

Germany in 1918 was forced to become a democratic republic. The failure of democracy in the period 1918-1934 was a ~~failure~~ result of nationalism but not nationalism alone. The failure of democracy was owed to a lot of other factors such as the humiliation of Versailles, the Great Depression, the inflation of 1923 and the thriving of nationalism when Weimar failed to uplift the country.

Germany became a republic in 1918 because the allies refused to negotiate peace terms with Germany unless it did so. Prince Max of Baden established a constitution with 4 major parties including the SPD & Zentrum, with Germany now a republic. Prince Max of Baden sued for peace based on Wilson's 14 points but the big Powers ~~of~~ (America, Britain & France) issued a dictat. The Treaty of Versailles was signed on the 11th of November 1918 and it brought great humiliation to <sup>the</sup> Germans who were led to believe that they were winning the war. The Kaiser was forced to abdicate and Prince Max of Baden

handed power ~~bet~~ to Ebert. Phillip Schiedemann claimed 'long live the new, long live the German Republic!'

However, this sudden change to a democratic system did not erase the great sense of pride and nationalism in the Germans. Germany had never had an experience of democracy and Historian Peter Gay claims that the Weimar Republic was simply an idea seeking to become a reality. Versailles ultimately gave Weimar the worst possible start to democracy.

Then Germany lost rich resource areas Alsace and Lorraine to France and the Rhineland was permanently demilitarised. The Clause 231 stated that Germany was to blame for the war and this outraged nationalists and ultranationalists who refused to support democracy. The military clauses of the treaty saw the army reduced to a small number and the navy reduced to virtually nothing.

Ebert's main threat in democracy was the Spartacists. Liebert and Luxemburg were a threat to peace and Ebert thus made a pact with Groener who promised army support and successfully got rid of this opposition. The Freikorps troops under Gustav eliminated Liebert and Luxemburg. The short term effect of this was

riding of opposition and the long term ~~we~~ effect  
afterwards was the beginning of the growth of  
militarism. The army further became a power  
unto itself under General von Seeckt who  
after seeking good relations with Russia,  
saw the army grow to a considerable size.

Under no circumstance was the influence of  
nationalism reduced under democracy. The  
Kapp Putsch of 1920~~2~~ saw ex-freikorps troops who  
had been disbanded ~~due~~ to the military clauses  
of Versailles trying to overthrow the  
government. The putsch failed but  
it showed the weaknesses of the government  
as they fled to Berlin.

Furthermore, nationalists such as Hitler,  
who shared the hatred for democracy,  
stuck together. The Nazis rose in the 1920s  
as most members were ex-freikorps  
troops. The Beer Hall Putsch of 1924  
saw Hitler try to overthrow the Bavarian  
republic. Democracy was so weak;  
the constant disruptions in government  
and continuous elections saw people lose  
faith in it.

Hitler ~~ca~~ was imprisoned for 5 years but spent only 8 months in prison as the judge was slightly right wily. ~~It~~. However Hitler used the trial to promote his image and party.

The Weimar republic also had a period of great prosperity. After the horrors of hyperinflation in 1923, the Stresemann government implemented the Dawes Plan in 1924 which immediately provided 800 million marks to Germany. German industry began to prosper and the economy grew, Stresemann himself was a nationalist but he sought to undo the injustice of Versailles through peaceful negotiations.

The reparations payments were another stigma on German honour. The French invasion of the Ruhr in 1923 showed the French determination against the Germans and this further disheartened the German nationalists. The Treaty of Locarno sought good relations with France

and French minister Briand claimed 'At Locarno we spoke European... it is a language that many everyone should speak'. Stresemann's foreign policy was effective and reparations were eventually completely cancelled with the onset of depression. Germany even joined the League of Nations.

~~Nationalists made~~

The Weimar republic collapsed for a number of reasons. The borrowed money from the US ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> dangerous; when the Wall Street crash occurred, Germany felt the full impact of the depression. Stresemann had claimed earlier 'we have lived off borrowed money' and this was a major weakness. Another major weakness in Weimar was the failure of removing powerful industrialists in power. Historian Bracher claims that power still rested with powerful nationalists, Junkers, aristocrats and civil service. Historian Broszat also agrees with this claim.

Hitler's alliance with Hugenburg gave him direct access to these powerful industrialists and Hitler used their money to promote his party, which ~~was~~ by ~~Alan~~ But

The Nazis appealed to the working class and upper class with their promises for a better life. They appealed to the Nationalists with their claims to reverse Versailles.

Stresemann died in 1929 and the Muller government came into power.

Alan Bullock claimed that Germany lost an irreplaceable leader.

The Muller government collapsed over disputes on relief payments and Brüning was elected chancellor. This saw an end to parliamentary government.

Brüning sought a deflationary policy to combat the depression but this was rejected and the Nazis used the depression and the weaknesses of government as propaganda to turn

people away from democracy.

Von Papen was elected chancellor and so sought to an alliance with Hitler. Hitler was given 3 cabinet seats and Von Papen became vice chancellor. Hindenburg was ironically the last hope for democracy. Papen underestimated the Nationalist party claiming "they are in our control."

The Nazis gained ~~203~~ many seats in the Reichstag and ~~at~~ <sup>Hitler urged</sup> ~~when Hindenburg died in 1934~~, Hindenburg to pass the enabling act hence giving Hitler complete power. The Reichstag fire was blamed on communists and Hitler used democratic power to overthrow it. When Hindenburg died in 1934, Hitler abolished the office of the president and became fuhrer. The Nazis Nationalist party were beneficiaries of the

Weimar weaknesses and the feeling of Nationalism was an underlying theme in the rise of the Nazi party and the collapse of democracy in 1918 - 1934.