

## Nazism in Germany

1. As Germany moved towards defeat in 1918, public opinion turned against the government, and in Oct., the Kaiser, in a desperate bid to hang on to power, appointed Prince Max as Chancellor. He was known to be in favour of more democratic form of government in which parliament had more power.
2. But it was too late; in Nov. revolution broke Out, the Kaiser escaped to Holland and abdicated, and Prince Max resigned. Friedrich Ebert, leader of the left-wing Social Democrat Party, became head of the government.
3. In Jan., 1919, a general election was held, the first complete democratic one ever to take place in Germany. The Social Democrats emerged as the largest single party and Ebert became first President of the Republic. They had some Marxist ideas but believed that the way to achieve socialism was through parliamentary democracy.
4. The new government was by no means popular with all German: even before the elections the communist had attempted to seize power in the Spartacist Rising (Jan., 1919).
5. In 1920 right-wing enemies of the republic occupied Berlin (the Kapp Putsch). The government managed to survive these threats and several later ones, including Hitler's Munich Beer Hall Putsch (1923).
6. By the end of 1919 a new constitution had been agreed by the National Assembly (Parliament), which was meeting at Weimer because Berlin was still tom by political unrest. This Weimer constitution, gave its name to the Weimar Republic and lasted until 1933, when it was destroyed by Hitler. The Great Depression, beginning with the Wall Street Crash in Oct., 1929, had disastrous effects on Germany, producing massive 6.5 million unemployed. The Government was unable to cope with the situation and by the end of 1932 the Weimer Republic seemed on the verge of collapse.
7. Meanwhile Adolf Hitler and his National Socialists (Nazis) had been carrying out a great propaganda campaign blaming the government for all the ills of Germany, and setting out Nazi solutions to the problems.
8. In Jan., 1933, President Hindenber gappointed Hitler as Chancellor, and soon afterwards Hitler saw to it that democracy ceased to exist; the Weimar Republic was at an end, and from then until April 1945, Hitler was the dictator of Germany. Only defeat in the Second World War and the death of Hitler (April 30, 1945) freed the German people from the Nazi tyranny.