

Humanities: History Elective
Unit 2: The World in Crisis
Chapter 3: Hitler's Germany

3.2 Hitler's Rule

3.1: Hitler's Rule – What was the impact of Hitler's rule?

Political Impact	a) One Party Rule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling Act (Mar 1933)
	b) Consolidation of power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Night of the Long Knives (Jun 1934) Creation of Fuehrer position (Aug 1934)
Economic Impact	a) Re-employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of unemployment
	b) Improved economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rise of Big Industrialists
	c) Control of working conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trade Unions (DAF) Welfare schemes
Social Impact	a) Controlled society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propaganda Censorship Rise of the Secret Police
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persecution of the Jews Persecution of other "undesirables"
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limiting women to domestic roles Setting up of Hitler Youth
	b) Persecution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persecution of the Jews Persecution of other "undesirables"
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limiting women to domestic roles Setting up of Hitler Youth
	c) Changed views of women and youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limiting women to domestic roles Setting up of Hitler Youth

1. Political Impact

a) One Party Rule	<p><u>Enabling Act in March 1933:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nazi party won 44% of the vote in the March 1933 elections and Hitler wanted the German Reichstag (Parliament) to pass the Enabling Act which would give him even more power. So, the SS and SA surrounded the Reichstag where the vote was to take place and only Nazis and Nazi supporters were allowed into the building. The Enabling Act was passed and Hitler used it to ban the Communist Party from ever taking part in anymore elections. Hitler continued to increase his power by making the Nazi Party the <u>ONLY</u> political party in Germany in May 1933. He became the dictator of Germany. All other parties were banned, imprisoned or killed. Trade unions were dissolved and the SA and SS brutally punished those who opposed Nazi rule and Hitler
b) Consolidation of power	<p><u>The Night of Long Knives (June 1934)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although Hitler was already a dictator, the German army was not completely under Hitler's control. Hitler has his own army – the SA who was under the control of the SA leader Ernst Roehm, who was loyal to Hitler The problem was the German Army disliked the SA because they saw them as a threat and several Nazi leaders also warned Hitler that Ernst Roehm was too powerful and might be a threat to Hitler. Hitler decided to gain the support of the German Army and get rid of Ernst Roehm. This was known as the <u>Night of the Long Knives in</u>

	<p><u>June 1934</u> where Hitler ordered the SS to execute Roehm and other SA leaders – about 400 men were executed. The rest of the SA and the German Army swore allegiance to Hitler and Hitler's control over the army was complete.</p> <p><u>Creation of the Fuehrer Position (Aug 1934)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When President Hindenburg died in 1934, Hitler took the opportunity to consolidate his power. He wanted to ensure that he would not face any more opposition. Based on the Constitution, the President had to be elected. However, Hitler merged the powers of the President and the powers of the Chancellor to create the position of Fuehrer. • With this power, Hitler could use Article 48 to give himself Emergency Powers and could also pass laws without consulting the Reichstag (Parliament). Hitler was now above the law. • With Hitler as Fuehrer, the army swore allegiance to Hitler personally and not to Germany.
--	---

2. Economic Impact

a) Re-employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nazis <u>reduced unemployment</u> by creating the Reich Labour Service to reduce unemployment by employing people to work on public facilities like roads, motorways, hospitals and schools. This helped to give people a job and also helped to build up good services and facilities for the German people. • Hitler intentionally allowed <u>Germany's military to grow larger</u>. In 1935: Germany defied the Treaty of Versailles and introduced conscription for their Army. By 1939, there were 1.4 million men in the army. Hitler also built a modern air force known as the Luftwaffe. This was also an effective way to decrease unemployment by involving unemployed men in the army and air force. • The growth of the military also helped to reduce unemployment since more men had to be employed in factories to produce weapons, equipment and uniforms. Through militarisation, the number of unemployed fell from 6 million in 1933 to below 1 million in 1939.
b) Improved economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With militarisation also came the <u>rise of big industrialists</u>, since industries that were important to Germany and Germany's rise as a military power, were given subsidies. Industries producing oil, steel, coal and explosives were given valuable government contracts. • The ban on trade unions also benefitted big business that did not have to bother with disruptions by strikes or calls to negotiate for higher pay. Hence, big businesses were very supportive of the government. • Hermann Goering also introduced a 4 year plan in 1936 to prepare Germany for war in 4 years. This was very favourable for big industrialists who received funds and money from the government to help them produce the weapons and resources that Germany needed for war. During this period, German rearmament proved to be very profitable for big businesses. Large government contracts were won

	<p>by various big companies to make weapons or other military-related supplies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In return, these big industrialists and businesses were very supportive of Hitler and the Nazis, often donating huge amounts of money to the Nazis.
c) Control of working conditions	<p><u>Trade Unions (DAF)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that industry was not disrupted by strikes as well as to eliminate a source of opposition, trade unions were abolished. Instead, the Nazis set up the DAF (Deutsche Arbeitsfront) which everyone had to join. The DAF controlled the workers strictly. They were not allowed to strike or bargain for pay raises or better conditions. A wage freeze was imposed on all workers in 1935. Wages were kept low and workers had to work longer hours. In some cases, the workers needed government's permission to leave their jobs. As Germany geared up for war in the late 1930s, workers were working up to 72 hours a week with restricted wages. <p><u>Welfare schemes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Nazis took measures to ensure the support of the workers, as they realised workers' support for the Nazi Party was vital. Nazi propaganda praised workers for their contribution to make Germany a great nation. 'Strength Through Joy' (KdF) programmes such as cheap theatre and cinema tickets as well as organised sport and cultural events were organised by the DAF. Workers could also work towards owning the KdF-wagen by paying instalments of five marks per week. These measures were very popular with the people. <u>However, these programmes to enhance the standard of living for the people also meant that the people's leisure time was also tightly controlled.</u> The DAF tried to improve the working conditions of workers through the 'Beauty of Labour' scheme. Washing facilities and low-cost canteens were set up, but workers had to pay indirectly for them.

3. Social Impact

a) Controlled Society	<p>Even though Hitler was a dictator and complete ruler over Germany, he needed to continue to win the support of the German people so that they would continue to support him and the Nazis. He did this through 2 methods – Propaganda and Censorship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Propaganda</u>: the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda was set up. Led by Joseph Goebbels it aimed to use every form of media to stir up German nationalism and communicate that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hitler was Germany's saviour and keep Germans loyal to Germany Only Nazi rule will enable Germany to become powerful again
-----------------------	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jews and Communists were enemies of Germany • Goebbels made use of films, posters, portraits of Hitler, rallies, public meetings, parades and films to increase German's support for Hitler and the Nazi policies. One of the most famous rallies that Goebbels organised was known as the Nuremburg rallies where there were huge impressive parades and marches which kept the people in awe of Hitler's power and rule. • Besides creating propaganda to win support, there was also strict <u>censorship</u> to prevent people from hearing or seeing anti-Nazi messages of information. Goebbels set up the Reich Chamber of Commerce. One had to join this organisation first, before being allowed to produce any literature, art, radio, film or newspaper. This meant that the Reich Chamber would view and censor anything that the German public would read to ensure that it was pro-Hitler and pro-Nazi. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Goebbels also organised a public book-burning event where 'unacceptable' books were burned. Listening to foreign radio stations was banned and punishable by death and the Nazis controlled all radio stations. Goebbels cleverly made radios affordable for all Germans so that they could listen to Hitler's speeches and Nazi broadcasts since there was nothing else available on the radio. • Besides trying to control the people through propaganda and censorship, Hitler also used fear to control the people, he did this through 2 ways – the SS and the Gestapo (both led by Heinrich Himmler) • <u>The Schutz-Staffel (SS)</u> was formed in April 1925 as an elite force who were Hitler's personal bodyguard. They already played a huge part in Hitler's rise to power by getting rid of Hitler's enemies. After Hitler became Fuehrer, they became more powerful. There are 2 sections of the SS that we will look at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The SS Death Head Units set up concentrations camps to punish those who were not loyal to the Nazis as well as the Jews and other "undesirables". In these death camps, prisoners were forced to work 11 hours a day, beaten often and provided with little food. Many of the prisoners were also killed without reason. ○ The SS-VT (Special Purpose Troops), later renamed Waffen SS was the Nazi Party's armed force. It played an important role in the fighting in WWII. • <u>The Gestapo</u> was the Nazi secret police and were responsible for spying on German citizens and arresting those they suspected were against the government. The Gestapo had unlimited powers of arrest and could imprison people based on suspicion without any evidence. The Gestapo used torture, murder, arrests and dirty tactics such as blackmail to create a culture of fear so that no one would go against Hitler.
b) Persecution	<p>Hitler persecuted 2 groups of people: the Jews and the other "undesirables"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Hitler blamed the Jews</u> for Germany's problems, portraying them as

	<p>sly, cowardly and evil people who wanted to destroy the honest, hardworking and brave Germans. With Hitler as Fuehrer, he set out a systematic way of bullying and eventually getting rid of all Jews through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ April 1933: National boycott of Jewish businesses ○ 1934: All Jewish shops were marked with the Star of David to prevent Germans from going in ○ Jews were only allowed to sit on benches and seats which were marked with “Juden” ○ Jewish books were also burned and Jewish businesses closed ○ 1935: Hitler passed the Nuremburg Laws which officially excluded Jews from German society, they were no longer considered citizens and did not have any rights. They could not marry non-Jews and some of their passports were confiscated. ○ <u>The Night of Broken Glass (1938)</u> was a key event which caused the Jews even more misery. A young Jewish boy had killed a Nazi diplomat and Hitler used this as an excuse to unleash violence on all Jews in Germany and Austria. Nazis looted and destroyed thousands of Jewish shops, homes and synagogues. Jews were beaten, killed and sent to concentration camps. ○ During Hitler’s WWII campaign, he also spread his hatred of Jews to the European countries that he conquered. For eg. In Poland, 3 million Jews were forced to live in ghettos with poor living conditions. In the Soviet Union, German soldiers hunted down Jews and killed them. ○ In 1943, the “<u>Final Solution</u>” was proposed – to solve the problem of the Jews by killing all of them. This led to the systematic murder of Jews all over Europe. By the end of WWII, an estimated 1/3 of the world’s Jewish population was dead. ○ This systematic exclusion of Jews and the mass murder of 6 million Jews by Hitler and the Nazis is known as the Holocaust. ● <u>Hitler also saw the Gypsies, homosexuals, the handicapped and the disabled as undesirable</u> people who were burdens to society and threats to the purity of the German Aryan race. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In order to control them, many of them were sterilised and forced to live separate from the German people in concentration camps. ○ Others had cruel medical experiments done on them before being killed
c) Changed view of women and youth	<p>Hitler’s rule also changed the way women and children were previously treated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Women were limited to domestic roles</u> under Hitler’s rule. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They could not be involved in politics but were only allowed to perform roles of a good mother and a good spouse. After Hitler came to power, there were no more female members in the Reichstag.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Women were also discouraged from pursuing university studies but were encouraged to go through training in farming and physical sports so that they could be better mothers and wives. ○ Many German women found this unfair and oppressive but others also felt that they had a clear role to play in German society. • <u>Youth were viewed as the future hope of Nazi Germany</u> and a lot of care was put in to ensure that they were loyal to Hitler and Germany <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hitler Youth was set up for this purpose for German youths between 14-18 years old and aimed to groom youths to be part of the SA and SS when they grew up. ○ 1923: Hitler Youth started with 1000 members but by 1933 it has 2.3 million members and by 1936, membership was compulsory for all Aryan German youths
--	---