Thinking on Your Own

As you read this lesson, take bulleted notes on the ways that Hitler gained and kept power. Title your notes "Hitler’s Policies." When you finish the lesson, compare your notes with that of a partner. Add any new concepts to your list.

The conditions that helped Adolf Hitler take over Germany were similar to those that helped Mussolini. Germans were angered at their treatment by the Allies at the Paris Peace Conference. German nationalists wanted the land that was taken from them under the Treaty of Versailles. Germany was also suffering from the worldwide depression. However, the Allies insisted that Germany continue to pay the huge reparations called for by the treaty.

Hitler’s Rise to Power

After the war, many nationalist political parties were developing in Germany. Adolf Hitler joined one of them, the small National Socialist German Workers’ Party. The name was eventually changed to the Nazi Party. By 1921, he headed the party. Two years later the party tried to overthrow the German government. Nothing came of the uprising, and Hitler was sent to jail.

After his prison term, Hitler set out to make the Nazis the most powerful political party in Germany. By 1929,
its membership had expanded from 27,000 to 178,000. Like Mussolini, Hitler appealed to nationalists. If Germans followed him, he promised to stop the payment of reparations. He would rebuild the German military. Germany would create a new empire. Like Mussolini, Hitler also appealed to business leaders and large landowners. He promised security from a Communist takeover and an end to the depression.

At the beginning of 1933, the president of the German Republic was forced to make Hitler chancellor. The Nazis had

---

**Inflation in Germany**

U.S. writer Ernest Hemingway and his wife Hadley spent September 19, 1922, in Kehl, Germany. In this excerpt, Hemingway describes how high prices were because of inflation.

"[W]e changed some French money in the railway station at Kehl. For 10 francs I received 670 marks. Ten francs amounted to about 90 cents... The 90 cents lasted... for a day of heavy spending and... we had 120 marks left!

"We picked out five very good-looking apples and gave the woman a 50 mark note... A very nice-looking, white-bearded old gentleman saw us... and raised his hat.

"Tardon me... how much were the apples?"

"I... told him 12 marks.

"He... shook his head, 'I can't pay it. It is too much.'"

---

**reading for understanding**

- How many marks did Hemingway receive for 10 francs?
- Why wasn't the man able to buy apples?
- How do you think Germans felt about not being able to buy basics like food?

"With marks at 800 to a dollar, or 8 to a cent,... [p]eas were 18 marks a pound, beans 16 marks,... Kehl's best hotel... served a five-course... meal for 120 marks, which amounts to 15 cents in our money."
won a majority of seats in the German Parliament. Hitler acted quickly to cement his power. He had Parliament suspend the constitution. Hitler no longer needed the legislature to make laws. The law was whatever Hitler decided it was. With the support of the Nazi Party, Hitler created a dictatorship. Germans began calling him Der Fuhrer, or the leader.

**The Nazi Government**

By 1934, there was no one who could challenge Hitler. The only political party allowed in Germany was the Nazi Party. Labor unions were banned. Hitler used terror and propaganda to maintain control and achieve his policies. The Gestapo, his secret police, spied on possible enemies. Anyone who opposed Hitler’s ideas could be sent to a concentration camp—a type of prison camp. This was the beginning of the persecution of Jews, homosexuals, gypsies, Roman Catholics, and others.

Hitler had promised to end the depression. Unlike Stalin, Hitler did not do away with private industry. But like Mussolini, he did control business and labor. The government set up massive public works projects to employ people. It also provided funding to private industry to create jobs. Hitler also stopped World War I reparation payments and set about re-arming Germany. Thousands of jobs were created to help build and equip the military.

A constant chorus of propaganda urged Germans to support the Third Reich. This was Hitler’s name for the new German empire. Youth groups trained young men in military discipline and values. Like Mussolini, Hitler discouraged women from working outside the home.
Anti-Semitism
Hitler was a fanatical anti-Semite. He hated Jews. Hitler had developed a theory that Germans were descended from a pure Aryan race. To Hitler, this was the master race, superior to all other races. Jews in Germany, the minority of the race. He also blamed the Jews for problems. In the beginning, Hitler wanted to exclude them from the country. Later, he turned to genocide, the systematic extermination of all members of an ethnic group.

Nuremberg Laws stripped Jews of German citizenship. They were no longer marry non-German Jews were also forbidden to have Star of David on their passports as Jews.

November 9, 1938, is known as the Night of Broken Glass. In that year, a young Jew had shot a Nazi, and in revenge, a Nazi mob attacked Jews. Houses, homes, and synagogues were burnt down, and many were murdered. After the violence, some Jewish men were sent to concentration camps.

In 1938, German Jews could not ride public transportation. They could not attend or teach in Jewish schools. They could not work in stores or in hospitals.

Time Box
1921
Hitler took over Nazi Party
1933
Hitler named chancellor of Germany
1935
Nuremberg Laws
1938
Kristallnacht

The aftermath of Kristallnacht