

## US History

### Origins of World War II

#### Learning Target:

*I can examine the rise of fascism and militarism in Europe prior to WWII.*

#### 4. The Rise of Militarism – Hitler & Germany

##### *War Debts and Reparations –*

##### The Debt –

- US banks had loaned billions of dollars to the Allies in World War I
- By 1920 the Allies owed \$10 billion to the US

##### Should They Pay?

- European Allied nations believed their debts should be canceled since they suffered for victory much more than the US
- The US disagreed but did cancel portions of the debt and reduced interest on the debts

##### How Can They Pay?

- The only way the Allies could pay was to collect severe reparations from Germany
- The Germans had to borrow money to pay the debts
- They also printed more money to pay resulting in massive inflation for the German mark
- Germany was on the brink of financial collapse

##### *Hitler's Reaction –*

- Adolf Hitler was a young and bitter WWI veteran at the time who needed someone to blame
- Became convinced German politicians lost WWI not the German army
- Hitler joined the National Socialist German Workers' Party, also known as the Nazi's, and plotted to overthrow the German government in 1923
- Quickly became the organization's leader due to his powerful speaking skills
- His efforts failed and he was sent to jail

##### Hitler & Mein Kampf –

- While in jail he wrote his book Mein Kampf (My Struggle) which laid out his plans to restore German power through Nazism

##### 3 Elements of Nazism –

###### 1. Extreme Nationalism

- Hitler was born in Austria and dreamed of uniting all German-speaking people in a great German empire

## 2. Racial Purification

- Germans, especially blue-eyed, blond-haired Aryans formed a master race that was destined to rule the world
- Inferior races, such as Jews, Slavs, and all nonwhites, were deemed fit to serve Aryans or die

## 3. National Expansion

- Hitler believed that for Germany to thrive it needed to be bigger
- Believed that war was the only way to accomplish this

- Hitler blamed the Jews, Communists, and intellectuals for Germany's decline
- Many supported Hitler who had been ruined by the depression

### *Hitler's Rise to Power –*

- In 1932 Hitler's National Socialist Party or the Nazi's won the national election
- Hitler became chancellor of Germany and dismantled the Weimar Republic
- Hitler's government, The Third Reich (Third Empire), claimed dictatorial powers

### Hitler's Policies –

- Prohibited Jews and non-Nazis from holding government positions
- Outlawed strikes & made military service mandatory
- Nazi soldiers crushed all opposition
- Violated the Treaty of Versailles and rearmed Germany

### Hitler's Early Expansion –

- March 1936 German troops moved into the Rhineland
- 1938 they took Austria with support from most Austrians
- They then turned to the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia
- Over 3 million German speaking people lived there
- Hitler demanded the region and Czechoslovakia refused

### *Anti-Semitism –*

- Hitler's anti-Semitism became official government policy

### Nuremberg Laws –

- Instituted in 1935
- Deprived Jews of their citizenship and allowed the destruction of Jewish property

### Fleeing the Country –

- Wealthy and famous Jews could flee the country like Albert Einstein
- Many came to the United States to escape Hitler
- Most however could not and had to stay and deal with the Nazis