

Was it the
weaknesses of the
weimar or the
strengths of hitler that
allowed him i...

[People](#), [Adolf Hitler](#)



The weakness of the Weimar Republic played a huge part in Hitler's rise to power. This essay will explore the Weimar's weaknesses, including the impact of the first world war, the constitutional weakness of the Republic, the implications of the Treaty of Versailles and the Munich Putsch. As well as other factors that led to Hitler's success not so related to the Weimar Republic. This includes the anger of the German people at Germany's surrender. This is commonly known as the stab in the back by the politicians who became known as criminals, due to the armistice being signed in November 1918. Reasons for this public feeling were because the Germans thought that they were winning the war. The politicians, in reality, had no choice. A significant problem with the Weimar Republic was the fact that it was constitutionally weak. The use of the proportional representation system proves this, due to the failure to form a majority government. Parties only needed 2% of votes in order to gain seats. There were also a lot of elections, for example in 1932 there were 5, which is a huge amount in politics. This wasn't the only problem however, each party was extremely self-interested. Article 48 was an issue. It was created as a means of protecting the Republic when it was threatened, for example by the Kapp Putsch. As time went on however, especially during Hindenburg's reign, it was misused, with new laws going from 5 being used in 1930, to 44 in 1931 and 60 in 1932, while sittings of the Reichstag declined from 94 in 1930 to 13 in 1932. Even more to Hitler's success was the Versailles treaty. Winning public approval for the Republic was made even more difficult because of this. The terms of the treaty included £6.6 billion reparation payments, a war guilt clause, great loss of land and colonies and an army of a mere 100,000 with a navy of 10,000.

and no aircraft. Besides these brutal terms, the war guilt clause proved to be extremely damaging. It was a constant reminder to the German nation of the 'stab in the back' by the 'criminals' which did nothing to help Weimar and just helped Hitler as it made people look for more extreme political ideas. It worsened their economic problems during the economic slumps of 1923-1924 with inflation reaching new heights. This worked in Hitlers favour as once again the German public were looking for much more extreme ideas to help their country get out of this mess. This resulted in Hitlers rise to power. Another foolish episode in Weimar's time were the years from 1924-28. These were the 'golden years' for Germany. It is argued that there was political stability and growth, and political violence was left behind. Even Germany's economy had stabilised, which was an achievement after the 1922/23 inflation problems. But it ended awfully for the republic. In order for Germany to be as stable as it was, the government had taken short term loans from America, and in 1929, with the Wall Street Crash, the loans were called in and Germany was left in a worse state than before, with unemployment reaching 5.6 million. Hitler seized on this mistake by offering jobs to be created if he were in power and for the stabilisation of the economy in Germany. Hitler and the Nazis used the Wall Street Crash in their propaganda and they blamed it on Weimar. From 1928 there were strains economically with investment dropping and unemployment rising. Due to the catastrophe in Germany due to the US calling their loans back in, Brüning was using article 48 increasingly in his attempt to help. Due to the Nazis propaganda this was the reason why right wing support increased for the Nazi party and Hitler. Another factor in Hitler's rise was the Munich

Putsch. He tried to take the government by force. Parts of the SA along with Hitler, and other attendees were stopped and sixteen Nazis were killed. Hitler was arrested, and in prison wrote Mein Kampf. Another part of Hitler's success is the collapse of the government 1930-33. In 1930 Muller resigned as chancellor due to pressure, with Brüning taking over. His election of 1930 wasn't good as the Nazis jumped from 12 to 107 seats. It was only through the SPD and Hindenburg's support that he made it through to May 1932, when Fritz von Papen took over. Papen had no scruples about governing by presidential rule. He then decided on an election in July 1932 which saw the Nazis jump to a staggering 230 seats in the Reichstag. They both had public support for the Nazis. People would expect Hitler to at least play some part in the government after this result, but he was adamant that he would not accept anything but the chancellor position, and Hindenburg was not up for this decision. This shows that the republic was weak as many resignations resulted in Hitler getting closer to his wanted position, which in the end results in him getting it. The final factor that helped Hitler was his personal attributes. He was a great public speaker and could win over many people with his speeches. In a source a man said 'each one of his words was like an arrow and everyone reached its target'. This helps Hitler as he can get his points across well and persuade the audience in an instant. In conclusion Hitler's sheer determination and will power allowed him to get into the position of chancellor but this couldn't have been done without the Weimars failures. If the stab in the back myth hadn't have been announced the public wouldn't have lost confidence in the republic. The economic strains on Germany also allowed Hitler to open up a gap to pursue. If the strains and

the stab in the back wouldn't have been their then no problems would have arose and their would be no need for change. However with these problems it meant that a gap opened and with Hitlers sheer determination he took full advantage.