

# Between the Wars

## Introduction/News

### Lesson 1 – 27.8.2019

- Boris Johnson: Prime minister of the UK
  - Only a couple of thousands elected him
  - Wants NoDealBrexit (Problem with Ireland)
  - Like to be in the center of attention
- Matteo Salvini: Domestic secretary of Italy
  - Responsible for latest crisis in Italian government
  - Too nationalistic – parallels with people between the Wars
- Carrie Lam: Chief executive of Hong Kong
  - Corruption Law
  - Protest against China (which is a totalitarian regime and wants the democratic Hong Kong)
- Adrian Amstutz: Head of SVP
  - New campaign with apple and worms, criticizes the left
- Greta Thunberg: fights for climate change
  - Emission free ships to NYC

### Lesson 2 - 29.8.2019

- Boris Johnson suspended the parliament, with forced holiday, in order to enforce the “noDealBrexit” (exit from EU without agreements)
- Boris Johnson says it has nothing to do with the Brexit
- The opponents say it is a constitutional nightmare
- He is not very democratic: splits the society and he excluded the parliament as head
- The queen had no other option than to agree to his proposal, because she’s only representative (Theoretically she could but It’s a formal thing)
- The queen stands for stability since she been around very long

- Swiss francs are too strong at the moment (good for holidays and import but bad for our export)

### Lesson 5 – 6.9.2015

- Grüne and CVP
  - Vorteil wege Klimaschutz
- SP same

## World War I

### Before the War

- Not strong firepower
- **Alliance:** USA, England, France and „Mittelmächte“, against Germany, Austria and Italy
  - Wettrüsten
  - 1914 Franz Ferdinand got shot down in Sarajevo by a nationalist
  - Austria and Hungary split
- Alliance + Russia
  - Italy switches sides

- Germany had strong sea force

## In the War

- More than 65 million men fought in WW1
- Many suffered from shell shock and posttraumatic disorder
- Typical for this war were the trenches (Gräbern). Western front used them. Soldiers sometimes had to live months in it. They described it as „Hell on Earth! “
- Opponents reacted with poisonous gas.
- Weaponry: tanks, planes, submarines, poisonous gas, tear gas
- Lasted longer than expected

## After the War

- 4 empires collapsed: Ottoman, Austria-Hungary, Germany and Russia
- USA transformed into the largest military power of the world. Britain lost its leadership.
- USSR: Creation of first communist state → new phase in history
- League of Nations → Basis for UN (Germany was excluded)
- Germany suffered from deep recession due to Treaty of Versailles (imposed severe sanctions on Germany). This set the basis for WW2.
- Increased people's suspicion of minority groups

### The Treaty of Versailles and German objections

Terms	German objection
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Germany lost tons of territory in Europe.</li> <li>2. Germany lost all of their colonies; the League of Nations took them under supervision.</li> <li>3. The German army was limited to only 100 000 troops and only six battleships. Tanks, Artillery and armored cars were prohibited.</li> <li>4. The War Guilt clause released some of the blame off Germany, the ex-Kaiser was blamed too and should be put on trial for war crimes.</li> <li>5. Germany had to pay £6600 million to the Allies for all the damage and the needed reparations.</li> <li>6. The League of Nations was formed.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Germany had no saying to anything on the treaty of Versailles, it was made without any German presence, the only way the Germans could object was through criticism through writing, which was mostly ignored.</li> <li>2. Many provisions were not based on the Wilsons 14 points. This was because no one actually agreed to these 14 points which were made in January 1918, and with the continuation of Germanys rampage, Wilson later added two more points, which were that Germany had to pay and to disarm Germanys military.</li> <li>3. The Loss of territory in Europe played a big role as there were often places with nationalities mixed with Germans, most of the places were given the right to choose where they wanted to belong to, this was only for the non-Germans. Upper Silesia was an exception, where 2/3 was given to Germany, while 1/3 was given to Poland, with the original idea being that Poland would get 1/1 of Upper Silesia.</li> <li>4. The loss of Germanys African colonies, the allies were taking German colonies for no reason, and did not admit that they were annexing Germany.</li> <li>5. 100 000 was not enough to keep order in Germany during a time of political unrest.</li> </ol>

	<p>Totally disarming Germany was impossible, since the Germans always found loopholes to exploit.</p> <p>6. The Germans did not want the sole blame of the war, but in the space of just six weeks it was impossible to know what we knew later, to indicate Germanys guilt. The allies wanted Germany to admit so they could be charged for the damages and pay up.</p> <p>7. The reparation costs were too high and impossible for Germany to pay. Starting at £6600 million later reduced to £2000 million which made it more affordable. The original price was so high because many of the countries needed the money to pay off their debts to America.</p>
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### Verdict on the Peace Settlement

The peace settlements were not as good as everyone thought, many countries were left with broken promises and problems. Germany was doing well again fast, with soldiers returning from war being seen as war heroes, still being called undefeated. Germany was still economically the strongest power in Europe.

## Weimar Republic

### 1<sup>st</sup> Period Development and self-assertion 1914 – 1919

The World War I allowed the military dominance of the allies grow on the Western front. General **Ludendorff** asked for armistice to Wilson. Wilson had 14 points plan which had milder terms and prohibited secret treaties (which had caused WW1) in order to settle peace for a longtime. His terms were too idealistic and bound to fail. This plea caused Ludendorff's demission (Rücktritt).

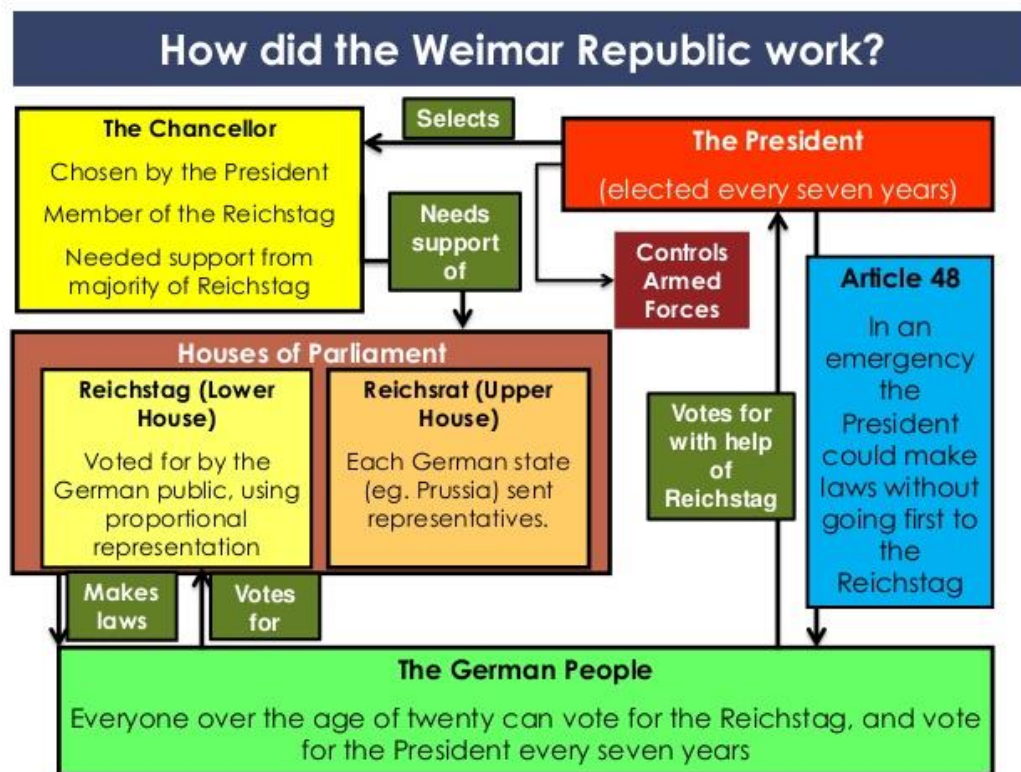
*Wilson 's most important points:*

- *Free access to the sea and free trade for everyone*
- *All Nation should work towards disarmament*
- *Colonies should decide about their future*
- *Self-determination for all people*
- *Establishment for League of Nations*

In October and November 1918 spread the **November revolution** from sailors to soldiers, worker and cities. The cause was the suffering and loss of the World War. Radicalism on the left and the abdication of Wilhelm II. occurred. There was chaos. After this a double proclamation of the republic by the **Parliamentary Republic (SPD)** and the **socialist council republic** by the **Spartacists** occurred. This meant even more chaos and problems for the Weimar Republic. At the end SPD asserted themselves. In November 11, 1918 they signed the armistice, this was the end of the war. This armistice was the basis for the "stab in the back" legend. They were accused for betraying the German people. In January the Spartacists revolted. SPD entered a fatal alliance with the Freikorps – **Erbert-Groener-Pact**. The Reichswehr murdered Spartacist leaders **Luxemburg and Liebknecht**. The Spartacist could no shift the

responsibility to the SPD because of the alliance. This caused enmity and disruption of the political left. For the first free election in 1919 the SPD, center and DDP entered a coalition. The revolution ended towards the creation of the Weimar Republic with Ebert as first president. They had Marxist ideas but wanted to achieve socialism through parliamentary democracy.

## Weimar Constitution 1919



How was this constitution formed, under which circumstances?

At this time, they wanted a mixture of Emperor state and democracy. They emerged out of a war situation, so they wanted stability and therefore wanted to keep some similarities from the past. They thought a strong and powerful leader could grant this stability. They also lacked at experience when it comes to democracy. It could only form because of three basic compromises:

1. **Weimar Coalition**
2. **Erbert-Groener-Pact**
3. **Stinnes-Legien convention** (Agreement with trade unions (workers support))

But the divided left and the civil servants and teachers who were mainly right-wing remained a big danger for the future.

Problem with the constitution

The Reichspräsident has too much power which he could potentially abuse. He has control over the Reichswehr and could even make laws without the Reichstag in case of emergency. The President could manipulate the people and therefore an election that lasts for 7 years is way too long. The Reichsrat has no control over the Chancellor and simply needs to trust. The whole constitution emerged out of a war situation.

→ Overall you can say there is a lack of "Checks and Balances" and a concentration of power by the President.

### ***Consequences due to the problems***

Because the constitution had many problems hostility grew against it. The stab in the back legend established. Germans were outraged about the Treaties of Versailles. The minority government after the 1<sup>st</sup> election to Reichstag didn't bring stabilization. NSDAP developed with Hitler as leader. Hitler started the **Munich Beer-Hall Putsh** in 1923 (1922 Mussolini marched to Rome) and got sentenced for 5 years. But he could leave the prison after 9 months because the Bavarian authorities sympathized with his aims. 1923 was a clash against France in the **Ruhr** in which the Germans succeeded. But this and other factors such as reparation payments caused hyperinflation.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Period cursory stability 1924-1929**

Germany received capital from abroad in order to rebuild its economy and to be able to pay the reparations. They got help mainly from the USA and UK. Germany recovered but its recovery was based on foreign loans and loans. Still they could compromise and cut the reparation payments. In 1924 **Gustav Stresemann**, the foreign secretary, wanted a **disguised revision**. He pretended to search conciliation and to improve the French-German relationship in order to regain trust and make it seem like taking responsibility. The real aim was to go back to the old system and enlarge Germany's borders. The Locarno Treaties were a pact of conciliation policy. Germany admitted into the League of Nations and this fixed Germany's western borders (French-German-border) but nothing was said about the eastern borders. The **Golden Twenties** followed. Entertainment was more and more important, the censorship gone, news system developed, economy and industry boomed. But there was an increasing gap between rich and poor and also between country-side and city. The majority lived under miserable circumstances. There were more problems such as domestic instability. The Reichspresident **Hindenburg**, who helped establishing the stab in the back legend, was Revisionist, against the Republic.

#### World economic crisis

1929 the **Great Depression** occurred. In the USA the people had invested a lot in few stocks which had led to an increase in the courses. Then it was announced that the prices have reached a plateau. The people started selling their stocks again and the price began to sink. The lower it fell, the faster they picked up speed. Everyone wanted to get rid of the stocks and sold them in an uncontrolled manner. Millions of dollars got lost and companies, banks failed. USA now needed the money back from Germany and gave them 90 days' time (other countries also had no money). Germany eventually followed into the Great Depression. The impact on Germany was companies going bankrupt, 6.5 Mio. workers lost their jobs which also caused an increasing political radicalization of left and right. People started riots. Germany was close to a civil war. By the end of 1932 the Weimar Republic seemed on the verge of collapse.

(Today: Eastern part (miserable condition) or in general Germany voted for the AfD. They use simple aims to give the people hope which struggle with their daily life. The AfD is against EU and is on the extreme right side. The AfD gained power due to political failure of the other parties. Which were also sometimes accused of lying)

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Period Decay and destruction of democracy 1929 – 1934**

Meanwhile **Hitler** and his NSDAP (Anti-Semitism and Antirepublicans) carried out great propaganda campaigns that blamed the government for all the ills and settled out their solutions. NSDAP had huge projects that provided room, gave workers hope. They were very good at appealing to people, workers. 1930 failure of Weimar Constitution because of conflict about social insurance. The party couldn't compromise and had to do re-elections for Reichstag. SPD hoped that the SPD or other Weimar parties would win the re-elections, but they were wrong. They NSDAP gained more and more seats (18%). The democrats in the middle got squeezed in. Even the communists would rather ally with the right. They failed to form a government and **Präsidialkabinett** (more right for chancellor and president) was formed on emergency decrees and got more power. 1932 Hindenburg got re-elected even getting votes from the

SPD because he was the least bad. May 1932, **Brüning** was ousted because of his SA-ban. This led Präsidialkabinett of **Papen** (DNVP) with Hindenburg. Papen ordered the **unconstitutional Preussenschlag**, he replaced the government of Preussen (SPD dominated) with the Reichskommission from Berlin. This was a blow for federalism. This marks the beginning of the transformation into a central state. The Reichstag got disbanded and the new election ended in NASDAP getting 37% and an unsacred **alliance between NASDAP and KPD** which blocked all the other parties. Hitler wanted to be Chancellor and establish an absolute NSDAP government. Hindenburg/Reichswehr/DNVP oppose. They reacted and offered a coalition for NSDAP. They agreed. 1933 Hindenburg and Papen legally appointed Hitler as Chancellor. They wanted to control him inside and also win against the communist with coalition of nationalist and NSDAP. The Weimar republic came to the end. They couldn't tame Hitler as hoped. Police and SA terror as well as right-wing-extremist propaganda got systematically expanded. February 1933, **Fire in Reichstag** because of the unconstitutional „Notverordnung von Volk und Reich“, which annulated basic rights. Later the dissolution of the Reichstag and the last free election in March 1933 led to 44% for NSDAP, but no absolute majority. The **Enabling act\*** destroys separation of power and disempowers the Reichstag. There were only few SPD members and communist were no longer able to have a say. During the debate the SA and SS were present with the Hakenkreuz. So, parties of the right and the NSDAP voted in favor for the act. This was a crucial element in the construction of dictatorship. Based on the enabling act all political parties were banned. Every Reichsländer had the same coordinated press and media. Federalism was gone, everything was now controlled by the NSDAP. 1934 Röhm-Putsch was an argument between the SA and the SS. SA wanted to create a second army which led to the breakup of SA in favor of the SS-State. Hitler killed Röhm, the leader of the SA. Since the Wehrmacht wanted to be the only army anyways they were now behind Hitler. From the death of Hindenburgs until 1945, Hitler proclaimed himself „Führer and Chancellor“, swearing in of the Reichswehr on Hitler completion of totalitarian dictatorship and the „Führerstaat“.

#### **\*Enabling Act**

- “The government only relies on law with own hands in case of emergency and without threatening the Reichstag.” – From 1933 to 1945 all arrangements relied on Ermächtigungsgesetz or Notverordnung
- “The position of the Reichpresident stays untouched.” – Hindenburg was nearly senile and only influenced one-sided. After his death the chancellor melted into the position.
- “The position of Bundesländer stays.” – With the Gleichschaltungsgesetz all Bundesländer were controlled from a seconded of the Reichskanzler. The majestic right was completely shifted towards the Reich.
- “Church can keep their rights.” – They tried to influence the church with their principals.
- “Parties should have the ability to compromise.” – Few months later a one party state was established.
- “Everyone should be able to decide between war and peace.” – Later the NSDAP dissolved their worker unions and shifted those earnings to the “Deutsche Arbeiterfront” and forced all workers to commit to it.

Why did the Weimar Republic fail?

- **It began with disadvantage**
  - a. It had accepted the Versailles Treaty and was therefore always associated with defeat and dishonor.
  - b. There was a lack of respect to democracy and there was a tradition of admiring the army and the officer class as rightful leader. This was also the reason that the stab in the back legend developed. (Even though the armistice was fostered by General Ludendorff while the Kaiser was still in power)
  - c. They lacked at experience in forming a democratic constitution. There were so many different groups that no party could ever win overall majority. Each party had to rely on co-operation. No party was able to carry out its plan.
  - d. The parties lacked at experience on how to operate a democratic parliament. The parties had not learned the art of compromise. They even started to make their own armies for self-defense.

- **Outbreaks of violence**
  - a. 1919 the Spartacist Rising. Communist occupied almost every major city. Government defeated them only with the help of **Freikorps**, an independent private force. This was a sign of weakness.
  - b. 1920 the **Kapp Putsch**. The right-wing tried to seize power. The government tried to disband the Freikorps which refused and occupied whole Berlin with Wolfgang Kapp as Chancellor. The Reichswehr did not take action. They were in sympathy with the right. In the end the workers of Berlin called out a general strike which helped the government and led to the resignation of Kapp. Many ex-members of Freikorps later joined Hitler's private armies.
  - c. A series of political assassinations took place. They were mostly carried out by ex-Freikorps. They were mainly against communist and left-wing. The right-wing sympathized with those acts.
  - d. **Hitler's Beer-Hall Putsh**. Hitler, helped by Ludendorff, tried to overthrow the government in Berlin. However, the police broke up this action and sentenced him.
  - e. Private armies expanded. All parties had their meetings broken up by rival armies. The police were powerless. The government seemed again incapable.
- **Economic Problems**
  - a. 1919 Germany was close to bankruptcy because of the war.
  - b. Reparation payments made their situation even worse.
  - c. 1923 French troops occupied the Ruhr attempting to seize goods. German industry in the Ruhr was paralyzed. French failed their aim, but Germany no had inflation and collapse of the mark. Most effected were the working class, middle class and small capitalist.
  - d. After Golden Twenties USA went into great depression and Germany followed due the loans, they had to pay back within 90 days.
  - e. The unemployment increased and unemployed criticized the government.
- **The alternative – Hitler and the Nazis**
  - a. The more unstable the economy etc. the more seats the Nazis got in the Reichstag.
    - They offered national unity, prosperity and full employment. They claimed that the Marxist, Armistice supporter, Jesuits, Freemasons and Jews are to blame. They increasingly blamed the Jews for their defeat in WW1.
    - They promised to overthrow the Versailles settlement
    - Private Army, SA, was popular for unemployed
    - Wealthy landowner feared communist revolution
    - Hitler had extraordinary political abilities (emotional force, power, modern communication techniques)
    - Contrast to Weimar Republic impressed people
    - However, it's doubtful whether Hitler could be so successful without the economic crisis
- **Hitler became Chancellor**
  - a. Hitler got in a coalition with the Nationalist. This happened due to von Papen and von Schleicher. They did that because they feared a Nazi Putsh and communist, they believed they could control him inside, they would gain seats and the Nazis would finally gain majority and they wanted to restore the monarchy anyways.
  - b. They invited Hindenburg to settle Hitler as Chancellor and Papen as Vice-Chancellor. Everyone feared the communist more than the Nazis. The Nationalist invited him into power which was a big mistake.

What did the nationalist stand for?

- It did not mean nationalization and socialism (redistribution of wealth).
- It was a way of life dedicated to the rebirth of the nation. All class needed to be united and all parties eliminated.
- Great emphasis on the ruthlessly efficient organization of all aspects of lives of the masses, in order to achieve greatness (with violence if needed). State was supreme.
- Since greatness could only be achieved by war the entire state was organized on military footing.
- The race theory was vitally important. The Aryans were the master race and all non-Aryans must be excluded.

***Who failed at the crucial moment and did not stop Hitler?***

- Reich judges (Hitlerputsch and process 1923)  
Sentenced for 5 years but released him after 5 months.
- Communists (main battle against Social Democrats)
- Hindenburg (appointment to Chancellor, agreed to emergency laws)
- Reichswehr /DNVP (integration- /taming concept)
- Reichstag (improved Enabling act)
- NSDAP electorate even though they never got more than 44%

***Who elected the NSDAP?***

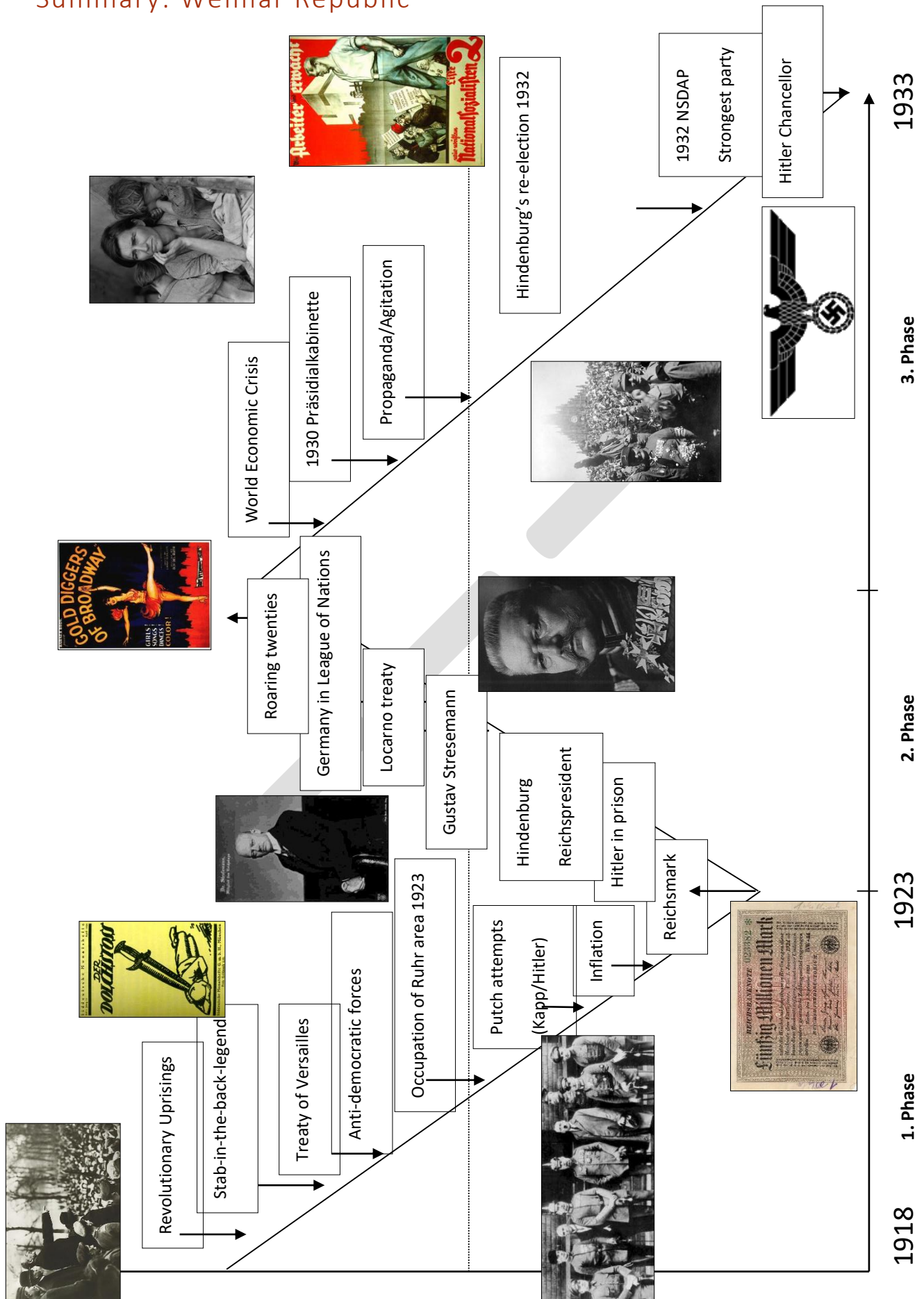
This party was not only party of the bourgeois middle class but a modern „people’s party“, i.e. a layer of cross-party mobilization (many frustrated people). The term „National Socialist German Worker’s Party“ should make it clear that everybody should see this party representing their interests.

***Did Hitler legally come into power?***

From the perspective of the so-called legal positivism Hitler’s dictatorship came formally into legally being correct. Contradicted by the fact that Hitler’s Nazi party never achieved an absolute majority in free elections, Hitler deliberately destroyed the Weimar Republic and has committed multiple constitutional violation (Preussenschlag, Enabling act).



## Summary: Weimar Republic



## Sol Task

### Racism and discrimination in science (0.5 A4)

Racism is something intellectually and artificially constructed. People have the need to classify. Classification process can be briefly outlined as follows: 1. Perception of group members, 2. Group boundaries, 3. Evaluative discrimination of groups, 4. Construction of breeds. The problem is that scientific racism captures the diversity of people in an incorrect manner and make it seem very reliable. In National Socialism race became the law of life, the rule of state was supported by racism and race reports. Race determined the soul of the individual, the national character and the entire culture. Their Darwinist racism was based on "survival of the fittest" and heredity. Survival was apparently linked to racial heritage and racial hygiene (purity). The aim was according to eugenics to protect their own "higher" race.

The Nazis even made poster with rules about getting kids – referred to as Nürnberger Gesetze. They declared who was allowed to make kids depending on whether they were German, Jewish or mixed. It seems ridiculous how the state interferes with one's private life. Also, it makes no sense that the heredity influences the character development. What is really responsible for that is the education and experiences that one will get. If someone is raised in a western culture, he will eventually have the "western software" even though he looks eastern. There are too many calculations in something that should happen naturally.

### Education and School in the Weimar Republic (Discussion)

What is the relationship between school and the Weimar Republic?

The schools or especially the teachers were very conservative and against the concept of the Weimar Republic. The teachers were against teaching the idea of international reconciliation. In the end the schools teach the students to pay homage to war heroes and the Kaiser. They teach that war is necessary because neighboring countries wouldn't begrudge Germany's world position.

What goals did Hitler have in mind with his national socialist youth education?

Hitler wanted to educate boys to soldiers that will do everything for the Vaterland and girls to mothers. Everyone has to part of the HJ else he would be persecuted by the police. The method was strict plans and overall strictness and order and youth leads youth. 1<sup>st</sup> was a healthy body, 2<sup>nd</sup> was mental ability and to totally subject to the fatherland and 3<sup>rd</sup> scientific knowledge. The Hitler youth was even taught to betray their parents for the Vaterland. Hitler even said that they would never be free again.

Which are the main differences between Hitler's ideas of education and the concept of the Gymnasium Immensee?

Hitler's idea was to create a part of the nation rather than an individual. He even was against it. He wanted to make a violent, bossy, intrepid, cruel youth. Everyone should be strong and beautiful. He wanted German Heroes/Soldiers/Slaves than German intellectuals. He also admits that the HJ isn't free and never will be again.

Immensee is the opposite. It relies on the formation of intellect and freedom to think in your own way. It relies on humanism rather than violence. One can choose what he wants to do. There is room for free-time and own interests.