

Adolf Hitler Lecture Notes “Putsch to Fuhrer” – Mr. Parker

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

“How did Adolf Hitler gain power in Weimar Germany?”

“What happened to allow Adolf Hitler to become Fuhrer of Nazi Germany in 1930’s?”

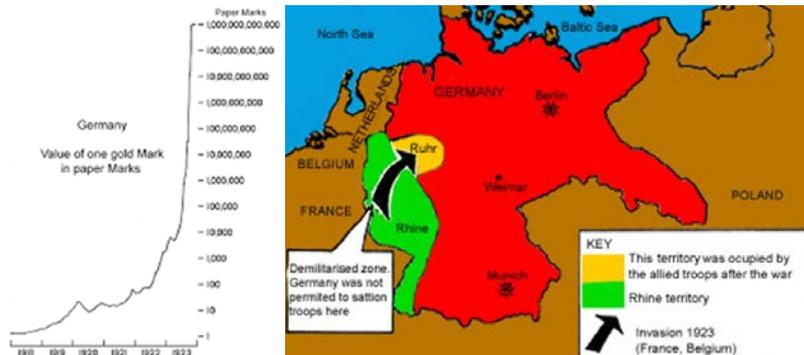
Germany After WWI:

- 1918 – End of WWI
 - “October Revolution” – Kaiser Wilhelm forced out of power – new German Republic established
 - Weimar Republic
 - Armistice signed, November 1918
 - Germans blamed their defeat on “stab in the back”
 - Belief that outside influences controlled Central Powers – DELUSIONAL!
 - “November Criminals” – betrayed the German Nation in WWI
 - Believed Jews also helped to bring down the mighty German military in WWI
 - Adolf Hitler was recovering from gas attack when WWI Armistice was declared – Distraught over the defeat!
- 1919 – Treaty of Versailles signed
 - German people outraged!
 - War Guilt Clause, Reparation Payments, German lands confiscated, German military reduced.

Weimar Republic: 1918-1933:

- After its defeat in World War I, Germany adopted a democratic form of government with a constitution and free elections.
 - The German Reichstag (legislature) assumed the responsibility of signing the Versailles Treaty.
- Led to mutinies by sailors, soldiers, and workers all over Germany
 - Labor strikes, political violence, etc...
 - Many Socialist groups set up local governing councils and called for communism.
 - The German army and marauding bands of right-wing soldiers broke up these governing councils – political chaos and violence.
 - Adolf Hitler was sent to spy on one such Socialist group: The German Worker’s Party (DAP).
- Reparation payments caused hyperinflation in the newly formed Democracy.
 - The government began to pay for these loans by printing more marks, the German paper currency.
 - Allies complained – Germans were paying their reparations with increasingly worthless currency.
 - The German people also suffered as prices spiraled upward.
- 1923 – Germany was late in making reparation deliveries of coal and other products to France.
 - Led to French and Belgian troops occupying Germany’s Ruhr Valley, a major coal-mining and industrial region.
 - The German government ordered miners and railroad workers to stop digging coal and transporting it to France.
- German government again printed more gold paper money – led to hyperinflation.
 - July 1914: 4 marks = \$1
 - Jan. 1923: 353,000 marks = \$1
 - Nov. 1923: 4 trillion marks = \$1

Date:	German Marks needed to buy one ounce of gold
Jan 1919	170.00
Sept 1919	499.00
Jan 1920	1,340.00
Sept 1920	1,201.00
Jan 1921	1,349.00
Sept 1921	2,175.00
Jan 1922	3,976.00
Sept 1922	30,381.00
Jan 1923	372,477.00
Sept 1923	269,439,000.00
Oct 2, 1923	6,631,749,000.00
Oct 9, 1923	24,868,950,000.00
Oct 16, 1923	84,969,072,000.00
Oct 23, 1923	1,160,552,882,000.00
Oct 30, 1923	1,347,070,000,000.00
Nov 5, 1923	8,700,000,000,000.00
Nov 30, 1923	87,000,000,000,000.00



Hitler After World War I:

- July, 1919 – After World War I, the German Army (Reichswehr) employed Adolf Hitler as a confidential informant (spy).
 - Job was to go around to the obscure political groups and attend meetings – bring info back to military authorities
 - It was in his capacity as a spy that Hitler attended a beer hall meeting of the German Workers' Party on September 12, 1919.
 - Adolf Hitler finds a political group full of individuals who believe the same as him.
 - He gives a speech at the same meeting denouncing Germany's enemies and secretly joins as the 55th member of the German Worker's Party.

National Socialist German Worker's Party:

- German Worker's Party (DAP) - (1919)
 - Nationalist
 - Anti-Semitic (hates Jews)
 - Anti-Communist
 - Anti-Capitalist
 - BIGGEST emphasis was on German Nationalism the promotion of the Aryan Race ("true Germans")
 - Purity and expansion of the Aryan Race
 - 1920 –DAP renames itself NSDAP
- National Socialist German Worker's Party
 - Swastika chosen as the symbol of the new "Nazi" party
*****more on the symbol of the Nazis later!*****
- 1921 – Hitler is named Chairman of the Nazi Party
 - His charisma and natural speaking ability gives him a lot of influence within the party.
- Under Hitler's leadership, Nazi Party grows.
 - Hitler views the Nazi Party as the perfect vehicle to further his political goals.
 - Many speeches
 - Many rallies
- Nazi Party grew using the strategy of:
 - Adolf Hitler's unique charisma and ability to speak in public.
 - Intimidation and terror - 15,000 *Sturmabteilung* (SA, "Storm Detachment"), the paramilitary wing of the NSDAP, fought in the streets with rival political groups and Nazi enemies
 - Weimar authorities looked past this political violence, for the most part.
 - Propaganda – every image of the Nazi Party was carefully crafted to appeal to the public.

The Beer Hall Putsch – November 8-9, 1923:

- A failed *coup d'état* by the Nazi Party (NSDAP) leader Adolf Hitler
 - Nazis attempted to violently seize power in Munich, Bavaria
 - Approx. 2,000 Nazis were marching to the Feldherrnhalle, in the city center, when they were confronted by police
 - Resulted in the death of 16 Nazis and four police officers
 - Hitler was wounded during the clash
 - Escaped immediate arrest and fled to safety in the countryside
 - After two days, he was arrested and charged with treason.

Hitler on Trial:

- The putsch brought Hitler to the attention of the German nation – made front page headlines in newspapers around the world.
- His arrest was followed by a 24-day trial
 - Trial was widely publicized – gave him a platform to speak about his beliefs and the Nazi party
 - HUGE opportunity - Spoke for hours at the trial.
- Hitler was found guilty of treason and sentenced to five years in Landsberg Prison.
 - This is where he dictated *Mein Kampf* to his fellow prisoners Emil Maurice and Rudolf Hess.

Mein Kampf

- *Mein Kampf* ("My Struggle") – 1925
 - Part autobiography/Part overview of Nazi philosophy:
 1. Hitler's Anti-Semitic beliefs.
 2. German's need for *Lebensraum* ("Living Space") – German territorial expansion.
 3. Totalitarian Government – Hitler's political ideology (*Fascism*).
 4. Describes Hitler's future plans for Germany.

5. Racial superiority of Germanic peoples.

- The book was edited by Hitler's deputy Rudolf Hess
- Hitler devoted himself entirely to the book while imprisoned.
 - Was a bestseller in Germany during the 1930s.
- After Hitler's death, copyright of *Mein Kampf* passed to the state government of Bavaria, which refused to allow any copying or printing of the book in Germany.
- In 2016, *Mein Kampf* was republished in Germany for the first time since 1945, which prompted public debate and protest from Jewish groups.

Hitler: 1924 – 1927:

- Hitler was released on December 20, 1924
 - Only served nine months
 - Weimar government put extreme restrictions on the Nazis and Adolf Hitler
 - Hitler was forbidden to speak publically until 1927
- Hitler and the Nazis now saw that the path to power was through legal and political means rather than revolution or force.
 - Once he began speaking publically again, Hitler and the Nazis threw themselves full force into using politics to take over Germany.

Hitler the Politician:

What did Hitler offer to the German people as a politician?

- Promises:
 - Nationalists – promise to restore Germany to greatness
 - Wealthy Industrialists – promise to stop Communism
 - Workers – promise to end unemployment
- Blamed others for Germany's problems:
 - "Undesirables"
 - Jews
 - "November Criminals"
 - Weimar Republic

How does Hitler rise to power?

- Brownshirts (SA)
 - Use terror tactics to eliminate opposition and critics
 - Used speaking ability – speeches & rallies – to reach the average citizen
- Hitler's charisma
 - He was a charismatic leader and speaker
- Propaganda – (Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels)
 - Public opinion begins to slowly sway toward Nazi support

Nazi Political Victories:

How does Hitler gain complete power in Germany?

- At the end of 1928, Nazi Party membership was recorded at 130,000.
- The SA was very active during this period (1925-1930)
 - The battles on the streets grew increasingly violent – pistol, bats, bricks, etc... - Many deaths.
- Hitler's Nazi Party gained increasing victories in the Reichstag
 - Nazi's held 107 seats (18.35% of the vote) in 1930.
 - The Nazis were 2nd largest party in Germany.
 - 1932 = 37% of the vote in the Reichstag.
- The Nazi Brownshirts were incredibly violent during this period (1928-1932)
 - 1931 - Ernst Röhm and the SA suffered 47 deaths and the Nazi political enemies saw 80 deaths in 1931 alone.
 - Street fights and beer hall battles throughout 1932 as well.
 - Adolf Hitler ran in the 1932 presidential election against the monumentally popular WWI hero, von Hindenburg.
 - Lost the Presidential election,
 - HOWEVER... the Nazis began applying pressure on Hindenburg to appoint Nazis to Cabinet posts.

Hitler Appointed Chancellor:

How does Hitler gain complete power in Germany?

- January 30, 1933 - Franz von Papen, Chancellor of Germany resigned when Nazi governmental power grows.
 - Supported the appointment of Adolf Hitler as the new Chancellor of Germany.

- Hindenburg reluctantly agreed to appoint Hitler as Chancellor.
- There is a belief among German politicians that they could “tame” Hitler.
- Hitler and the new Nazi Cabinet sworn in during a private ceremony in Berlin.
 - The SA and SS led torchlit parades throughout Berlin to celebrate Hitler’s Chancellorship.
 - Hitler's *Machtergreifung* ("seizure of power")

Reichstag Burns – February 27, 1933

How does Hitler gain complete power in Germany?

- February 27, 1933 - The Reichstag fire was an arson attack on the Reichstag building (home of the German parliament) in Berlin
 - Occurred one month after Adolf Hitler was sworn in as Chancellor of Germany.
 - The Nazi party stated that Marinus van der Lubbe, a Dutch council communist, was found near the building – Stated that he set the fire,, along with communist conspirators
 - 1933 - a German court decided that van der Lubbe had acted alone

Why does this matter?

- After the fire, the *Reichstag Fire Decree* was passed.
 - 1933 - The *Reichstag Fire Decree* suspended most civil liberties in Germany
 - habeas corpus
 - freedom of expression
 - freedom of the press
 - the right of free association and public assembly
 - the secrecy of the post and telephone
 - The Nazi Party used the fire as evidence that communists were plotting against the German government.
 - The Nazis were able to increase their share of the vote March 5, 1933, Reichstag elections from 33% to 44%
- March 23, 1933 - *The Enabling Act* was passed - gave Hitler the right to rule by decree.

The Night of the Long Knives (1934)

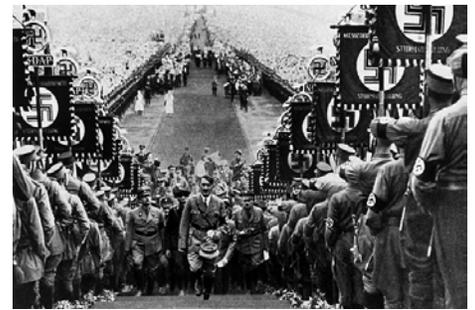
- “The Night of the Long Knives” (also known as the Röhm Purge)
 - A purge of SA and Nazi leaders that took place in Nazi Germany from June 30 to July 2, 1934
 - Adolf Hitler carried out a series of *political extrajudicial executions* intended to consolidate his hold on power in Germany
 - Hundreds of Nazis killed
 - Also alleviated the concerns of the German military about the role of Ernst Röhm and the *Sturmabteilung* (SA)
 - Nazi propoganda presented the murders as a preventive measure - Was there an imminent coup by the SA under Röhm?
 - Röhm Putsch?



IMPERIAL GERMANY
1871 - 1918



WEIMAR REPUBLIC
1918 - 1933



NAZI GERMANY
1933 - 1945

