

World War 2: From democracy to dictatorship

Democracy:

... is a form of government, in which an elected parliament perform the political power. ...

=> division of power  
=> sovereignty

Dictatorship:

... is a totalitarian (dt. die Gesamtheit umfassend) form of government, in which an owner or an arrangement have a nearly absolute political power. There are no important oppositions.

What were the reasons for the evolution from a democracy to a dictatorship?

- great poverty in the nation --> NSDAP promised betterment of the situation
- NSDAP show them as a worker party (dt. Arbeiterpartei)
- rise of the NSDAP because the members of the public of the "Weimarer Republik" were discontented
- Hitler was the leader of the NSDAP
- propaganda Hitler's address a lot of people



The steps of the development

1.
  - March 1930: - Heinrich Brüning became chancellor (dt. Kanzler) of the "Weimarer Republik"
  - he reduces wages (dt. Löhne), of civil employers, increases taxes (dt. Steuererhöhungen), cuts back welfare (dt. Wohlergehen)
- September 1930: - general election: NSDAP got 107 seats in the parliament
- March 1932: - presidential election:
  1. P. v. Hindenburg (nationalist, conservative)
  2. A. Hitler (NSDAP)
  3. E. Thälmann (KPD)
- April - June 1932: - Brüning wants use the Army to stop SA ("Sturmabteilung") + SS ("Schutzstaffel")
- Hindenburg refuses, dismisses Brüning
- new chancellor: Franz von Papen
- July 1932: - general election: NSDAP got 230 seats in the parliament
- Papen ask Hitler to join the government in coalition
- Hitler refuses
- November 1932: - new general elections: NSDAP got 196 seats in the parliament
- December 1932: - Papen can't solve problems
- K. v. Schleicher became chancellor

very detailed

! 1.-3. = "Präsidentialkabinett"  
no majority possible; dependent on the president

- January 1933:       - Hitler wanted became chancellor
- NSDAP holds majority of seats in parliament
- 30.01.1933:       - Hitler became chancellor



Hitler called for (dt. nach etwas verlangen) new elections on 5. March 1933

- 27.02.1933:        "Reichstag fire":       - NSDAP accuse Communists lay the fire
- following morning: 4000 Communists had been arrested
- Hitler persuaded president Hindenburg to pass (dt. etwas verabschieden) the Degree for the Protection of the People and the State (dt. Verordnung zum Schutz von Volk und Staat)
- Hitler used the power of the new degree to arrest another 40.000 Communists, Social Democrats and other political opponents
- the prisons were soon very full --> the first concentration camps were established in early March 1933
- 05.03.1933:       - "March election": NSDAP got only 44% of the votes -->       needed the DNVP (dt. Deutschnationale Volkspartei) to govern

Hitler's aim was to achieve absolute power and, therefore, plans for an "Enabling Act" (dt. Ermächtigungsgesetz) were made.

This act effectively making Hitler a dictator, because it enabled the government to pass laws without asking the "Reichstag" for approval (dt. Zustimmung).

- 23.03.1933:       - the "Enabling Act" was put to the vote --> voted by a majority of 444 to 94 votes, because a lot of other members of the parliament were manqué (dt. verhindert)

=> Continued on next handout ...

#### Summary:

The democracy were developed to dictatorship, because of the regime from Hitler as the leader of the NSDAP and chancellor of the "Weimarer Republik".

#### Sources:

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- [http://www.planet-wissen.de/geschichte/diktatoren/adolff\\_hitlers\\_lebensweg/pwiediebasisfuerhitlerswegzumacht100.html](http://www.planet-wissen.de/geschichte/diktatoren/adolff_hitlers_lebensweg/pwiediebasisfuerhitlerswegzumacht100.html) 24.4.2017, 15.48 Uhr

- "National Socialism 1933-1945", page 4

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