

# Why did Hitler become Chancellor?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Violence

- Hitler's SA or brownshirts were used to intimidate opponents and drum up support.
- Running battles were fought with rivals the Communist party.
- Violence and rivalry were central to Nazi philosophy of survival of the fittest.
- Ernst Rohm led the SA for the Nazi party

## Hitler 'political genius'

- Hitler had an undoubted ability for public speaking and an understanding of ordinary peoples desires.
- Hitler had 'his finger on the pulse of Germany' Walden.
- The vision as highlighted in Mein Kampf.
- Singlemindedness.
- 'Enter the Reichstag holding our noses'

## The Beer Hall Putsch

- 1923 saw Hitler's first attempt at seizing power with the Nazi party.
- Hitler was imprisoned for treason and reconsidered his political strategy.
- Hitler dictated Mein Kampf whilst in prison and decided that the Nazis has to gain power legally through elections.

## Why did Hitler become Chancellor in 1933?

## The Wall Street Crash

- Disastrous for Germany - 6 million unemployed.
- Second major economic catastrophe for the Weimar Republic.
- Soon became a political crisis as 3 Chancellors in 2 years could not solve the problems of Germany (Bruning, Schleicher, Von Papen)
- Hitler 'the last hope'

## Attractive Policies

- Hitler appealed to many sections of society.
- 'Rip up the Treaty of Versailles'
- 'Work, freedom and bread'
- Sort out the communists.
- Guaranteed farm prices
- Regain national pride.
- Hitler had his finger on the pulse knowing the desires of ordinary Germans.

## Divided Opponents

- Hitler should have been kept from power, he never gained an overall majority.
- Communists and Socialists were divided.
- Parties squabbled over how to deal with the depression.
- 1933 January Hitler is invited as Chancellor in an attempt to control him and the Nazis

## A weak position to begin!

- After being invited to power in January 1933 Hitler initially finds himself in a weak position.
- Von Papen commented 'we have hired him', Schleicher said 'we'll push him into a corner until he squeaks'
- Only 2 out of 9 cabinet members were Nazis.

## The Reichstag Fire

- An election is called for March 1933 to give Hitler an overall majority in the Reichstag.
- On February 27th 1933 The Reichstag (German Parliament) burns down.
- A young Communist is arrested and Hitler declares a state of emergency.
- Hitler is granted new powers

## Intimidation and Violence

- During March 1933 election the SA fight street battles with the Communists.
- Public meetings are broken up
- Local police work with SA.
- After the Reichstag fire 4000 Communists are arrested.
- Hitlers new powers also see imprisonment without trial of opponents.

# How did Hitler consolidate his position as leader of Germany?

## The Enabling Law

- March elections see Nazis gain 52% of the vote.
- The Enabling act is now passed allowing Hitler to act as dictator without Parliament.
- The Communist Party is banned, followed quickly by Trade Unions.
- All other political parties are also now banned.

## Night of the Long Knives

- Having removed external opponents Hitler now turns against internal Nazi threats.
- 30th June 1934 Hitler turns against the SA who are becoming an embarrassment and too powerful.
- Leader Ernst Rohm and 400 others are executed in one night of butchery.

## The Death of Hindenberg

- The last political figure now who could possibly oppose Hitler is the aging President Hindenberg.
- Hindenberg dies (naturally!) leaving Hitler to become Fuhrer (Chancellor and President combined)
- The army now swear an oath of personal loyalty to Hitler