

Hitler's Rise to Power

-Hitler was Austrian

-received Iron Cross in WWI

-occupation of Ruhr in 1923 forced him into action

-in 1921 he joined the National Socialist German Worker's Party (NSDAP) aka Nazi – identified with anti-semitic/communist messages – appointed chairman of party in 1921

-Munich (Beer Hall) Putsch of Nov. 9, 1923, marched on Parliament building, led by Hitler and Gen. Ludendorff, 3000 men (armed SA – Sturmabteilung) – 100 Bavarian police shot at them and killed 16 SA, Hitler was arrested – given a light 5 year sentence, only served 9 months – wrote Mein Kampf, outlined his political aspirations and theories.

-the failure made him realize he needed general support and come to power constitutionally

-Key Ideas:

1. Ultra-nationalism: Aryan, lebensraum, history, anti-semitism
2. Anti-ToFV
3. Anti-Red (communism) = support of wealthy, business and middle class

-Depression and civil disorder brought him to power

- 1928 Nazis = 12 of 647 seats in Reichstag
- 1930 Hitler's SA were called illegal
- 1930 Nazis = 107 seats (2nd largest party in Reichstag)
- 1932 the economy was improving, but previous gov't lost favour
- 1932 Hitler ran for prez. Against the incumbent Hindenburg – to see how much support (knew he would lose) 13million – 19 million for Hindenburg
- 1932 Nazis = 270 seats, largest party, no majority – but he was not named Chancellor
- 1933 Nazis out of money, German industrialists supported them
- 1933 Hitler and Papen (current Chancellor) met secretly agreed to form a coalition gov't, w/ Hitler as Chancellor (Hindenburg agreed on Jan. 30)
- Papen believed Nazi support was dropping and easier to keep Hitler under control if he was in a position where he could be closely watched

From Democracy to Dictatorship

- election in Feb. 1933, Reichstag burned to ground week before, blamed on the communists- Hitler used this to destroy left-wing opposition – Result: Reichstag Fire Decree allowed Nazis to arrest all opposition and use SA to intimidate voters = 44% of the vote in next election.
- March, Enabling Act = allow Hitler to govern for 4 years without parliament approval = Dictatorship for 4 years (passed with 2/3 majority in parliament)

-passed following laws immediately

1. Outlaw all political parties.
2. All regional/local police centralized under Gestapo
3. Abolished state parliaments
4. Centralized power
5. Banned trade unions, created Labour Front (DAF) as the only union – would decide wages and compulsory deductions, workbooks that showed employment record
6. Lost freedom of speech and press.

-summer of 1933 only groups left were the church and the SA

-Rohm, leader of the SA wanted to replace the Reichswehr (200,000) with the SA (4.5 million) and be commander-in-chief – aristocratic officers gave Hitler much needed support of the class if he squashed SA
= Night of the Long Knives (June 30, 1934)

-SS (elite bodyguard – Schutzstaffel) eliminated all rivals in SA, killed 100 SA leaders, including Rohm, and the socialist wing of the party.

-Hitler gained support of the Reichswehr and removed socialism, which solidified the industrialists support.

-August 2, 1934 Hindenburg died. Hitler held plebiscite to unite the president and chancellor positions –passed with 92% - Hitler now head of state and government. = “The Fuhrer” of the German People – end of Weimar Republic.

-Nuremberg Laws ('35 – '39)

-gradually make German Jews non-citizens

-many Jews left for Palestine, West Europe and North America

-SS formed in 1925, Himmler appointed leader in 1929

=280 in 1929, Himmler set to expand, personally made sure they were all good "Aryans", all black uni in 1932.

=52,000 in 1933, '36 Gestapo put under their control.

-1940 established the Waffen SS (army of the SS) = 150,000

-SS Death heads in charge of concentration camps, responsible for murdering Jews, gypsies, communists, slavs, homosexuals, political enemies., Gestapo was responsible for identifying them as the armies went through the countries of Europe.