris** to justify the retaliation.

**Joseph Goebbels** was particularly involved in Kristallnacht, through his orders to newspaper printers to publish widely the events in Paris. Nazis forces attacked Jewish homes and synagogues.

After the German diplomat had died, **the attacks went national**. Hitler ordered that local Nazi forces were to attack Jewish businesses, but they were to wear plain clothes to do this. **Hitler also instructed the police not to become involved stopping the attacks**.

In total, **191 synagogues were destroyed** across Germany and around **100 Jews were killed**. After the events of Kristallnacht, the **Jews were fined 1 billion Reichsmarks** for instigating the violence and to pay for any damage. This was followed up with by the rounding up of Jews and interning them in concentration camps.

**Nazi Propaganda**

Propaganda in Germany was widely used by the Nazis as a method for **getting their message out to the German people**. Hitler himself set up the idea of the **cult of the Führer**, showing himself as the leader and saviour of all Germany. The Nazis used this image carefully always showing Hitler in a position of strength or serving Germany.

The Nazis used posters and radio broadcasts to great effect. Posters, films and radio were all used to show how great the Nazis were and how they were saving Germany from the Weimar Republic.

The **creation of Propaganda** was given to **Joseph Goebbels**, a loyal Nazi who became **Minister for People’s Enlightenment and Propaganda**. He coordinated much of the Nazi propaganda machine and election campaigns prior to the Nazi takeover in Germany.

Goebbels believed that propaganda was most effective when people did not realise that they were being indoctrinated. This is what Goebbels set out to achieve with Nazi Propaganda.

**Party Rallies**

Some of the most famous images of Nazi Germany come from the Party Rallies, where **thousands of people packed into stadiums** **to hear Hitler and other leading Nazis speak**. Rallies had been an integral part of the Nazi campaigns, starting life in beer halls across Germany.

The rallies were used as **symbols of the greatness of Nazism and Nazi Germany**, showcasing strength and the organisational ability of the state. Rallies were organised by Joseph Goebbels and the **Ministry of Propaganda**. When the Nazis took power, the rallies took on a new importance. Goebbels organised the rallies in the **city of Nuremberg**. **Rallies at Nuremberg** were held from **1923 to 1938**. From 1933 they were held at specially built grounds in Nuremberg. Each rally had a different theme celebrating the achievements of the party for Germany.

The last rally was in 1938 as the 1939 Rally was cancelled due to the outbreak of World War Two. The planned 1939 rally was supposed to be a celebration of peace and the peaceful intentions of Nazi Germany.

The rallies were also accompanied by **propaganda films** which were then shown across Germany and the world. The two most famous films were 1933 called ***Victory of Faith***, and 1935 titled the ***Triumph of the Will***.

**Opposition to the Nazis**

Despite somewhat high levels of acceptance of the Nazi Party there were **pockets of opposition** to the regime. In many cases these **acts of resistance** and opposition were small and would simply inconvenience the Nazi Party. There was no outright rebellion in the form of an uprising.

Even though trade unions and political parties had been banned, **there was opposition to the Nazis**. The **Social Democrats**, which had been banned printed a newspaper which resulted in the leaders being detained, however some of the leaders **managed to escape Germany and continued to spread anti-Nazi messages from abroad**. In addition to this, the Communist Party (KPD) encouraged workers to delay and resist the Nazis. Actions from the communists included workers calling in sick, damaging machinery or working slowly to delay the completion of Nazi building projects.

**The Army** too had levels of resistance as not all officers were convinced by the Nazi regime. General **Ludwig Beck** attempted to get officers to arrest Hitler and led **plots to assassinate Hitler** in 1943 and 1944.

Resistance could also be found in the Church and among young people, even though the Nazis had attempted to stamp out religious and youth opposition with the control of churches and youth organisations.

**The Hitler Youth**

The Hitler Youth was the group for boys set up by the Nazis. During the Weimar Republic it was common for political parties to set up youth wings for the party, and the Nazis were no different. However, when Hitler became Chancellor, these alternative groups were banned and everyone was encouraged to join the Hitler Youth instead. This was eventually made compulsory in 1939.

The Hitler Youth differed to groups today as the Hitler Youth was simply the Nazi Party for children. The Nazis used the group to teach Nazi ideas to the young people which included the Nazis views on Jews and German History. The members of the Hitler Youth also had to pledge their loyalty to the party and to Hitler. It was also expected that members of the Hitler Youth would report on members of their families or teachers if they were not following the Nazi ideas.

The Nazis also used the Hitler Youth to create model German citizens who would fit with the Nazi ideals. As the Nazis placed a huge emphasis on the strong overcoming the weak, the Hitler Youth had a strong regime of physical fitness, including hikes and trips into the mountains. The emphasis of physical fitness was accompanied by military style training, after all the Nazis wanted members of the Hitler Youth to become soldiers for the Reich. Therefore, members of the Hitler Youth trained with small firearms and skills for being a soldier in the field. The Nazis also set up specialist divisions for more specialist training including flying and the navy. Members of the Hitler Youth were often instructed by members of the SA who enacted harsh punishments upon them if they disobeyed orders or for doing something wrong.

**The Nazis, Women and the Family**

When the Nazis took control of Germany in 1933 they faced a falling birth rate in Germany, which worried them greatly. A falling birth rate meant that Germany would not have enough workers or soldiers for the future of the Reich. With this impending crisis in the population, the Nazis implemented several changes which were designed to reverse this trend.

**Law for the Encouragement of Marriage 1933**

It was the Nazis vision for women to get married and raise a family in accordance with the Nazi ideals. To encourage this, the Nazis provided financial incentives to encourage marriage. Loans of 1000 Reichsmarks were available to those couples who married. This was a significant amount of money equating to roughly ¾ of a year’s salary. The Nazis applied conditions to the loan so that the wife removed herself from the labour force.

The law itself also contained benefits for families who have children. Each time a family had a child, there would be a reduction of a quarter of the loan. Divorce laws were also reviewed to ensure that they were designed to promote the birth of children. A man could divorce his wife if she would not or could not provide children.

**The Mother’s Cross**

Rewards were offered to mothers who had had large numbers of children. If a mother had four or five children she would receive a bronze medal, six or seven for silver and eight for gold. It was seen as a prestigious honour to receive one. The medals had the date of award and Hitler’s signature on the reverse.

**Lebensborn**

In 1935, the Nazis started the Lebensborn programme which encouraged children to be born to SS men to create pure Aryans who would be the future leaders of Germany. The programme was headed by the SS leader Heinrich Himmler.

**Education in Nazi Germany**

The Nazis saw the children of Germany as the future, and if they educated them in the ideals of the Nazi party, then the Thousand Year Reich would be secure. To this end, the Nazis placed a great importance on educating the young of the nation. To control the education of children, the Nazis needed to control all the schools in Germany.

Controlling education in Germany meant controlling the teachers in schools. The Nazis set up the Nazi Teachers’ League to educate teachers in the Nazi ideas which they would teach the children. Membership of the League was compulsory, and any refusal meant teachers lost their jobs. In this way, the Nazis controlled the staff working in schools to ensure their message remained pure and undiluted.

The Nazis also changed what schools taught. They added new subjects and altered some to make them more German or as methods of indoctrinating pupils in Nazi ideas and beliefs. New subjects included Race Studies or Eugenics, which focussed on racial groups of people, what to look for in partners and how Germans were far superior to other groups. Subjects which were altered included history which emphasised German victories and highlighted certain groups such as the Jews as betrayers of Germany.

The Nazis separated boys and girls so that they could be taught different subjects so they could fulfil the roles they were expected to in society. Girls were taught how to be good housewives and mothers, and boys had a focus on physical fitness.

**The Nazis, Women and Employment**

It was a core Nazi belief that a woman’s primary responsibility was to be at home looking after the children and the home. As such the Nazis used a number of methods to encourage women to leave the workforce and focus on their families. Any women in the workforce was taking the place of a man.

**Kinder Küche, Kirche**

This slogan was used by the Nazis throughout various means of propaganda from speeches to posters. It encouraged women in Germany to focus on the children, kitchen and church. It was this that would make them into good Germans.

**Legislation to reduce the number of women at work**

Whilst initially the Nazis used propaganda to encourage them to leave the workforce and focus on the home, the Nazis did introduce laws and policies which would remove and restrict women in the labour force.

For example, from a young age the Nazis taught girls that their place was in the home and were taught how to achieve this. They focused on lessons in housework such as cooking, needlework and ironing. They also studied racial science so that they would be able to pick suitable Aryan husbands in the future. In 1937 the Nazis banned girls from **attending grammar schools** which was seen as a way of encouraging girls into university.

Women faced **restrictions from 1933** when the Nazis banned women from holding jobs in professional employment such as doctors and teachers. This was then extended in 1936 to include jobs within the justice system, which included the right to serve on a jury.

**Edelweiss Pirates**

This **group of young people** appeared during the later part of the 1930s, in the districts of large cities. These districts were mainly made up of working-class people. There were groups across Germany in differing cities each called something different. However, each group used the white edelweiss flower to show support with the wider Edelweiss movement.

Membership of the groups was **predominantly teenagers**. Teenagers who joined were unhappy with the lifestyle which were imposed upon them by the Nazis. They did not like the military aspects of the lifestyle which was imposed by the Nazis. In open defiance to the Nazi beliefs the members of the Edelweiss Pirates, wore white or checked shirts and white socks. This was a stark contrast to the military uniforms of the Hitler Youth or League of German Maidens.

Members of the Pirates were often difficult to catch by Nazi Security forces as the Pirates would gather on street corners. Pirate members would also sing songs, and joked about leading Nazis and the regime, although to do this they would often go into the mountains or German countryside.

**Martin Niemoller**

**Martin Niemoller** was a **Protestant Pastor**, who had a history as a submarine commander during the First World War. Like many ordinary Germans, he did not like the Weimar Republic and supported the Nazis. Niemoller voted for the Nazis and supported Hitler as Chancellor. All of this came from a deep belief that Germany should have a strong leader.

However, despite this earlier support, **Niemoller started to oppose the Nazis**. He was one of the founders of the **Pastors’ Emergency League** and the subsequent **Confessing Church**. He set this up because he disagreed with the Nazi interference in the Church. Niemoller also rejected the idea that Jews could not become Christians, a view which the Nazis held.

From 1934 to 1937, Niemoller became more opposed to the Nazis and spoke out widely against them their policies. This resulted in his arrest numerous time, before eventually being imprisoned in a concentration camp in 1938. **He was freed from a concentration camp in 1945** when the Nazi Regime fell.