

The seeds of hitler's  
rise to power were  
planted f essay



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Following the outcome of the First World War. With Germany's defeat, many German men returned to Germany feeling betrayed by their country and government. Among them was Adolf Hitler, a young Austrian Corporal who had fought bravely for Germany. When the World War broke out, Hitler was very happy. The War had been a blessing to the young Hitler, who had been unsuccessful in civilian life. When Germany was defeated, Hitler was devastated. He wrote, "I could sit there no longer, once again, everything went black before my eyes, and I tottered and groped my way back to the place where we slept, and buried my burning head in the blankets and pillows." (Stewart p. 31). On returning unemployed to Munich, Hitler was outraged exclaiming "in these days the hatred grew in me, hatred for those responsible for this deed." (Stewart p. 31). Hitler promised to get back at people for those who had been responsible for Germany's defeat. ! With the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, Hitler blamed the defeat of Germany on the Jews, Communists, and the weak Weimar government. This is the government which held power following Germany's defeat. With his strong hatred for the Communists, the Jews, and the weak government, Hitler vowed to fight back, and to change the terrible things, which he believed, had been done to Germany.

After the War, Hitler found a job as a prison guard sixty miles north from Munich. The job was boring, but it provided him with security, food, shelter, and something to do. When the job ended, Hitler went back to Munich, where he was offered a more challenging job due to his great dislike for the Communists who were provoking revolution in cities throughout Germany. In this assignment, Hitler was given the task of keeping a close watch on

individual groups, which could have been a threat to the military of the Weimar Government. In this, Hitler learned many things and even was given special training at the University of Munich where he attended political philosophy classes. These classes may be where he began to take keen interest in German expansion.

In 1919, Hitler was investigating a fifty-four member group which was called the German Workers Party. This group had funds adding up to about seven U. S. dollars. This group was anti-Communist ideas, and believed along with the Jews were to blame for Germany's problems. After attending a few meetings, Hitler joined becoming the party's fifty-fifth member. Although this was small party, in a few years it becomes the most powerful political group in Europe. When a member, Hitler became very busy, spending all his free time doing work for the party, forcing him to resign from his military position. Until that time a man by the name of Drexler had been the leader of this party. It was this man who saw that Hitler had much potential. This is therefore the reason for promoting him to the position of director of propaganda. In this new position, Hitler set to work, spreading news of the party's ideas and meetings. With the increased publicity, the party grew attracting! large audiences who were curious and intrigued by Hitler and his speeches. Although at first a shy and awkward man, Hitler became a very powerful and convincing orator. At these meetings Hitler spoke of The Versailles Treaty, the Jews, Communists, and the Germany and the World's future. As one bystander said, " he could sent shivers down one's spine".

Within a few months membership increased to over a thousand members.

Hoping to gain further popularity, Hitler changed the name of the Party to <https://assignbuster.com/the-seeds-of-hitlers-rise-to-power-were-planted-f-essay/>

the National Socialist German Worker's Party (abbr. NAZI). This because he felt that the old name was boring and lacked clarity. As his power increased he introduced a new flag and symbol of the Party. By 1920, Hitler demanded Drexler for full control of the party. Drexler, without any alternatives gave over power. With the new authority, Hitler changed his name to "Adolf Hitler a. k. a. der Führer" (Stewart p. 37). As activities increased Hitler suggested a private army for the protection of him and other party members. A loyal follower by the name of Rohm (a gay man), organized a group of ruthless ex-soldiers naming them the S. A. The S. A. were trained, drilled, and closely resembling a real military group. These men often led attacks on hecklers and Jewish people. They had little sympathy for their opponents and often were extremely brutal in their attacks. They did this because of passionate hate.

In the year 1923, the Nazis had over 150,000 members, all drawn by the exciting rallies and the hatred of Jews. During this same year, the Ruhr, an important mining region was occupied by the French troops. This action was taken, because it was during this year that Germany failed to pay debts and damages to France. This invasion by France angered many Germans who were still very hostile to the Treaty of Versailles, and the same that it brought upon their nation. With the occupation of the Ruhr inflation skyrocketed, making the German currency nearly worthless. This was the moment that Hitler had been waiting for. With the support of his party, Hitler stepped in presenting the German people with the scapegoat for all their troubles. On the top of the list were the Jews, followed by the Communists and all foreigners. To many Germans, these groups did seem like plausible excuses

for their troubles. On November 8, 1923, five years after the Germany's defeat, Hitler chose the moment for a revolution. At a beer hall in Bavaria, he attempted to seize power in the Beer Hall Putsch, where he failed to gain power, but where he gains national recognition for his brave attempt. He was sentenced for five years in prison, but due to his sympathetic supporters in Bavaria, he served only nine months.

During these nine months Hitler had a lot to think and write. Although he was in prison, one Nazi remarked, "The place looked like a delicatessen. You could have opened a flower and fruit and wine shop with all the stuff stacked there. People were sending presents from all over Germany and Hitler had grown visibly fatter on the proceeds". (Stewart p. 44). While enjoying the gifts, Hitler sat down to work on his book entitled *Mein Kampf* (my struggle). This is the book in which he outlined his ideas on the future of Germany, his racial policies, preservation of the Volk, and the thousand year Reich. The book was published in 1925, two years after he failed revolution. The book was not a success, selling a few thousand copies in the next few years. Readers found it boring, poorly written, and difficult to read. In his prison experience, Hitler learned one valuable lesson. This was if he hoped to gain power, he would have to obtain it through legal means.

After being released from prison, it was at first difficult for Hitler to pick up from where he left off. Economic stability had been achieved by the Dawes Plan, and the Weimar Republic had gained more respect from its people. Hitler was forbidden to make speeches, and found a rival Nazi, who was in charge of the Nazis in the north in Germany. It was only by 1929 that Hitler received large audiences again due to the economic and political instability, <https://assignbuster.com/the-seeds-of-hitlers-rise-to-power-were-planted-f-essay/>

which resulted from the Wall Street Crash in New York. By the 1930 elections, the Nazis were the second largest party in Germany. This was attracting 36.8% of the vote in the national elections. In January 1933, Hitler was invited to hold the position of Chancellor by Hindenburg, a position that he accepted.

Once in power, Hitler went on to establish himself as an absolute ruler. A fire in the German Parliament building gave him a good excuse to demand full powers. These were granted to him two days later on the 29th of February 1933, which stripped the individual of all freedom and choice. However, in order to succeed in presidency, Hitler needed the support of the army. In return for eliminating old friend and leader of the SA (which was to be replaced by the SS), Hitler was promised full support of the army. On June 30th 1934, Hitler carried out his promise in the Night of the Long Knives. Rohm and other members of the SA were executed crying "Heil Hitler", not understanding why they were being killed. With the support of the army, Hitler went on to tackle the unemployment problems, and to bring military back to Germany.

The year 1935 saw many changes for Germany. In January, the Saarland was returned to Germany, and in March conscription was introduced along with rearmament. In July, a naval agreement was established with the British, which recognized Germany's right to rearm. In 1935, the conditions for the Jews got worse. At a speech in Nuremberg, Hitler announced the Nuremberg laws, which stripped Jews of their citizenship, and their rights to enjoy the benefits of the state. The Jewish people of Germany were also forced to wear a yellow star of David, identifying them to the Gestapo (Hitler's secret

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police). Those who broke the laws were subject to beatings, punishment, and even death. In 1936, using the Soviet-French pact as an excuse, Hitler remilitarized the Rhineland, a disputed territory between Germany and France. In October of that year, Hitler signed the Rome-Berlin axis, which soon became the Anti-Committee Pact which included the country of Japan. With the intensified persecution of the Jews, Hitler began to formulate ideas about foreign policy. Hitler believed that Germany needed to fight, to undo the wrongs that had been committed against Germany in the Treaty of Versailles. Hitler wrote "those who do not want to fight, do not deserve to live". (Mein Kampf). Hitler formulated an idea named "Lebensraum", which in English means living space. In this policy, Hitler hoped to spread German frontiers, in order to make Germany more self-sufficient and spacious. This idea alone meant taking over other countries which were sovereign in their own right. (In particular the nations of Poland and Russia).

In the year of 1938, Hitler completed Anschluss with the country of Austria. With the fall of Austria without a single shot being fired, Jews in Austria received the same treatment as their counterparts in Germany. Tens of thousands were jailed and sent to concentration camps, just because they happened to be Jewish religion. Not willing to take on the issue, the Allies were unable to stop the German's from taking over Austria. As Hitler grew bolder, so did his conquests. Next on his agenda was Czechoslovakia, a country surrounded on three sides by Germany and Austria. Hitler demanded that the German speaking section of the country should become part of Germany. The Czech Government was strongly against Hitler's demands feeling that they did not have anything to worry about since they were

militarily allied with France and Russia. In meetings with the British Prime Minister, In Munich, Hitler was given the Sudetenland in return for no more territorial demands. The Agreement was made and peace was made in order to appease Hitler, so he would no longer cause any further problems. It seemed like a triumph for peace, but in fact, the Czechs were let down by their allies. By March 1939 Hitler had broken the Munich Agreement when the whole of Czechoslovakia was invaded. Unlike Chamberlain's quote, there would be no more things as "peace for our time." (Stewart p. 85).

Hitler's next move was against Poland. Before launching his invasion, Hitler first wanted to secure an alliance with the Soviet Union, since they could have been a possible threat. With Stalin's pledge, Hitler invaded Poland splitting in two between the Soviet Union and Germany. Having experienced the slow and bloody battles in the First World War, Hitler decided to use a new technique of waging war. He used Blitzkrieg, or lightning war in which airplanes would bomb, while being supported by large divisions of tanks. This new technique proved well in the invasion of Poland, which took the Germans only two weeks to take over. Although the Poles had been long time allies of the British and the French, there was not much that the allies could do for her, because it would have involved going through Germany. This would have been a difficult task.. The allies did however declare war, but no military actions were taken. This war is often referred to as the phony war because they never fought.

In the following spring of 1940, after a cold and long winter, Hitler went on to conquer the Nations of Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, and France. With a great speed and power, the Germans rolled through <https://assignbuster.com/the-seeds-of-hitlers-rise-to-power-were-planted-f-essay/>



these nations as in a very short time, easily crushing the resistance. England on the other hand was not backing down Hitler. The new P. M. Winston Churchill vowed to fight against the Germans. During the Battle of Britain, which began in 1940, the British and German's battled it out in the skies. Huge losses were suffered on both sides, civilian and military. In spite of these great losses, the British refused to give out. The bombing of British civilian only increased British support around the World. Especially from the United States, who from this point increased their economic and military aid to the British. By October of that year, Hitler called off the operation, realizing that the British could not be defeated.

Following Hitler's failure in the Battle of Britain, Hitler moved on to conquer the Soviet Union in order to gain power on their oil, minerals, and wheat fields. The attack was launched on June 22nd 1941, in the hope that the defeat of the Soviet Union would occur before the winter. This was a grave miscalculation on Hitler's part, because it assumed that the Soviet's would easily be defeated. This was not the case. By December of that year, it was clear that the German's were not going to take the Soviet Union in one single battle. The winter had come and the German's were not prepared to deal with the subzero temperatures. Hitler was forced to back down. This was Hitler's first set back and led to his declining success.

Meanwhile, back in Germany, Himmler prepared Hitler's plans on the final solution. This was the plan which was referring to the extermination of the Jewish people. Concentration camps were expanded throughout the conquered territories of Europe. As well as concentration camps,

extermination camps were added to the lists. These were places like <https://assignbuster.com/the-seeds-of-hitlers-rise-to-power-were-planted-f-essay/>

Auschwitz and Mauthausen, where hundreds of thousands of Jewish men, women, and children were murdered. In addition to concentration camps and extermination camps, mobile execution squads were established, which traveled around Europe murdering Jewish people. In this next quote, we see an eyewitness's vivid memory of an execution: "The people, completely naked, went down some steps and clambered over the heads of the people lying there to the place to which the man directed them. They lay down in front of the dead or wounded people some caressed those who were still alive and spoke to them in a low voice. Then I heard a series of shots. I looked into the pit and saw that the bodies were twitching.... Blood was running from their necks." (Quoted in Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*). By the end of the war, an estimated six million Jews died at the end of Nazi's, in what they saw as the only solution to the Jewish "problem".

At the end of 1942, defeat against Hitler brought the war to a turning point. Hitler turned away from the reality of the situation, only listening to positive reports, which were given to him by his personal secretary. Germany was facing a desperate situation because they were not receiving no useful help from her weakening ally Mussolini. The years of 1943 and 1944 saw several assassination attempts on Hitler's life. They all failed making his personal security tighter. As 1945 came around, Hitler was found in a bunker where he was planning his last efforts to stop the incoming forces of the Soviet Union, the United States, and the British. On April 30th, the end was near. Hitler parted farewell to his loyal remainders before shooting himself in the head. A week after the suicides of Hitler and Goebbels, the force of Germany surrendered unconditionally to the Allies. The war was over, but it was only

by the time that the world realized the horrors that had been committed. As the Allies liberated the death camps throughout Europe, people everywhere were shocked. Between the years 1945 and 1949, many Nazi leaders were put on trial for the war crimes that they had committed against humanity. While on trial, these men claimed that they were only following orders. The judges were unsympathetic to these claims, and sentenced many of the leaders to death and life imprisonment.

The defeat of Hitler's Reich greatly changed the lives of many people. The Jews were the most abused victims of Hitler's Reich, losing about six million of their people to indiscriminate killings. With the end of the war, they looked for a homeland in which they could get away from the discrimination and experiences, which they had in Europe. In 1947, Palestine was split into a Jewish State and an Arabic State, causing immediate confrontation of the two groups. With the defeat of the Palestinians in 1949, the Jewish people established a state of Israel. The picture had not only changed in Europe, but as well as in the Middle East. In Europe the Allies were unwilling to allow Germany to ever produce a similar Reich to the one Hitler had created. Not only that, but Germany was not allowed to create nuclear arms. Countries which suffered from Germany in the War, never wanted to see German soldiers on their soils again. Not only that, but they did not trust such a nation with terrible weapons after all the horrors they committed. The Allies split the Germany into two different zones. This is which resulted in the formation of two separate countries, which were not reunited until 1989. Now that it has passed fifty years since the 2nd World War, Germany has changed in many ways. Despite the numerous scars which the nation hold in

it's memory, great progression has occurred. With the reunification in the year 1989, Germany has hit new eras. Germany has become one of the largest economies in Europe and in the world without having needs to conquer other peoples. Emerging from a dark day of history, Germany is now the most important single backer in European monetary union. These remarkable changes can be accounted for because of the allies' occupation, which has led Germany to pay for their war crimes and terrible deeds. The results have been interesting in contrast to the years in which Hitler led the country to war. Germany is the undisputed economic giant in Europe. Though, one can see that the countries like France are scared of Germany's rise. In history, Germany has invaded France on many occasions. As Germany gets stronger and leads European Union, France is skeptical because they don't know if they can be trusted. Anyway, despite France's hesitation, Germany has risen from a devastated war-torn country to one of the leaders in Europe. This to me is impressive, because they have come along a fair bit since their defeat in 1945. Hitler's overall success must be attributed to the conditions, which existed in Post War Germany, and Hitler's great talent as a speaker and a politician. His rise to power was not inevitable, it must be noted that he greatly used the conditions of the time in his favor. The power that he held was total, but he made no permanent contributions to the human race. He has left an evil mark on mankind. Hitler is known and will continue to be known for the evil crimes that he committed against mankind, and against the world. Now, fifty years later, Germany has emerged as an economic giant without the needs for grand military. Other nations will not forgive Hitler, but they will forgive the people.

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