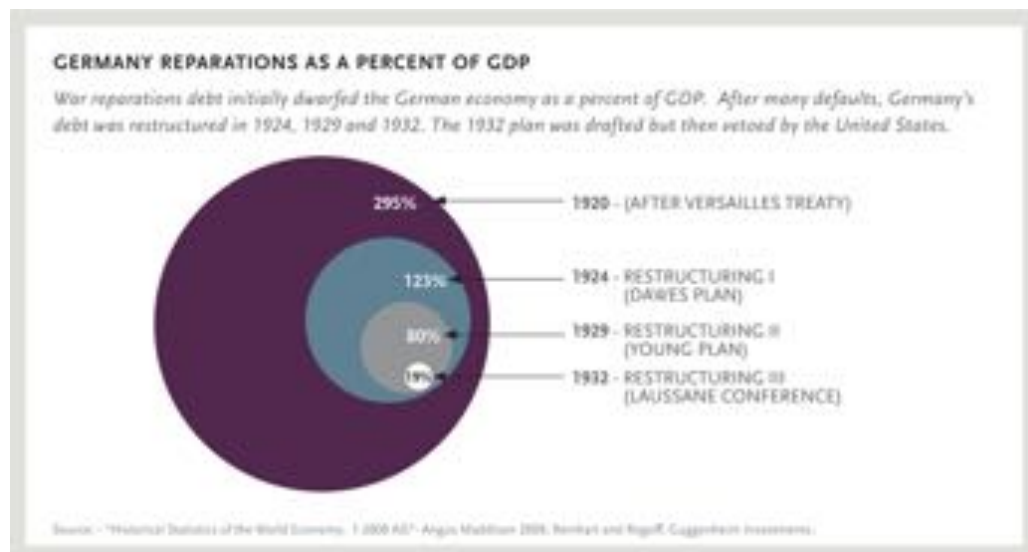


# The Road to World War II



# The Weimar Republic

name of the post-WWI government in Germany



millions of Germans blamed the Weimar government for their country's defeat and postwar humiliation

# Inflation Causes Crisis in Germany

Heavy reparations payments caused the value of the Reichsmark to fall sharply, causing severe inflation.

Germans needed more and more money to buy the most basic goods.



In Berlin a loaf of bread cost less than a mark in 1918, more than 160 marks in 1922, and some 200 billion marks by late 1923.

## The Dawes Plan

The International Financial System  
Under the Dawes Plan and Young Plan  
1924-30



THE DEBTORS.

American banks loaned money to Germany

Germany's reparations payments were restructured

# The Kellogg-Briand Pact

in 1928, US Secretary of State Frank Kellogg arranged an agreement that pledged “to renounce war as an instrument of national policy”



almost every country in the world signed the treaty

the treaty had no means to enforce its provisions



# 1929 American Financial Collapse

many middle-income people began buying stocks on margin



in September 1929, some investors started selling their stocks; panic ensued; prices plunged to a new low

on “Black Tuesday,” October 29, 1929, the Stock Market collapsed

# A Global Depression

American bankers demanded repayment of loans



US placed high tariffs on imported goods  
World trade dropped by 65%.  
Unemployment rates soared.

# The Failures of Versailles



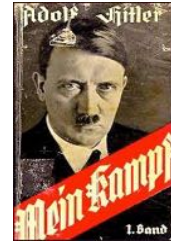
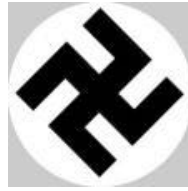
The Versailles Treaty (above on crutches) took a beating in the U.S. and abroad

- Germany's economy was in a shambles
- The Versailles Treaty failed to provide a "just and secure peace" as promised
- Instead Germany grew more and more resentful of a treaty they felt was too harsh and too punitive

# Adolf Hitler



Hitler in WWI, far right



- WWI veteran
- joined the German Workers' Party in 1919

- Hitler had great public speaking abilities and in organizing support
- he quickly became a leader of the group, renaming it the National Socialist German Workers' Party, or Nazi Party
- In his book, *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle), he explained that he wanted to unite all German-speaking people in one grand Empire
- He wanted racial purity – “inferior” races such as Jews, Slavs and all non-whites were to form a work force for the “master race” of blond, blue-eyed “Aryans”

## Hitler Gains Power

By 1932, the Nazis were the strongest political party in Germany



In January of 1933, Hitler was appointed as Germany's Chancellor

Hitler quickly threw out Germany's existing government and replaced it with a totalitarian government

Called himself “Der Führer”  
and his rule of Germany the Third Reich  
He promised to return Germany to its former glory.

## Germany Rearms



*Above: Hitler is enthusiastically greeted as he visits a factory. Many Germans were grateful for jobs after the misery of the depression years.*

## Germany Remilitarizes the Rhineland

March 1936



The Rhineland was the region of Germany that was 'demilitarized' after the Treaty of Versailles.

# Nazi Germany Expands: Austria



The arrival of German troops was met with great enthusiasm by the Austrians.

The majority of Austrians favored unification with Germany

A day later, Germany announced its union with Austria, which it called “Anschluss”

Another element of Hitler’s grand design was creating “Lebensraum”

In March, 1938, German troops marched into Austria unopposed.



# Nazi Germany Expands: the Sudetenland

many German-speaking people lived in the Sudetenland in  
Czechoslovakia



1938 - Hitler occupied the  
Sudetenland

an occupation of the rest of  
Czechoslovakia seemed imminent

# The Munich Conference

September 1938



Neville Chamberlain, Edouard Daladier,  
Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini

Hitler promised the annexation of the Sudetenland would be his “last territorial demand”

the Munich Agreement allowed Germany to keep the Sudetenland

Chamberlain returned to England and announced that he had secured

“...peace in our time.”

the dangerous policy of appeasement  
– giving up principles to pacify an aggressor

# Nazi Expansion Continues

March 15, 1939: German troops occupy all of Czechoslovakia

August of 1939: Germany and the USSR sign a non-aggression pact



September 1, 1939: Germany invades Poland

The Soviets received part of Poland (a promise made in the non-aggression deal between Germany and the USSR).

Great Britain and France, allies of Poland, declared war on Germany.

World War II had officially begun.