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**AQA**  
**GCSE**  
History

# UNDERSTANDING THE MODERN WORLD





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# HOW THIS BOOK WILL HELP YOU IN AQA GCSE HISTORY

## SOURCE 1

A Russian cartoon. The caption reads: 'The Russian Tsars at home.'



## THINK

What do Sources 5 and 6 suggest about changing lifestyles for many in the USA in the 1920s?

## KEY WORDS

Make sure you know what these words mean and are able to define them confidently:

- American Dream
- Black power movement
- Civil Rights

## TOPIC SUMMARY

### Post-war America

- The USA emerged from the Second World War by far the strongest world power.

## It will help you to learn the content

Is your main worry when you prepare for an exam that you won't know enough to answer the questions? Many people feel that way. And it is true you will need good knowledge of the main events and the detail to do well in this study. This book will help you acquire both the overview and the detail.

The **text** explains all the key content clearly and comprehensively. It helps you understand each period, and each topic and the themes that connect the topics.

The **Factfiles** and **Profiles** are packed with facts and examples to use in your own work to support your arguments.

We use lots of **diagrams** and **timelines**. These help you to visualise, understand and remember topics. We also encourage you to draw your own diagrams – that is an even better way to learn.

It's full of brilliant **sources**. This course deals with some big issues but sources can help pin those issues down. History is at its best when you can see what real people said, did, wrote, sang, watched, laughed about, cried over, and got upset about. Sources can really help you to understand the story better and remember it because they help you to see what each development or event meant to people at the time.

**Think** questions direct you to the things you should be noticing or thinking about. They also practise the kind of analytical skills that you need to improve in history. **Activities** are included as more creative approaches to learning the content.

**Key words** – every subject and topic has its own vocabulary. If you don't know what these words mean you won't be able to write about the subject. So for each chapter we have provided a key word list. These are the kind of words or terms that could be used in sources or an exam question without any explanation so you need to be able to understand them and use them confidently in your writing. They are all defined in the **glossary** on page 371. But we also want you to create your own key word list. In a notebook or on your phone, write down each word with your own definitions.

Finally there is a **Topic Summary** at the end of each of the three parts of each chapter. This condenses all the content into a few points, which should help you to get your bearings in even the most complicated content. Some people say it is good to read that summary before you even start the topic to know where you are heading!

## It will help you to apply what you learn

The second big aim of this book is to help you apply what you learn, which means to help you think deeply about the content and develop your own judgements about the issues, and make sure you can support those judgements with evidence and relevant knowledge. This is not an easy task. You will not suddenly develop this skill. You need to practise studying an issue, deciding what you think, and then selecting from all that you know the points that are really relevant to your argument. One of the most important skills in history is the ability to select, organise and deploy (use) knowledge to answer a particular question.

The main way we help you with this is through the **Focus Tasks**. These are the big tasks that appear at various points in each chapter.

Most Focus Tasks have tips that help you get started – for example, highlighting a couple of key points that you can use in your answers.

### FOCUS TASK

#### How did the Depression affect the League of Nations?

Look back at the Focus Task on page 256.

- 1 Using the information on pages 258–59, add another speech bubble for each of the two diplomats to sum up their views of the League now that the world has been affected by the Depression.
- 2 Add a speech bubble for each diplomat to explain their views on the future of the League.

## It will help you prepare for your examination

If you read all the text and tackled all the Focus Tasks in this book we are sure you would also find you were well prepared for the challenges of Paper 1 of the exam, but you will probably also want something more exam-focused. So on the next two pages we explain how the content in this book will be assessed and how you can prepare yourself for the assessment.

Additionally:

- Dotted throughout the chapters you will find **Practice Question** boxes – offering practice questions.
- At the end of each chapter is an **Assessment Focus** specific to that topic which analyses different question types and uses sample answers to help you to see how to improve your own performance.

### PRACTICE QUESTION

Which of the following was the more important reason why the Mormons travelled to Salt Lake City:

- Religious persecution
- The leadership of Brigham Young?

Explain your answer with reference to both reasons.

## How the period studies will be assessed

Section A of this book includes all four period studies from the specification. You only have to answer questions on one. This will be examined in Section A of Paper 1. The questions could be on any part of the content so you need to know it all. It will test three of the assessment objectives:

- AO1 – knowledge and understanding
- AO2 – explanation and analysis
- AO4 – interpretations

**Questions 1–3** will focus on interpretations, for example:

- comparing interpretations and explaining why they differ
- asking you to evaluate each interpretation – for instance saying how convincing the interpretation is. This means you have to compare what the interpretation says against your own knowledge.

**Question 4** will ask you to describe two key features or characteristics of a period. This is a pure 'knowledge' question but you will need to select the knowledge that is relevant to the question, write in clear language and include plenty of relevant detail to support your answer.

**Question 5** is about change. You will need to use your knowledge to explain how a particular group or people were affected by an event or a development.

**How does Interpretation B differ from Interpretation A about ...?**  
(4 marks)

**Why might the authors of Interpretations A and B have a different interpretation about ...?**  
(4 marks)

**Which interpretation do you find more convincing about ...?**  
(8 marks)

**Describe two problems faced by ...**  
(4 marks)

**In what ways was X affected by ...?**  
(8 marks)



Which was the more important reason why ...?  
(12 marks)

Source A opposes X. How do you know? Explain your answer by using the source and your contextual knowledge.  
(4 marks)

How useful are the two sources to an historian studying ...?  
(12 marks)

Write an account of ...  
(8 marks)

'The main reason for ... was ...'  
How far do you agree?  
(16 marks)

**Question 6**, which carries the highest marks, is an essay question in bullet-point format. The two bullets will give structure to your answer. You need to consider each of them and reach a conclusion. You need to know your topic well to write an essay but equally importantly you also need to think clearly because the best answers will be those that develop a clear, coherent and relevant argument from the start and carry it through the whole essay.

You will get plenty of practice thinking about these issues and practising different question types throughout the study. Then there are some sample questions and answers with teacher feedback and analysis at the end of each period study:

## How the wider world depth studies will be assessed

These will be examined in Section B of Paper 1. The exam will include all the depth studies but remember you only need to answer questions on one—make sure it is the one that you have actually studied!

The questions could be on any part of the content so you need to know it all. It will test three of the assessment objectives:

- AO1 – knowledge and understanding
- AO2 – explanation and analysis
- AO3 – source analysis

There will also be marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG).

**Questions 1 and 2** are the source-based questions:

- The first will present a source from the period (written or visual). Use the source and your knowledge to back up the statement that you are given about the source.
- The second question will ask you to compare two sources (written, visual or both) and evaluate how useful they are for a given investigation.

**Question 3** asks you to write an account of an event from the depth study.

**Question 4** is another essay question. You will be presented with a statement and you need to write clearly and coherently about how far you agree with it. This is less structured than the period study essay but the expectations are similar. To prepare to answer these kind of questions you need to revise the content but also think about it and learn how to present an argument and support it. The best answers will be those that do that and develop a clear, coherent and relevant argument. This is the question which carries extra marks for correct use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

You will get plenty of practice thinking about these issues and practising different question types throughout the depth study. Then there are some sample questions and answers with teacher feedback and analysis at the end of each depth study.

## Keys to success

As long as you know the content and have learned how to think, these exams should not be too scary. The keys to success are:

- **Read the question carefully.** Answer the question set, not the one you wished for! Identify if you are being asked to describe, explain, compare, etc.
- **Note the marks available.** That helps you work out how much time to spend on a particular question.
- **Plan your answer before you start writing.** This is important for essays so that you are able to write several well-argued paragraphs.

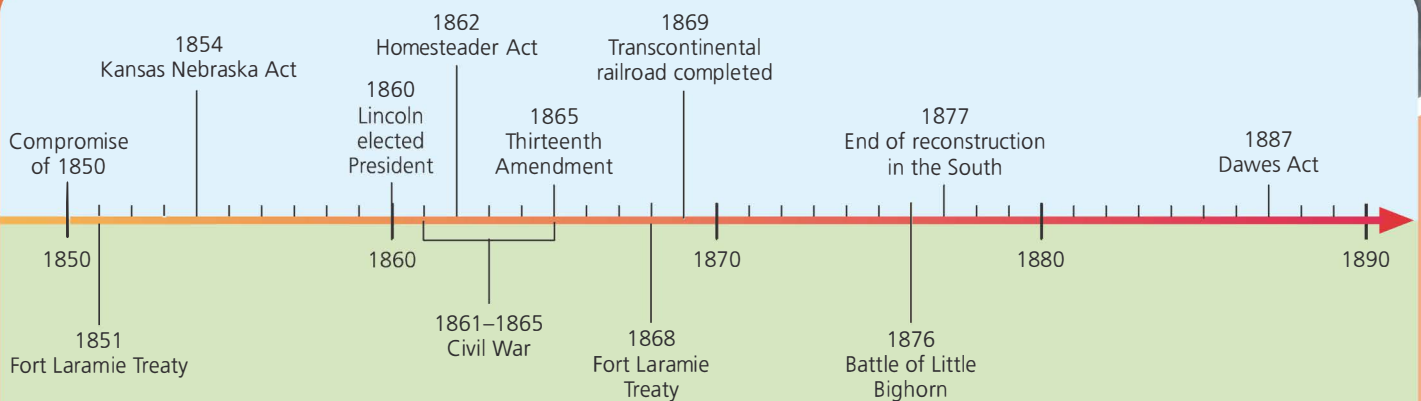
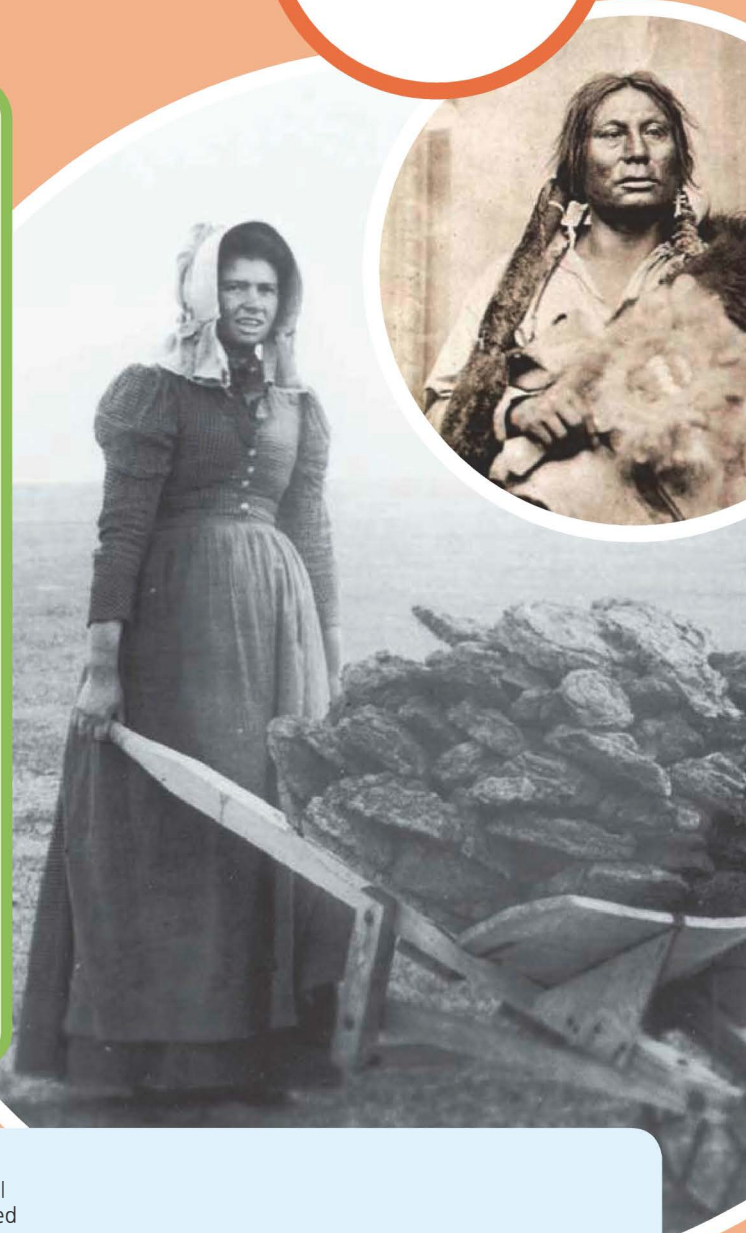
# America 1840–1895: Expansion and Consolidation

1

This period study focuses on the development of America during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of expansion and consolidation – the expansion to the West and the consolidation of the United States as a nation.

You will be studying the development of the United States from various perspectives:

- Political developments such as the growth of the United States, the power of the federal government versus the power of individual states and the tensions that nearly broke the Union.
- Economic developments such as the spread of cattle ranching on to the Great Plains and the bridging of the continent by the new railroads.
- Social and cultural developments such as the destruction of the Plains Indian way of life and culture.
- The role of ideas in influencing change such as Manifest Destiny, differing perspectives on land and slavery and the religious beliefs of a group like the Mormons.
- The role of key individuals and groups in shaping change and the impact the developments had on them such as Abraham Lincoln, Brigham Young, Jefferson Davis, John Brown, George Armstrong Custer and Red Cloud; and African Americans, homesteaders, the Mormons and the Plains Indians.



# 1.1 Expansion: Opportunities and challenges

## SOURCE 1

Major Stephen Long, of the Army Corps of Engineers, described the Great Plains after crossing them in 1820. His expedition was for the United States government which was exploring its boundaries with Spanish California and British Oregon.

*In regard to this extensive section of country, I do not hesitate in giving the opinion that it is almost wholly unfit for cultivation, and of course uninhabitable by a people depending upon agriculture for their subsistence [producing enough food to live on]. Large areas of fertile land are occasionally to be found, but the scarcity of wood and water will prove an impossible obstacle in the way of settling the country.*

## FOCUS

In 1840 the United States of America was made up of 27 states, most of them east of the Mississippi River. To the west were the Great Plains. To the nomadic Plains Indians these were home. To the citizens of the United States they were 'the Great American Desert'; but change was coming.

In 1.1 you will study these changes, and in particular:

- The geography of North America and how attitudes towards the Great American Desert changed.
- Why the early settlers went west and the challenges they faced.
- How the Plains Indians adapted their lives to the Great Plains and how their culture was at odds with American culture.

FIGURE 2

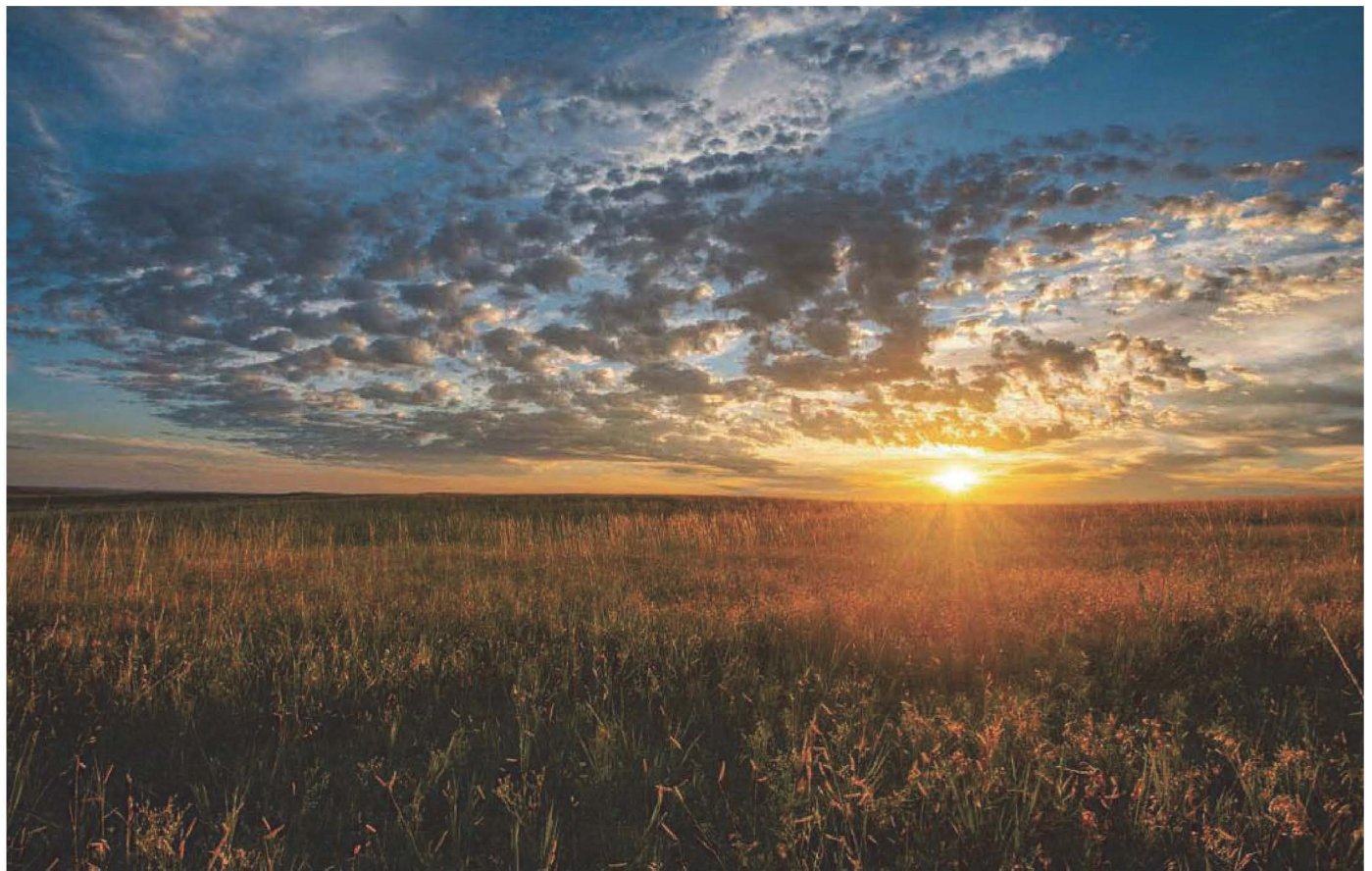
The geography of North America.





**FIGURE 3**

The Great Plains.



## ● Attitudes to the Great American Desert

In 1840 the people of the United States were not interested in the Great Plains. They were simply dismissed as the Great American DESERT although some journeys of exploration were supported by the government. That attitude, however, would be changed by a number of developments.

The 27 United States were not alone on the continent of North America. To their north was British Canada and to the south and west was Mexico, including California. During the early 1800s Americans had travelled to and peacefully traded with California, while from the 1820s others had settled in the Mexican STATE of Texas. These Texas SETTLERS were originally encouraged by the Mexican government. However, they tended to be southern farmers who brought slaves with them for their cotton PLANTATIONS and after the Mexican government abolished SLAVERY in 1829 it tried to stop them. These tensions eventually led to rebellion and Texas declared itself a REPUBLIC in 1836. Meanwhile by the 1840s Americans were beginning to settle the good farming land in California.

In 1845 the United States took over Texas. It became the 28th state of the Union. This led to the Mexican–American War 1846–48 which ended in complete defeat for Mexico. By the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the United States gained the Rio Grande as the southern boundary for Texas, all of California and a large area of land that was to become the future states of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming.

**THINK**

Look at Source 1. Why does Major Long say the West is not suitable for farming?

**FACTFILE**

### The Mexican–American War, 1846–48

The Mexican–American War had its roots in the tussle for control of Texas and was triggered in 1846 by the annexation of Texas, including land south of the Rio Grande. Negotiations failed and after Mexican troops attacked US troops in Texas open war broke out. The Mexicans were driven out of Texas. Then US armies occupied New Mexico and California. Finally in 1847 the US armies advanced deep into Mexico, winning the Battle of Buena Vista, capturing Mexico City and forcing Mexico to sign the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

#### SOURCE 4

A close-up of a Shako cap worn by US soldiers during the Mexican-American War. The cap shows an eagle spreading its wings, the symbol of Manifest Destiny.



#### SOURCE 5

Extract from the column written by John L. Sullivan in *New York Morning News* on 27 December 1845.

*And that claim is by the right of our manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and federated self-government entrusted to us.*

## ● The belief in 'Manifest Destiny'

In the north-west the newly opened Oregon Trail c.1840, brought new American settlers to Oregon Country in British Canada. Many Americans began to believe that their country should occupy the entire continent from coast to coast. This idea of expansionism was captured by the journalist John L. Sullivan who coined the phrase 'MANIFEST DESTINY'. To many Americans it was God's will that as they occupied these new lands they should bring with them their ideas and beliefs of Christianity, freedom and DEMOCRACY. They believed they would use these lands more effectively than their existing occupants, whether these were the Mexican Hispanic people in California and Texas, who some viewed as lazy and slow, or the Plains Indians, who some viewed as savages. Furthermore the Americans believed that this made it right for them to go to war if necessary to achieve that destiny. For a time it seemed that Britain and the United States might go to war but the boundary dispute was settled by negotiation. By the Oregon Treaty in 1846 the United States gained the land which was to become the future state of Oregon.

### FOCUS TASK

#### Why did attitudes to the Great American Desert change after the Mexican-American War?

- 1 Copy and complete the following table to show how attitudes to the Great American Desert changed before and after the Mexican-American War.

Attitudes before the war	Attitudes after the war	Reasons for change

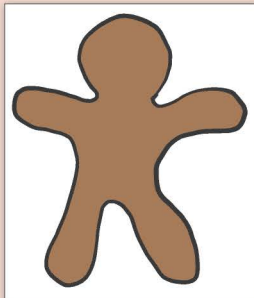
- 2 Now, use your notes from the table to prepare a podcast (no longer than one minute, so around 200 words) to explain how victory in the war against Mexico and the Americans' belief in Manifest Destiny changed the attitude of Americans to the Great American Desert.

## ● Why the early settlers went west and the challenges they faced

### FOCUS TASK

#### Part 1: Why did the settlers go west?

- 1 Create three 'gingerbread' figures, like the one shown here, to represent the following groups:



- Pioneer farmers like the Knight family
- Mormons
- Gold miners

As you read pages 5–8, annotate these figures. *Inside* the figures write their motives for going west and on the *outside* write those factors that influenced them.

- 2 In pairs, discuss what reasons were common between the three groups and highlight them in one colour on your gingerbread figures.
- 3 In the same pair, choose a second colour and highlight one reason for each figure which was unique to that group.

#### Part 2: What challenges did settlers face?

- 1 On the back of each figure, use pages 5–8 to write the challenges this particular group faced *inside* the figure, and around the *outside* write how they dealt with these challenges.
- 2 In pairs, discuss how successful you think the settlers to the Plains were during this period.

## The pioneer farmers and their journey west

The first group of Americans to travel west across the Great Plains and into the Rocky Mountains were fur trappers. Fur hats became very fashionable in the eastern United States and in Europe in the '1820s and 30s' and there was money to be made. The trappers came to be known as 'mountain men'. Following them came thousands of pioneer farmers who went west in the 1840s for a variety of reasons. For some it was the pull of good farming land, a better climate or simply the excitement of the new. Others were pushed by the effects of the ECONOMIC DEPRESSION in the eastern states that began in 1837 and led to wage cuts, increased unemployment and the loss of savings when banks collapsed. This depression also had a negative impact on farmers in the Mississippi Valley as crop prices fell, leading some of them to move further west for a new start in the fertile farmlands of Oregon and California. Whatever the reason, it had to be a strong one as the four-month journey was long and hazardous, as Source 6 shows.

### SOURCE 6

An edited diary entry by Amelia Stewart Knight on the Oregon Trail.

*Saturday, May 14th - We see very few Indians. We are now in the Sioux country. Travelled 2 miles and were obliged to stop and camp on the prairie near a large pond of water, on account of the high winds. Winds so high that we dare not make a fire, impossible to pitch the tent, the wagons could hardly stand the wind.*

### PRACTICE QUESTION

Describe two problems faced by the pioneers on the Oregon Trail.

4



#### 1 Crossing the Plains

The wagons travelled 1000km across bleak, rolling grassland. Early summer storms turned the trails to mud. It could take two months to complete this part of the journey.

#### 2 Entering the Rockies

The wagons passed through Sioux territory as they climbed into the mountains. The water was poor and the trail became much steeper.

#### 3 Fort Hall

Here travellers rested and repaired their wagons before heading either to Oregon or California.

#### 4 The Blue Mountains

There were narrow ledges and deep ravines. Some of the rivers were almost impossible to cross.

#### 5 The Utah Desert

There was very little water and it was very hot.

#### 6 The Sierra Nevada

Early snowfall was a major hazard as the wagons were winched and hoisted across mountains.



## PROFILE

### Brigham Young



- Born 1801 in Whitingham, Vermont.
- Became leader of the Mormons after the murder of Joseph Smith.
- In 1845 took the decision that the Mormons should go west.
- Successfully organised moving the thousands of Mormons across the Great Plains to the valley of the Great Salt Lake.
- Ensured that Salt Lake City was a success.
- Became first governor of Utah Territory.
- A supporter of polygamy, he had 55 wives.
- Died at Salt Lake City in 1877.

## Brigham Young and the Mormons

Brigham Young became leader of the MORMONS in 1845 after the murder of the religion's founder Joseph Smith. Since their religion began, the Mormons had faced hostility and violence from non-Mormons or GENTILES. They worked hard and were successful, which aroused the envy of some. Their belief that they were God's chosen people and that they were against slavery angered others.

They had already been driven out of Kirtland and Missouri before they settled at Nauvoo in Illinois. Here they were allowed to build their own independent city state with its own armed forces and their numbers grew. But things changed significantly after Joseph Smith announced that God had told him men could have more than one wife (POLYGAMY). This led to divisions among the Mormons themselves and non-Mormons were shocked. They believed polygamy was a sin. Some feared it would lead to a Mormon population explosion. When in 1844 Smith announced that he was standing for president it sparked trouble. In the turmoil that followed Smith was arrested and jailed in the town of Carthage. On 27 June 1845 a mob attacked the jail and Smith was murdered.

In September 1845 Brigham Young took the crucial decision that the Mormons would never be allowed to practise their religion and to live peacefully within the United States alongside non-Mormons, so they should leave. He decided not to go to California or Oregon as there were already many American settlers there and the Mormons believed that the same problems would resurface.

Brigham Young therefore decided that the Mormons should move to the area around the Great Salt Lake, east of the Rocky Mountains. There were four reasons for this choice:

- 1 The area was very isolated.
- 2 Reports suggested there was water and fertile farming land available.
- 3 It would allow the Mormons to live close together to retain their distinctive religious beliefs and practices.
- 4 It was in Mexico and not the United States.

### The journey

To move more than 16,000 Mormons across the Great Plains, and then the Rocky Mountains, required careful planning. During the winter months of 1845–46 oxen, food and equipment were bought and wagons built. Then, in February 1846, the first group set off across the Mississippi to build the first of a chain of rest camps stretching across the Plains. The plan was simple: the first groups would set up the rest camps with facilities to repair wagons and also plant crops, then the rest of the Mormons would travel in a steady stream of separate WAGON TRAINS, each of about a hundred wagons stopping at the rest camps on the way. At the Missouri River thousands of cabins were built for all the families as they arrived for shelter from the winter. This part of the plan worked well. The Mormon wagon trains had successfully crossed the Plains to the Winter Quarters by the autumn.

Winters on the Plains were harsh and 1846 was no exception. As food and fuel supplies ran low and disease spread, over 700 died in the Winter Quarters. But the rest survived and in the spring Brigham Young led a 'Pioneer Band' onwards through the South Pass in the Rockies to the Great Salt Lake, clearing a path for the rest of the wagons to follow.

### SOURCE 8

An extract from Brigham Young's orders for the journey west.

*At 5.00 in the morning the bugle is to be sounded as a signal for every man to arise and attend prayers. Then cooking, eating, feeding teams till seven o'clock, at which time the camp is to move at the sound of the bugle. Each teamster to stay beside his team, with his loaded gun in his hands. No man to be permitted to leave his wagon unless he obtains permission from his officer. In case of an attack from Indians, the wagons to travel in double file. The order of encampment to be in a circle with the mouth of the wagon to the outside, and the horses and stock tied inside the circle. At 8.30 the bugle to be sounded again at which time all to have prayers in their wagons and to retire to rest by nine o'clock.*

## SOURCE 9

'The Mormons' Winter Quarters' by C. C. A. Christensen.



## SOURCE 10

Group statue of a Mormon family with a handcart outside the Mormon Trail Centre. Later groups of Mormons were too poor to afford ox-drawn wagons. They used handcarts instead.



## Settling Salt Lake

The success of the crossing of the Plains consolidated Young's position as leader of the Mormons and this helped to ensure the success in settling Salt Lake. First Young was able to ensure that the church allocated land to people and families according to their needs. At the centre of the new city was the temple and the main square. Leading off from this were planned streets lined with plots of land for homes and gardens as well as farms for larger families. Access to water was managed by a system of IRRIGATION ditches and a timetable for when individuals could draw off water for their own plots. By this co-operative working the Mormons were able to feed themselves.

## Deseret

The Mormons had succeeded in building a new life for themselves in Mexico, but with the end of the Mexican–American War they found themselves back in the United States. Brigham Young wanted to found a new state called 'Deseret', the 'land of the honey bee', and for it to be admitted into the Union but the US government refused. Instead a compromise was negotiated. The TERRITORY of Utah, smaller than Deseret, was created and Young was appointed as its first governor.

In the final phase of Young's plan the Mormons established towns and settlements in those parts of Utah where farming was possible and on the borders of the territory: such towns as Carson City and Las Vegas. They also tried to start an iron and linen industry to become even more self-sufficient, although these initiatives were unsuccessful. Finally, as more Mormon settlers were needed, missionaries were sent to Europe and South America to gather more converts to the Mormon religion. These tended to come from the poorer sections of society and so, in a final step, a PERPETUAL EMIGRATING FUND was established to pay for their travel to Utah. Their journey was organised by ship to America and then by wagon or handcart across the Plains using the existing resting stations. In this way the population of Utah grew, the Mormons became almost self-sufficient and they hoped to be able to live in peace.

## SOURCE 11

A description of Salt Lake City by a US government surveyor in 1850.

*A city has been laid out upon a magnificent scale. Through the city itself flows an unfailing stream of pure, sweet water, which, by an ingenious mode of irrigation, is made to travel along each side of every street whence it is led into every garden-spot, spreading life, and beauty, over what was a barren waste.*

*The houses are built, principally, of sun-dried brick, which make a warm comfortable dwelling, presenting a very neat appearance.*

## PRACTICE QUESTION

Which of the following was the more important reason why the Mormons travelled to Salt Lake City:

- Religious persecution
- The leadership of Brigham Young?

Explain your answer with reference to both reasons.

## The miners

The fourth group of Americans to go west were the 'FORTY-NINERS'. They were not seeking the solitary lifestyle of the mountain men, the fertile farmland of the settlers or the freedom from persecution of the Mormons. They sought wealth.

In 1848 a carpenter building a saw mill in the foothills of California's Sierra Nevada mountain range discovered gold.

News of this discovery spread slowly at first until it was picked up by a San Francisco newspaper. Then it spread rapidly across the USA and beyond. The first miners to arrive were locals. Two-thirds of the able-bodied men in Oregon joined the Gold Rush in the months that followed. By 1849 miners were arriving from around the world. Those who could afford it came by sea. Others took the slower route by wagon train across the Great Plains. The population of California rocketed from roughly 15,000 in the summer of 1848 to nearly 250,000 by 1852.

All that the earliest miners needed was a pick and shovel and a washing pan. In the washing pan water would carry away the lighter soil and gravel, leaving the heavier gold in the bottom. Later on the cradle was developed, a box that did the same job as the washing pan but for larger quantities.

### THINK

- 1 List the items of equipment the miners in this picture appear to have.
- 2 If you were to use one word to describe this scene, what would it be?

### SOURCE 12

Miners using washing pans and cradles in a Californian stream bed.



Mining towns grew out of the mining camps and they were lawless places. Tensions and violence arose because there were:

- no organised forces of law and order; the area was still under military control following the Mexican–American War
- disputes between miners and the local Californians
- disputes between miners over mining CLAIMS.

This was made worse by racial tensions between Americans and Hispanics (Mexicans, Chileans and Peruvians), the Californian Indians and the thousands of Chinese who arrived as labourers for Chinese merchants, as mining came to be dominated by large companies. Added to this mix were ex-convicts from Australia, free African Americans and slaves brought with them by ex-plantation owners from the southern United States. These slaves were not allowed to stay. When California was admitted to the Union in 1850 it was as a free state. This again illustrates that slavery was an issue in the United States.

By 1852 the Gold Rush was over and many miners moved on to search for gold in the Rocky Mountains.

### PRACTICE QUESTION

Which of the following was the more important reason why white Americans travelled across the Great Plains in the 1840s and 1850s:

- Religion
- Economic opportunity?

Explain your answer with reference to both reasons.



## ● Dealing with a different culture

Attitudes to the Plains were greatly influenced by early travellers such as Major Long (see page 2). It would be many years before outsiders began to see the farming potential of the Plains. In the 1830s all they could see were the problems – the harsh weather, the lack of trees, the wind, the absence of water. The Indians of course had a very different view. They were not farmers but **NOMADIC** hunters who moved across the Plains following the buffalo herds. The Plains were perfect for this nomadic way of life.

### The Plains Indians' way of life

#### Homes

The *TIPÍ* (also called a lodge or tepee) was the home of each Indian family. It was made from 10 to 20 buffalo skins sewn together and supported by a frame of wooden poles arranged in a circle. It was the responsibility of the women. They made it, owned it, put it up and moved it. It could be taken down and packed for transport in ten minutes. This made it an ideal home for people who were frequently on the move.

At the top of the *tipi* there were two 'ears', or flaps, that could be moved to direct the wind so that the smoke from the fire inside could escape. In summer the *tipi* bottom could be rolled up to let air in. In winter it could be banked with earth to keep the *tipi* warm. The *tipi*'s conical shape made it strong enough to resist the strong winds on the Great Plains. Sioux *tipis* were decorated by the men with geometric patterns and scenes recording their bravery in the hunt and in battle.

Inside, a fire would always be burning at the centre to provide heat and for cooking. The floor was covered with furs.

Everybody had their place in the *tipi*. Because the space was small there were strict rules about behaviour. For example, it was rude to pass between another person and the fire.

#### Family life

Indians spent most of the year travelling, hunting and camping with their band. This would consist of between 10 and 50 families, each with their own *tipi*. Within the family there were different roles. The men were responsible for hunting, looking after the horses and protecting the band. They were judged by their skills as hunters, **WARRIORS** and horsemen. Women were responsible for the *tipi*, for preparing food and fetching water, and for making clothing and other items. They were judged by their skill at crafts and as homemakers.

Most men had one wife but rich men could have several wives – known as polygamy. Polygamy made sense in a situation where there were more women than men, and this was often the case because of the dangers of hunting and warfare.

#### THINK

Describe how the *tipi* design solved the following problems facing Indians living on the Plains:

- The lack of wood
- The strong winds
- The extremes of temperature
- The need to move frequently.

**FIGURE 13**

A modern artist's drawing of a *tipi*.



### SOURCE 14

A Sioux proverb.

*A beautiful tipi is like a good mother. She hugs her children to her and protects them from heat and cold, snow and rain.*

### SOURCE 15

George Catlin, *Manners, Customs and Condition of the North American Indian*, 1841. Catlin's writings and the hundreds of paintings he made of scenes from Indian life have had a great influence on the way people think about the Plains Indians.

*The lodges are taken down in a few minutes by the women and easily transported to any part of the country where they wish to camp. They generally move six to eight times in the summer, following the immense herds of buffalo. The manner in which a camp of Indians strike [take down] their tents and move them is curious. I saw a camp of Sioux, consisting of six hundred lodges, struck and everything packed and on the move in a very few minutes.*

### SOURCE 16

Extract from Colonel Dodge's book *Hunting Grounds of the Great West* (1877), based upon his experience serving in the army in the West before and after the Civil War.

*I cannot say exactly how these powers and duties of these three governmental forms [i.e. chiefs, councils and warrior societies] blend and concur ... and I have never met an Indian or white man who could satisfactorily explain them. The result, however, is fairly good, and seems well suited to the character, needs and peculiarities of the life of the Plains Indians.*

### THINK

Study Source 17, the painting of a Sioux Council by George Catlin. Explain how it helps you to understand Colonel Dodge's confusion over how Indian government functioned.

## Indian society and political organisation

To survive on the Great Plains the members of an Indian band had to co-operate and be well organised as they moved following the buffalo. Sometimes bands would meet to camp and hunt together. At least once a year the bands would meet as a NATION.

### Chiefs

Indian chiefs were not elected, nor did they inherit power. They became chiefs because of their wisdom, their spiritual power or 'medicine', and their skills as hunters and warriors. Only great chiefs like Red Cloud and Sitting Bull were able to persuade the warriors of many bands and even of different nations to follow them.

### Councils

Important decisions were taken in council. The advice of the MEDICINE MEN, chiefs and elders would be listened to with respect, but these men would not tell the others what to do. Normally, the council members would keep talking until everyone agreed. While they talked they smoked a ceremonial pipe, believing that the smoke would inform the spirit world and help them to make good decisions.

When bands met, the council of the nation would meet. It could take important decisions, such as deciding to go to war, but the bands were not bound to agree with the council's decision. As a result, some bands might be at war while others were at peace. Later this was a source of confusion for the settlers when conflict broke out. Was a band at war or not? Were all its members peaceful, or just some?

### Warrior societies

All the men of a band belonged to a warrior society, such as the Kit Foxes of the Sioux. They were responsible for supervising hunting and travelling, and for protecting the village.

### SOURCE 17

*A Sioux Council*, a painting by George Catlin, 1847.





## The importance of the buffalo to the Plains Indians

### Buffalo Dances

The Plains Indians did not farm the buffalo; they hunted them. Before setting out to hunt, they would hold a ceremonial Buffalo Dance which could last for many days (see Source 18). The purpose of the dance was to call upon the spirit world for help in their hunting and to call the buffalo herd closer to them. Plains Indians believed this would bring them good luck and ensure a successful hunt.

### The buffalo hunt

Once they had horses, Plains Indians were able to kill greater numbers of buffalo. The hunt was organised and policed by the warrior societies. They ensured that the buffalo were not scared away before all was ready and that not too many animals were killed. Two or three successful buffalo hunts a year were sufficient to feed and shelter the band.

### SOURCE 20

Black Elk, a Sioux Indian, born c.1863, describes the preparations for a hunt.

*Then the crier shouted, 'Your knives shall be sharpened. Make ready, make haste; your horses make ready! We shall go forth with arrows. Plenty of meat we shall make!'*

*Then the head man went around picking out the best hunters with the fastest horses, and to these he said, 'Young warriors, your work I know is good; so today you will feed the helpless. You shall help the old and the young and whatever you kill shall be theirs.' This was a great honour for young men.*

### THINK

Study Source 18, *Buffalo Dance of the Sioux*. Explain what roles the men are playing and what they are re-enacting. Thinking about what they are wearing and carrying should help you.

### SOURCE 18

*Buffalo Dance of the Sioux*, painted by George Catlin.



### SOURCE 19

*Buffalo Hunt, Chase*, painted by George Catlin.



### THINK

Study Source 19, *Buffalo Hunt, Chase*. What are the dangers of the hunt for the Indians and what skills do they need?



## FIGURE 21

A hundred uses? How the Plains Indians used every part of the buffalo.

**Horns** were used for arrow-straighteners, cups, fire-carriers, head-dress ornaments, ladles, spoons, toys and quill-flatteners.

The **skull** was used in religious ceremonies. The **brain** was used for tanning the hides.

**Rawhide** was used for bags, belts, containers, horse harnesses, lashings, masks, sheaths, shields, snow-shoes, string and travois lashings.

**Tanned hide** was used for bags, bedding, blankets, clothes, dolls, dresses, drums, leggings, mittens, moccasins, pouches, robes, saddle and *tipi* covers.

The **flesh** was cooked, or dried and mixed with fat and wild cherries to preserve it as pemmican.

**Sinews** were used for bowstrings and thread.

The **tongue** was used as a hairbrush and also eaten raw as a delicacy.

The **heart** was cut from the body and left on the ground to give new life to the herd. The buffalo was sacred, man's relative who gave his life so that the people could live. The heart might also be eaten raw so that the warrior could take the strength and power of the buffalo.

**Fat** was used for cooking, to make soap and as hair grease

**Gall** was used to make yellow paint. The **liver** was eaten raw as a delicacy.

**Intestines** were used for buckets and cooking vessels.

**Fur** was used for decoration on clothes, as stuffing for saddles and pillows, and to make mittens and rope.

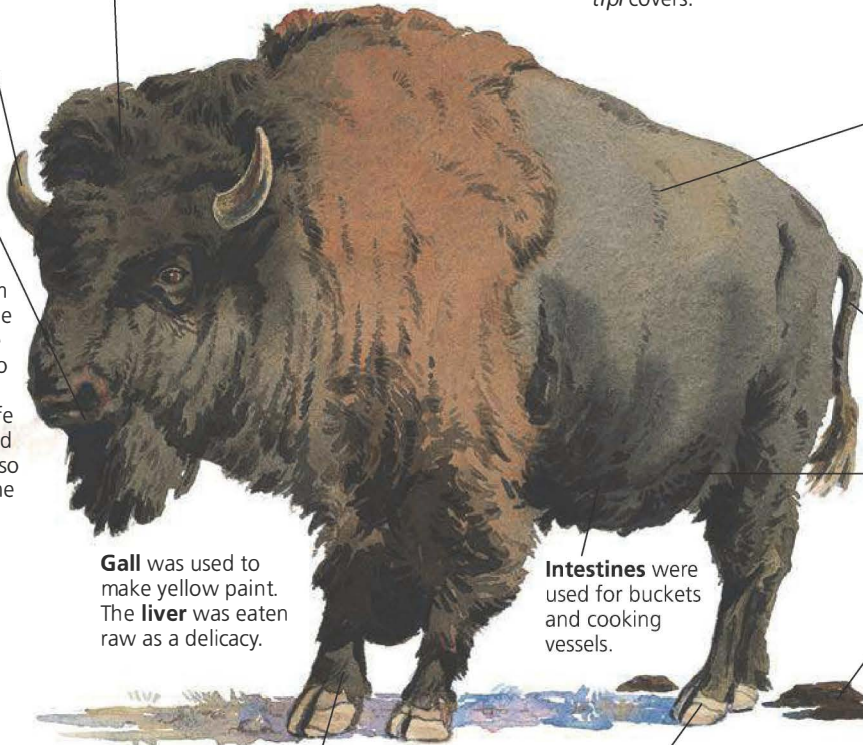
The **tail** was used for fly swats, ornaments and whips.

The **bladder** was used for food bags.

**Dung** was used for fuel (buffalo chips) and smoked by men in special ceremonies.

**Bones** were used for arrowheads, dice, game counters, jewellery, knives, needles, paint brushes, saddle frames, shovels, sledge runners, tools and war clubs.

**Hooves** were used to make glue and also to make rattles and tools.



### PRACTICE QUESTION

Describe two ways in which the buffalo was important to the life of the Plains Indians.

### After the hunt

Once the buffalo was dead, it was butchered by the women and children. The meat was eaten or preserved. The hides were processed. First they were pegged out to dry and scraped to remove all the flesh. This made RAWHIDE. Some hides were then tanned, using the animals' brains, and worked to make them soft and pliable. They were then ready to be made into clothing or *tipi* covers.

### The importance of the horse to the Plains Indians

The horse was vital to the Plains Indians. They used it to hunt, as a means of transport for home and family, and in war. The horse enabled warriors to raid over much longer distances and gave a new reason for warfare – stealing horses. It also changed the way that individuals actually fought. It led to war skills and horsemanship becoming an important measure of bravery and status in Plains society.

The horse was so vital to life on the Plains that individuals counted their wealth by the number of horses they owned.

## Indian warfare

Warfare to the Sioux was a series of raids by relatively small groups of warriors. Plains Indians went on these raids for a number of reasons: to steal horses, to seek revenge or to destroy their enemies. They did not want to conquer land in the way that the settlers did. Plains Indians did not believe that anyone could own land. But there was rivalry for hunting and living space.

Wars happened in the summer when the Plains Indians had built up their food supplies. Some historians have argued that the warfare helped to keep the bands together. Certainly, by 1840 the Sioux nation had traditional enemies, the Crow and the Pawnee, and traditional allies, the Cheyenne.

### Counting coup

The arrival of the gun on the Great Plains could have made war far more destructive. Yet it did not, because war was made into a ritual with the idea of 'counting COUP'. It was considered braver to touch an enemy – to count coup – than to kill him and that it was foolish to fight if outnumbered. Casualties were relatively low. Between 1835 and 1845 the Sioux were at war with their eastern neighbours, the Ojibwa. In that decade the Sioux lost 88 people, their enemies 129. More men were probably lost as a result of hunting accidents than through fighting.

### Taking scalps

Plains Indians took SCALPS as evidence of their successes in battle. The scalps were dried and hung as trophies outside their *tipis*. The Plains Indians believed that if a warrior lost his scalp he could not go into the afterlife. You scalped your enemy so that he would not be there to fight you when you died. This was also the reason for the MUTILATION of dead enemies: to leave them disabled in the afterlife.

## FOCUS TASK

### Part 1: How did the Plains Indians adapt their lives to the Great Plains?

It is 1840. Use the information and sources on pages 9–12 to make notes under the following headings:

- The Indians' nomadic lifestyle
- Indian homes and society
- The importance of the buffalo
- The importance of the horse.

Using your notes, write a newspaper article describing the Plains Indians for an audience back east. Your opening sentences could be:

*'The Great Plains, which have been described as the Great American Desert, are home to the Plains Indians. What makes their way of life so well adapted?'*

### Part 2: In what ways was Plains Indians' culture different?

Your article should now go on to explain to readers how Plains Indians' culture was so very different from American culture, and what problems you can see this may cause in the future.

Your article should tell readers about:

- the importance of the spirit world
- their attitudes to land ownership, war and horse stealing
- the fact that every band makes its own separate decisions.

## SOURCE 22

Sioux war song first written down in the nineteenth century.

*See them prancing.  
They come neighing,  
They come a Horse Nation.  
See them prancing,  
They come neighing,  
They come.*

*Crow Indian  
You must watch your horses.  
A horse thief,  
Often,  
Am I.*

## SOURCE 23

Extract from *Native Americans: the Sioux* by Richard Erdoes, 1982.

*For young braves the main purpose of making war was to 'count coup', that is, to gain war honours, which was the way to fame and advancement. There was comparatively little prestige in killing an enemy. After all, a coward could shoot a man from ambush without any danger to himself. But to ride or walk up to a foe while he was still alive and armed, touching him with one's hand or one's special coup stick brought great honours, because a man risked his life doing it. Stealing horses right under the enemy's nose was also counted as a fine 'coup'.*

## THINK

Which part of Source 22 supports Richard Erdoes' view of Sioux warfare in Source 23?

## PRACTICE QUESTION

Which of the following two animals was the more important in enabling the Plains Indians to live as nomads on the Great Plains:

- the horse
- the buffalo?

Explain your answer with reference to both animals.

## Early American government policy towards the Plains Indians

From the very beginnings of its founding colonies the people of the United States of America had encountered the original inhabitants, the Indian nations. The early history of this relationship varied from friendship and co-operation to hostility and open war. To begin with, the Indians were treated as SOVEREIGN NATIONS to be negotiated with but, over time, they became increasingly seen as a barrier. In 1824 the Bureau of Indian Affairs was set up within the US War Department to manage this relationship.

### The Permanent Indian Frontier

In 1830 the Indian Removal Act was passed. This did two things:

- It established a Permanent Indian Frontier in the West, across the Mississippi.
- It allowed the removal of the south-eastern Indian nations so that their lands would then be available for settlement.

These Indians were no longer seen as separate nations but rather as people under the control of the United States and they were moved to lands beyond the Permanent Indian Frontier in what became known as Indian Territory. This measure was described as being for their protection although thousands died during the forced removal known as 'The Trail of Tears'. This removal process was completed by 1838.

The situation changed in the 1840s when the Great Plains became a barrier to cross for the settlers moving to California and Oregon, to the miners heading for California and to the Mormons heading for Salt Lake City. Figures vary but between 1840 and 1848 it is estimated that 11,500 Americans took the overland trail to Oregon and 2,500 to California. During this great movement of people there were few violent incidents between travellers and the Plains Indians but a change in attitude was happening.

### Indian Appropriations Act, 1851

By the 1850s, more travellers were crossing the Great Plains and settlers were moving beyond the Permanent Indian Frontier onto the eastern edges of the Plains. This westward movement was something that the US government encouraged, but it made the Plains Indians' need for protection more pressing. Meanwhile in 1849 the Bureau of Indian Affairs had been moved from the War Department to the Department of the Interior. US government policy focused on trying to 'civilise' the Indians by confining them to RESERVATIONS and setting up schools. The outcome of this policy was the Indian Appropriations Act of 1851. This set up legally recognised reservations intended to protect Indians from westward expansion.

The Americans were beginning to see the land of the Great Plains from the point of view of ownership and settlement but the Plains Indians believed that no one could own the land. At the core of their religious belief was the circle of life and death and the circle of nature. They believed that they were a part of nature, that they came from the earth just like all animals and plants and when they died they returned to the earth. As well as a clash over land, at the heart of the later conflict between the Plains Indians and the United States was a clash of cultures, with neither side fully understanding the other.



**SOURCE 24**

Crowfoot, a Blackfoot Chief responding to an offer of money for tribal land from the US government.

*Our land is more valuable than your money. It will last forever. It will not perish as long as the sun shines and the rivers flow, and through all of the years, it will give life to men and beasts. We cannot sell the lives of men and animals, and so, we cannot sell the land. It was put here by the Great Spirit and we cannot sell it because it does not really belong to us. You can count your money and burn it with the nod of a buffalo's head but only the Great Spirit can count the grains of sand and the blades of grass on these plains.*

**THINK**

- 1 The attitudes and beliefs expressed by Crowfoot in Source 24 are typical of the Plains Indians. How could a US government treaty negotiator trying to buy land for settlement, trails and railroad links respond to this?
- 2 Study the Topic Summary. If you were asked to identify one key reason for the expansion of the United States, which would you choose?
  - a) Belief in Manifest Destiny
  - b) Victory in the Mexican–American War.

**TOPIC SUMMARY****Expansion: Opportunities and challenges**

- At the start of the 1840s the Great Plains was seen as the Great American Desert.
- The Great Plains was the home of the Plains Indians whose nomadic lifestyle was perfectly suited to the challenges of life on the Plains.
- Early American pioneer farmers, guided by the mountain men, began to cross the Plains in the 1840s in order to settle Oregon and later California.
- The United States annexed Texas from Mexico in 1845.
- In 1846 the Mormons crossed the Great Plains to escape from the United States.
- Victory in the Mexican–American War that ended in 1848 doubled the size of the United States and brought the Mormons back into the United States.
- Differing beliefs were a significant factor in destabilising peace in North America – Manifest Destiny helped to drive the expansion of the United States and it came into conflict with Mexico, Britain and the Plains Indians; religious differences prompted the Mormons to try to leave the United States; and arguments over the existence of slavery were already creating divisions within the United States.
- The discovery of gold in California in 1848 led to a Gold Rush, with thousands travelling to California hoping to get rich quick.
- Initially, Plains Indians were seen as nations who could be negotiated with to ensure free passage for settlers, miners and other travellers across the Plains.
- Once their lands were wanted for settlers, the Plains Indians became increasingly seen as a problem to be resolved.

## 1.2 Conflict across America

### FOCUS

By 1850 the United States had won a war against Mexico and gained vast areas of land stretching to the Pacific Ocean. It had gained further land in Oregon through its negotiations with Britain. Its citizens had begun to settle these new lands and as they did so they came into conflict with others and with each other.

In this part of the topic you will study the following:

- How and why conflict was increasing on the Plains.
- The background to the Civil War and why war broke out in 1861.
- Coming to terms with the Mormons and the reasons why the US government found it hard to deal with them.

### ● Increasing conflict on the Plains

#### Fort Laramie Treaty, 1851

While the Americans were simply crossing the Great Plains there was very little actual conflict with the Plains Indians. But with the numbers increasing, the US government felt it needed to take action. The first FORT LARAMIE TREATY between the US government and representatives of the Plains Indian nations (the Arapahoe, Cheyenne, Crow and Sioux) was signed on 17 September 1851. The Plains Indians promised not to attack settlers travelling on the Oregon Trail and to allow the building of some roads and forts in their territory. In return each nation had its agreed hunting area and was promised an annual SUBSIDY.

This policy of 'concentration' seemed to solve the 'Indian problem' and pleased the 'negotiators' – those people who wanted a negotiated solution to the Indian problem. These were mainly people living in the East. They did include some Westerners, such as government officials who, as Indian agents working with the Indians, had gained some understanding of them and their way of life. The 'negotiators' believed that responsibility for Indian affairs should be kept within the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

### THINK

Study Source 1, *Fort Laramie*. What does the building of this fort tell you about the attitude of the US government to the Plains Indians?

### SOURCE 1

*Fort Laramie, Wyoming in 1837, painted from memory by Alfred Jacob Miller.*



Not everyone was pleased with this. Some Plains Indian nations, notably the Crow, did not feel bound by the treaty. But more significantly another group existed who had very different ideas about the Plains Indians. Termed the 'exterminators', this group believed that the Indians were savages, and that the 'Indian problem' required a military solution. Their aim was to use the army to wipe out the Plains Indians – a solution that today we would call GENOCIDE. These 'exterminators' were mainly people living in the West – the settlers, ranchers and miners and the soldiers sent to protect them. They also included some who profited by selling beef and other supplies to the US army. They were both the people with most to gain if the Plains Indians were removed and those most likely to have suffered from Indian hostility.

### THINK

Write a paragraph to explain the key differences between the negotiators and the exterminators.

## Failure of the policy of concentration

Although some nations never received the goods promised as payments, the Fort Laramie Treaty was followed by a period of peace. The historian John D. Unruh's research showed

that between 1840 and 1860, while over 250,000 travellers followed the California and Oregon Trails, fewer than 400 were killed. Of these, 90 per cent were killed west of South Pass, that is, not on the Great Plains. However, this peace on the Great Plains was broken by four developments:

- In 1858 gold was discovered in the Rocky Mountains and the Colorado Gold Rush began. In the three years to 1861, roughly 100,000 settlers and miners poured into parts of Colorado and Kansas looking to get rich quick. They were moving on to Indian lands in breach of the treaty but the US government chose not to enforce it.
- Nor did the government do anything to stop a second development, the movement of settlers on to the plains of Kansas and Nebraska from 1854 onwards.
- The third development was the start of organised transport links across the Plains. In 1858 Butterfield's overland mail coaches began to run regularly from St Louis, Missouri, to San Francisco, California. Meanwhile railroad surveyors began searching for the best routes across the Plains.
- Fourth and finally, while the chiefs of the Indian nations might have agreed to the peace treaty, the nature of Plains Indian society meant that there would always be warriors or bands who would not feel bound by that agreement.

FIGURE 2

A map showing the developments that undermined the Fort Laramie Treaty.





## FACTFILE

### Sand Creek Massacre, 1864

Black Kettle, chief of a band of around 800 Cheyenne Indians, plus some Arapaho, had camped at Sand Creek near Fort Lyon. This had been agreed at peace talks. The warriors had left to hunt buffalo, leaving mostly women, children and the old in the camp. Black Kettle flew an American flag over his *tipi* to show that his was a friendly village.

On the morning of 29 November, Colonel Chivington and 700 soldiers of the Colorado militia attacked the camp and, while some Indians escaped, the rest were killed. Worse still, Chivington's men took scalps as trophies. The event was the subject of a Congressional enquiry that heard evidence from survivors and participants, including some of Chivington's officers who had refused to attack. It concluded that Chivington had 'deliberately planned and executed a foul and dastardly massacre'. He was never brought to justice.

## The Indian Wars, 1863–68

### Cheyenne War, 1863–67

In 1861 the Cheyenne and Arapahoe began making serious attacks on the miners, travellers and railway surveyors on their lands and by 1863 full-scale war had broken out on the Southern Plains. This was at the same time as many regular soldiers had been withdrawn to fight in the CIVIL WAR back east so local volunteer forces, such as the Colorado MILITIA, were raised. The fighting continued with Indian attacks on RANCHES and small settlements. In 1864 some Cheyenne came to an agreement to move on to a new, smaller reservation. Among these were Black Kettle and his followers. They were camped at Sand Creek when they were attacked by Colonel Chivington and his Colorado militia. Initially hailed as a victory, this came to be known as the Sand Creek Massacre as it emerged in a government enquiry that most of the approximately 150 Indian dead were women, children and the elderly.

After the peace agreement, although many Cheyenne lived peacefully on their reservation, others continued to fight. On 6 January 1865, over one thousand Arapaho, Cheyenne and Sioux warriors attacked Julesburg. The garrison of only 60 soldiers were able to hold out but the area was plundered and the Indians took away cattle and horses. Later in 1867 another Cheyenne band living off the reservation were attacked and defeated by General George Armstrong Custer at the Battle of Washita, itself a controversial event see (page 45). Others continued to live off the reservation, continued raiding and later still could be found fighting in Red Cloud's War.

### Sioux or Red Cloud's War, 1865–68

Red Cloud's War had similar causes to the Cheyenne War. In 1862 gold was discovered in the Rocky Mountains in Montana. New mining towns such as Virginia City and Bannack sprang up as miners rushed to the area along a new trail, the Bozeman Trail. This left the Oregon Trail near Fort Laramie and crossed Sioux lands, once again breaking the terms of the Fort Laramie Treaty. Again the US government did nothing to stop these miners from breaking the peace treaty. Rather they encouraged them as by 1865 the country, finances exhausted by four years of Civil War, needed the gold. The reaction of the Sioux was to attack travellers on the trail.

In 1866 the government tried a negotiated settlement to the problem. Their first step was to open peace talks with the Sioux leader, Red Cloud. However, at the same time the government also ordered the US army to begin work on a chain of forts along the trail. Red Cloud broke off the peace talks in disgust and attacked the army. By the winter of 1866 the soldiers were under SIEGE in their forts. The Sioux were not strong enough to capture the forts, which were equipped with artillery, but they did attack wood-cutting parties and tried to lure the soldiers into a trap.

### The Fetterman Massacre

Fort Phil Kearney was commanded by Colonel Carrington who was inexperienced in Indian warfare. During the autumn of 1866 there were frequent skirmishes between any troops that he sent out of the fort and the Indians who surrounded it. Carrington took a cautious approach and insisted that his officers did not pursue the Indians too far from the fort. He was afraid that they might be lured into an ambush. Most of his officers agreed with him but some underestimated the fighting ability of the Sioux and their allies.

On 21 December 1866 a detachment of 80 men led by Captain William Fetterman was lured into a trap set by the Sioux and were all killed and mutilated. Who was to blame is still disputed by historians.

## FOCUS TASK

### Why did conflict increase on the Plains, 1851–68?

- 1 Create a timeline for the period 1851–68 to explore the idea that conflict was increasing on the Plains.
- 2 Underneath the timeline, note the treaties, acts and actions of the USA and its citizens.
- 3 Above the timeline, note the years when the Cheyenne and the Sioux were at war together with any notable incidents.
- 4 Does your completed timeline show increasing conflict?

## Red Cloud's achievement

Since the superior firepower of the soldiers prevented the capture of Fort Phil Kearney, Red Cloud made sure that it was surrounded by his warriors. The army could not move safely outside the fort and travellers could not use the Bozeman Trail. This was the major achievement of Red Cloud: that he kept together a force of several Sioux bands, plus their Arapaho and Cheyenne allies. He managed to keep them fighting through the winter months. He also had the vision to try to persuade the Crow, traditional enemies of the Sioux, to fight with him. Although he was unsuccessful in this, he kept the US army on the defensive.

## The Peace Treaty

In 1868 the government was forced to admit defeat and change its policy. The government realised that the Sioux and their allies could not be defeated militarily. At the same time an alternative route to the gold-mining areas had been opened. So the government agreed to withdraw from the forts and under the terms of the second Fort Laramie Treaty the Great Sioux Reservation was created (see page 43). No non-Indian settlers were to ever be allowed to enter this land. Red Cloud agreed to this treaty. When the soldiers withdrew, the Sioux moved in and burned the forts to the ground. The Sioux had won – or had they?

For Red Cloud it marked the end of his fighting against the US army. From this point on he lived peacefully on the Sioux reservation. However, not all the Sioux agreed with the peace treaty. Red Cloud's power decreased and many of the Sioux went on to follow younger, more militant leaders such as Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse.

## PROFILE

### Red Cloud

- Born near the forks of the Platte River c.1819.
- War leader of the Sioux by the 1860s.
- Forced the US government to negotiate a peace treaty at Fort Laramie in 1868 and give up its forts on the Bozeman Trail.
- Lived as a respected councillor on the Sioux reservation after 1868.
- In 1880 he successfully exposed the corruption of the Indian agent running the Sioux reservation but earlier was unable to prevent the government actions that precipitated the Great Sioux War 1876–77.
- Died in 1909 at the Pine Ridge Reservation.



## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

**Interpretation A** Shannon Smith Calitri from her article *'Give Me Eighty Men': Shattering the Myth of the Fetterman Massacre*, published in 2004.

*The well-worn story of the ambush is built on variations of the infamous declaration attributed to Fetterman: 'With eighty men I could ride through the entire Sioux nation.' Citing the doomed officer's 'reckless boasts', historians and popular authors have created a lasting but inaccurate image of an arrogant buffoon so disdainful of the Plains Indians' military skills that he disobeyed his commander's orders and led his men to their deaths ...*

*Letters and memoirs by Fetterman's fellow soldiers universally describe him as an excellent officer, a chivalrous gentleman, and a compassionate superior who commanded devout loyalty from his men. His substantial military record shows him to have been a man with outstanding leadership skills both in battle and in administration and an officer who was thoroughly indoctrinated in the military code of conduct.*

**Interpretation B** Stephen E. Ambrose, from his book *Crazy Horse and Custer*, published in 1975.

*Almost as soon as the wood cutters reached the pine woods, a small group of Indians rode to the attack. Carrington had prepared a relief party of seventy-nine men, mixed cavalry and infantry, giving the command to the same cautious officer who had led the pursuit on December 19. It was a wise choice, but just as the troops were about to leave the fort Captain Fetterman caught Carrington's arm and demanded that he be given command, as he was the senior officer next to Carrington himself at the fort. Carrington acquiesced, with obvious misgivings, as he gave Fetterman a cautious written order: 'Support the wood train. Relieve it and report to me. Do not engage or pursue Indians at its expense. Under no circumstances pursue over the ridge, that is Lodge Trail Ridge.' So worried was Carrington about Fetterman, in fact, that he twice verbally repeated the order not to pursue beyond Lodge Trail Ridge.*

Read Interpretations A and B and answer Questions 2–4.

- 1 How does Interpretation A differ from Interpretation B in its assessment of who was to blame for the Fetterman Massacre?

Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B.

- 2 Why might these two historians have a different interpretation of who was to blame for the massacre?

Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your own contextual knowledge.

- 3 Which interpretation do you find more convincing about who was to blame for the massacre?

Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your own contextual knowledge.

- 4 Which of the following was the more important reason for conflict with the Plains Indians?

- Discoveries of gold
- Settlers travelling to California and Oregon.

Explain your answer with reference to both reasons.

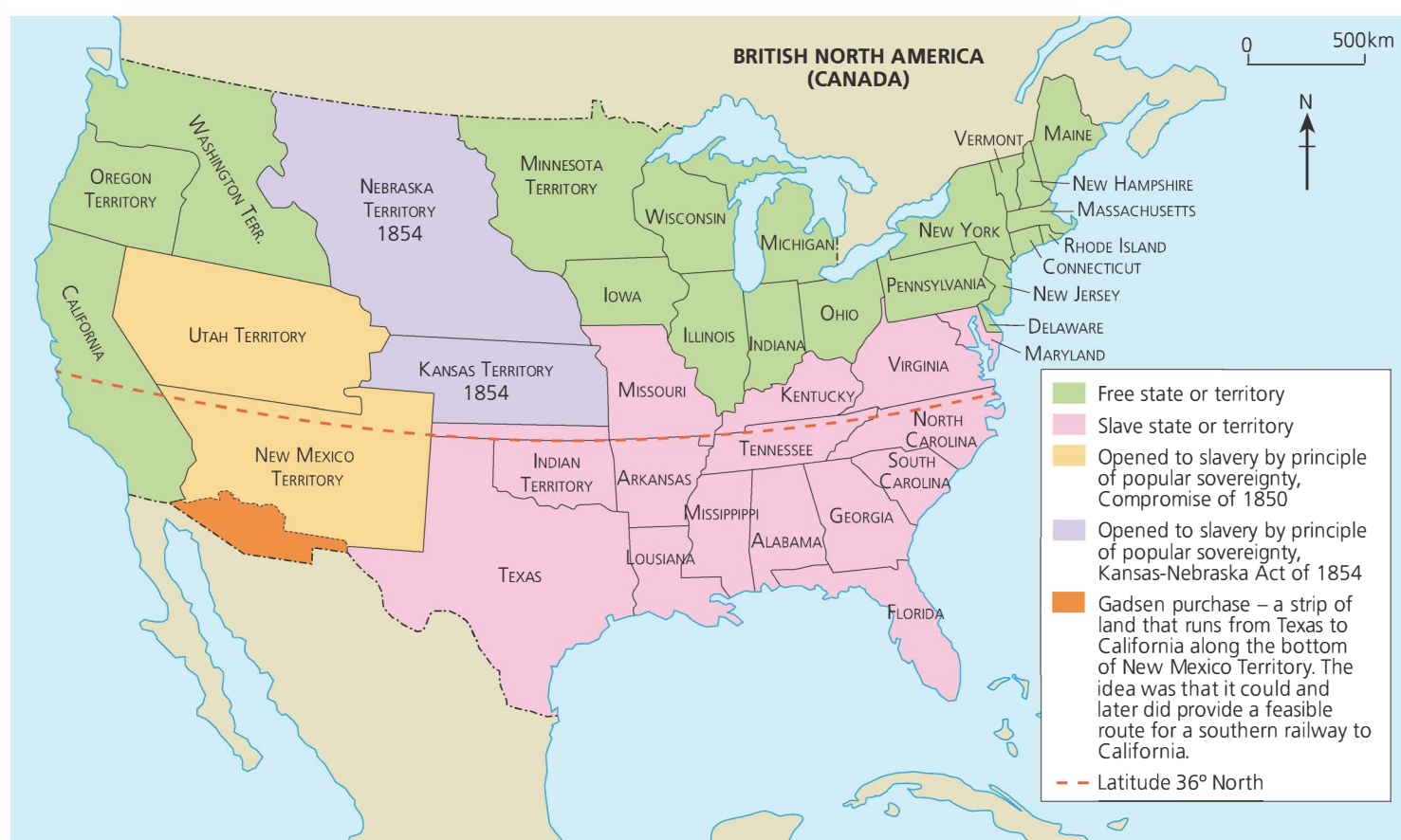
## • The background to the American Civil War, 1861–65

Victory in the Mexican–American War brought vast new territories into the United States, and the question of how they should be run brought into focus existing divisions within the country.

When the United States first became a country after defeating the British in 1774 they adopted a **FEDERAL** model of government and the individual states formed the Union. In this federal model power is shared between the federal (or central) government, and state governments, and from the beginning there were debates about how much power the federal government should have over the lives of the people and the separate states in which they lived.

**FIGURE 3**

Map showing states and territories in 1854.



## Differences between North and South

There were significant differences between the Northern and Southern states, which grew wider during the period 1800–40. These differences had their origins in the geography and climate of North America. The Southern states were more suitable for plantation agriculture, growing rice, tobacco and particularly cotton. Supplying the cotton industries of Britain and Europe made the South rich and this is where investors in the South, including in the new lands in the south-west towards Texas, put their money. Crucially the plantation system relied upon slave labour. Roughly a quarter of the South's population was economically dependent



on slavery; but there was also arable and food crop farming so the South could feed itself.

In comparison, the Northern states industrialised, with towns and cities developing alongside agriculture. It was to the Northern states that the many immigrants to America came and stayed. They arrived in the North because that was where the shipping lines ran to and they stayed because they did not want to try and compete with slave labour.

Meanwhile in the North slavery was disappearing. The last Northern state to end slavery was New Jersey in 1804. At the same time an ABOLITIONIST movement, working for the total end to slavery, developed in the Northern states.

Differences aside, historians argue that the two economies of North and South complemented each other so in that respect the Union worked well. But the fact that they had different interests meant that the Northern and Southern states sometimes disagreed on federal government policy. For example when regulating trade with Britain, the main market for Southern cotton, the Southern states wanted open trade while the Northern ones wanted protection for some of their industries. When such disagreements arose the equal numbers of Northern free and Southern slave states balanced each other, neither could vote down the other's interests so everyone was forced to look for a compromise.

### PRACTICE QUESTION

Describe two differences between the Northern and Southern states in the 1840s.

## Abolitionism

Formal organised opposition to slavery in the USA began as early as 1817 when the American Colonisation Society began work. It bought land in West Africa and worked to resettle freed slaves there in what was to eventually become the country of Liberia. This gradual approach gathered only limited support from white and black Americans. Only about 12,000 freed slaves had been helped to migrate to Liberia by 1860.

In the meantime the wider anti-slavery movement that emerged in 1831 demanded an immediate end to slavery. The Anti-Slavery Society was set up in 1832 and gained momentum after slavery was abolished throughout the British Empire in 1833. It also went further in demanding equal civil and religious rights for freed slaves. Unsurprisingly it was far stronger in the Northern states. The issue of slavery therefore became part of the political debate in the United States and part of the argument between the Northern and Southern states.

## Westward expansion

When the USA expanded westwards the federal government divided the land into new territories. As each territory was settled and its population grew, the people within it could apply for full statehood. They would then be admitted as a state into the Union. As the free states of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois entered the Union so too did the slave states of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, thus maintaining the voting balance between North and South. But when in 1819 Missouri was ready to enter as a slave state, the Northern states initially opposed this. In the end the Missouri Compromise, 1820, was reached by which Missouri could enter as a slave state while Maine entered as a non-slave state, but no more slave states were to be allowed north of the line of latitude 36 degrees north.

## The Compromise of 1850

After 1848, as the United States expanded into the vast new territories captured from Mexico, it still contained an equal number of free and slave states, 15 of each. The political debate over the new territories was whether slavery should be allowed to continue there, and this threatened to break up the Union. While many in the South wanted to allow the expansion of slavery, many Northerners, known

## FACTFILE

### Uncle Tom's Cabin

In 1851 *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe was published. Her hero, Uncle Tom, a long-suffering slave, is torn from his family when he is sold separately from them. Tom goes on to rescue the daughter of his new master and is well treated as a reward. When his master dies Tom is sold by the cruel widow to an evil owner who whips poor Tom to death. Stowe's portrayal of slavery as an evil institution that destroyed the family was enormously popular and sold 1.2 million copies by 1853, going on to become the best-selling novel of the century. How far it increased anti-slavery feeling in the Northern states is open to debate. One historian David Potter suggested that Northern attitudes were 'never quite the same' after *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Meanwhile to some Southerners, Stowe was 'a vile wretch in petticoats'.

sometimes as FREE-SOILERS, did not. In 1850 a new compromise, the Compromise of 1850, was reached, including the following points:

- California would be admitted to the Union as a free state, breaking the balance of free and slave states.
- The decision whether to permit slavery in the new south-west territories would be taken by their own governments.
- A more effective Fugitive Slave Act was passed making it easier for slave catchers to recapture runaway slaves in the Northern states and return them to their owners in the South.

This compromise kept the peace between North and South, but the possibility of the two breaking apart was growing stronger. Increasingly Southerners were considering secession (that is, leaving or breaking away) from the Union. Meanwhile the Fugitive Slave Act made the institution of slavery very visible to Northerners and so anti-slavery feeling grew even stronger there.

## FACTFILE

### The Underground Railroad



From 1786 runaway slaves were helped to escape northwards along a secret route, by a secret network. In the period 1840–60, an estimated 50,000 slaves were helped to escape and settle in the Northern states or in Canada. One notable individual associated with this was Harriet Tubman, born c.1822 and died 10 March 1913, Auburn, New York State. She was born a slave, escaped and made many trips back into the South to help others to escape too. She helped John Brown recruit men for his raid on Harpers Ferry (see page 24), was a Union spy during the Civil War and afterwards worked for women's SUFFRAGE. At the time of writing she is one of the female candidates to be on a ten-dollar bill. The statue pictured stands as a memorial in Harlem, New York.

## THINK

Compare the contributions of the two Harriets, Stowe and Tubman, to the emancipation of slaves in the USA. Which woman would you put on the ten-dollar bill and why?

### Kansas–Nebraska Act 1854

Within four years the Union was threatened again. This time the trigger was a disagreement over the route of a TRANSCONTINENTAL railroad. The Southerners were behind Secretary of War Jefferson Davis' favoured Southern route and encouraged the Gadsden Purchase – the buying of a barren stretch of land through what is today New Mexico and Arizona – from Mexico for \$10 million.

The alternative proposal was for a line further north through Nebraska and this prompted the creation of two new territories, Nebraska and Kansas. To gain Southern support for this, they were not to be free territories and eventually free states. Instead, as in 1850, the issue of slavery was to be left open to popular sovereignty – that is for the people of the territories to decide for themselves.

## The breakdown of the Missouri Compromise

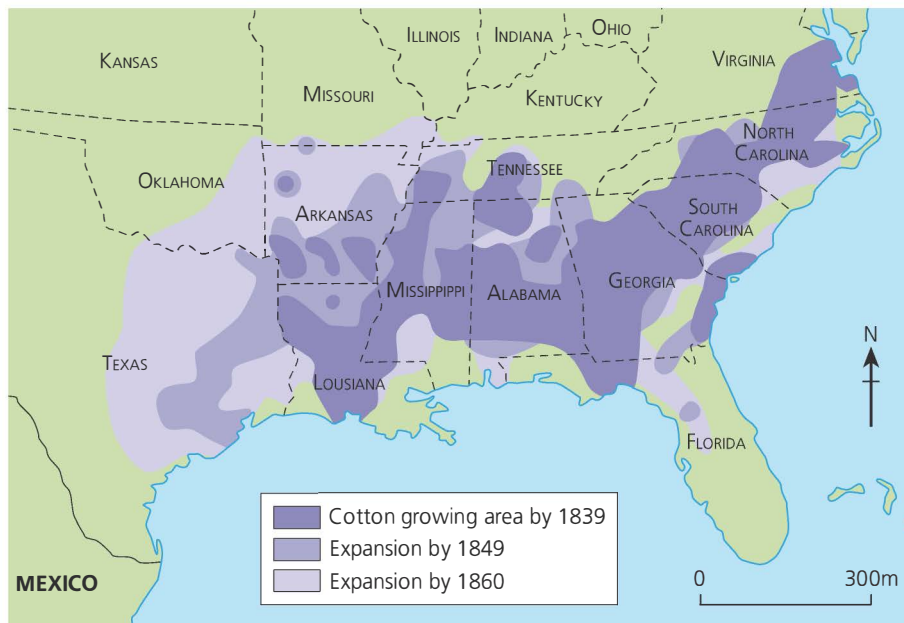
At the same time it was agreed that this new Kansas–Nebraska Act meant that the Missouri Compromise had been superseded or that it no longer applied. So new states north of the Missouri Compromise line could potentially become slave states even though this was unlikely. This decision changed the nature of US politics for good. Instead of the two old political parties whose members were split between pro- and anti-slavery, and who gained support in both Northern and Southern states, a new political party emerged, the **REPUBLICANS**, whose supporters were in the Northern states and who were anti-slavery.

### THINK

Study Figure 4. How does this map help to explain the increasing importance of slavery in US politics?

**FIGURE 4**

The spread of cotton growing using slave labour between 1839 and 1860.



## Bleeding Kansas

Most people agreed that Nebraska would never be a slave state but in Kansas it was a different matter. Both those for and those against slavery began to encourage like-minded settlers to move to Kansas in an attempt to gain control of the government of the state. Then they believed they could win the vote on whether it would become a slave or a free state. By 1856 Kansas had two opposing governments, both illegally formed, and as the prospect of a political solution faded both sides armed. In 1856, 700 pro-slavery supporters entered the free-state town of Lawrence and smashed newspaper presses, stole property and burned buildings, although there was only one fatality. The 'sack' of Lawrence prompted a free-soiler, John Brown, to lead four sons and three other men to attack the Potawatomie Creek pro-slavery settlement. There they killed five men in front of their families. In the months that followed the violence spread and there were more raids across Kansas that left roughly 200 killed (including one of Brown's sons) and much property destroyed. After federal government involvement, a political decision was eventually reached in 1858 that Kansas would be a free state.

### PRACTICE QUESTION

In what way did the United States' westward expansion make the disagreements between the North and South worse in the 1840s and 1850s? Explain your answer.



## SOURCE 5

*The Last Moments of John Brown*, painted 1882–84 by Thomas Hovenden. It shows John Brown under arrest at Harpers Ferry.



### THINK

- 1 How has the artist presented Brown – as a criminal or as a hero?
- 2 How does he do this?

## John Brown and Harpers Ferry

Following Potawatomie, John Brown kept a low profile although he was still involved in fundraising and recruiting for the abolition of slavery. He came back to national attention on the night of 16 October 1859 when with a band of 19 followers he seized the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia. This is believed to have been an attempt to arm a slave rebellion but it failed. Instead the townspeople and local troops surrounded the building and then it was recaptured by a force of US Marines led by Army Lieutenant-Colonel Robert E. Lee. Several men were killed, including more of Brown's sons. Brown himself was tried for treason against Virginia and hanged.

Initial Southern reaction was that Brown was a mad fanatic but, as his links with Northern abolitionists emerged and some Northern abolitionists made a martyr of him, opinion changed. To some Southerners his raid was proof that the North intended to destroy them.

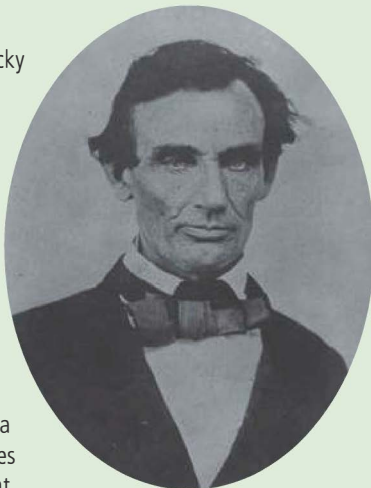
## Lincoln elected President 1860

When the Republican candidate Abraham Lincoln won the 1860 presidential election, Southern fears that the Republicans would abolish slavery reached a new peak. Lincoln was a strong opponent of the expansion of slavery but said he would not interfere with it where it existed. That was not enough to convince many in the South. Before he was even sworn in as President, South Carolina voted to leave the Union, as did six other states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. Together they formed the Confederacy. From that point on it seemed compromise was no longer possible, although politicians still tried. Just a spark was needed to ignite open war.

## PROFILE

### Abraham Lincoln

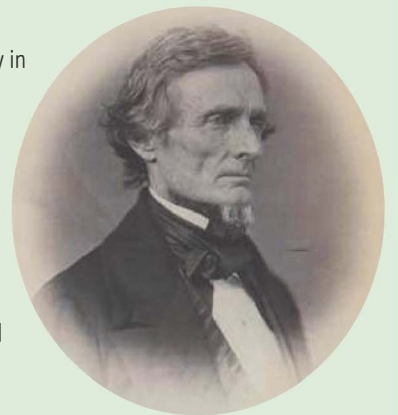
- Born in Hodgenville, Kentucky in 1809.
- Early career as a lawyer before entering politics. He returned to legal practice after opposing the Mexican–American War.
- Re-entered politics in 1854 and became a leader of the new Republican Party. In 1858, while running for CONGRESS, he took part in a series of high-profile debates with his Democrat opponent Stephen A. Douglas and spoke out against the expansion of slavery.
- In 1860 he successfully ran for President and his election convinced many in the South of the need to secede from the Union.
- His Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863 was a key move towards ending slavery.
- In July 1863 his Gettysburg address given at the battlefield cemetery clearly identified the Civil War as a war against slavery.
- ASSASSINATED by John Wilkes Booth just six days after the Confederacy had surrendered in 1865.



## PROFILE

### Jefferson Davis

- Born in Fairview, Kentucky in 1807 or 1808.
- Early career as a soldier. Later ran a plantation and became a slave owner before entering politics.
- He fought and was wounded in the Mexican–American War.
- After that war he returned to politics with a seat in Congress and went on to become Secretary of War.
- As the split between North and South widened he was a supporter of states' rights but argued against secession.
- Elected the President of Confederacy in 1861.
- After the Civil War he was imprisoned for two years but then released.
- Died in New Orleans in 1889.



## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Read Interpretations A and B and answer Questions 1–3.

**Interpretation A** Thomas Johnson, from his book, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, published in 1909. Johnson was born a slave in Virginia where he was bought and sold several times. After the Civil War he was freed and moved north where he became a church minister and eventually a missionary in Africa.

*In 1860, there was great excitement over the election of Mr Abraham Lincoln as President of the United States. The slaves prayed to God for his success because we knew he was in sympathy with the abolition of slavery. The election was the signal for a great conflict in which the question was: Shall there be slavery? The South said: Yes. All the coloured people that I spoke to believed that if the North gained victory they would have their freedom.*

**Interpretation B** Jefferson Davis, from his memoirs, *The Rise and Fall of Confederate Government*, written in 1881. Davis was the son of a plantation owner who, in 1845, entered Congress for the state of Mississippi. When Mississippi and six other states left the Union and set up their own Confederate government in 1861, Davis was elected as President.

*The Confederates fought for the defence of a fundamental right to withdraw from a Union which they had, as independent communities, voluntarily entered. The existence of slavery was in no way the cause of the conflict but was only a minor issue.*

- 1 How does Interpretation B differ from Interpretation A about what the conflict between North and South was about in the American Civil War?

Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge.

- 2 Why might the authors of Interpretations A and B have a different interpretation of what the conflict between the North and South in the American Civil War was about?

Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge.

- 3 Which interpretation do you find more convincing about what the conflict between North and South in the American Civil War was about?

Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge.

## FOCUS TASK

### Why did the Civil War break out in 1861?

Here is a list of long- and short-term causes of the Civil War:

- Differences between North and South
- Abolitionism
- Westward expansion
- The spread of cotton growing
- Publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
- The underground railroad
- Transcontinental railroad
- Bleeding Kansas
- John Brown and the Harpers Ferry Raid
- The election of Lincoln as President

- 1 For each write down one example of why it made war more likely.
- 2 Give each a mark out of 10 for its importance in bringing about war, with 1 being the most important.
- 3 Choose what you think are the five most important causes and write a short paragraph on each, explaining why you have chosen it.
- 4 If you took away any of those causes, would war still have broken out in 1861?

# The social and economic impact of the American Civil War

## Recruitment and conscription

At the start of the Civil War volunteers rushed to join the armies of both sides. Local recruiting offices were set up and volunteer regiments tended to be composed of men from a particular area. Initially officers up to the rank of colonel were elected by other officers and enlisted men, and uniforms varied between units. People expected a short war but it quickly became apparent that that would not be the case and soon the volunteers were not enough.

The Confederacy introduced CONSCRIPTION first in April 1862. All able-bodied men between 18 and 35 were required to serve for three years. By the end of the war this had been extended to all men between the ages of 17 and 50. The Union introduced conscription in March 1863 for all able-bodied men between the ages of 20 and 45. In the South there were exemptions for planters with 20 or more slaves. In both North and South those unwilling to fight could provide a substitute not of draft age or pay a fee \$300 or \$500, respectively. There was widespread opposition to conscription in both the North and South, which limited its enforcement.

## Emancipation

On 1 January 1863 President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This was a key moment. Up to then Lincoln had insisted that the war was to restore the Union and not to free the slaves, but growing numbers of slaves began to turn up in Union army camps. The question then was should they be freed. In the end Lincoln decided that emancipation was necessary for three reasons:

- 1 It would give the North a moral cause, public opinion was moving in that direction already and he felt this would boost morale.
- 2 Slave labour was propping up the Confederate war effort with slaves working in MUNITIONS works and army camps.
- 3 Making the war into one against slavery would remove any danger of France or Britain supporting the Confederacy.

One immediate effect of emancipation was that African Americans could enrol in the armed forces. Moves were made to form all-black units and by mid-1863 they were involved in the fighting. They did not always receive equal treatment and there were no black officers. Initially black soldiers received lower pay than white soldiers, but this was changed in June 1864. When some were captured by the Confederates they were not treated as prisoners of war but were returned to slavery in the state they came from or in some instances executed. Over 38,000 had died by the war's end.

### THINK

- 1 Which cause of the Civil War can you see evidence of in both posters?
- 2 In what different ways do the posters try to persuade men to enlist?

### SOURCE 6

Recruitment poster designed to encourage African American men to enlist in the Union army.



### SOURCE 7

Recruitment poster designed to encourage Virginians to enlist in the Confederate army, May 1861.

## Head Quarters, Virginia Forces, STAUNTON, VA.

### MEN OF VIRGINIA, TO THE RESCUE !

**Your soil has been invaded by your Abolition foes, and we call upon you to rally at once, and drive them back. We want Volunteers to march immediately to Grafton and report for duty. Come one! Come ALL! and render the service due to your State and Country. Fly to arms, and succour your brave brothers who are now in the field.**

The Volunteers from the Counties of Loudoun, Highland, Bath, Alleghany, Monroe, Mercer, and other Counties convenient to that point, will immediately assemble, and report at Staunton, in Highland County, where they will join the Companies from the Valley, marching to Grafton. The Volunteers from the Counties of Hardy, Hancock, Randolph, Pocahontas, Shenandoah, and other Counties convenient, will in like manner report at Grafton. And the Volunteers from the Counties of Loudoun, Lewis, Harrison, and other Counties, will report at Phillipsburg in Barbours County. The Volunteers, as soon as they report at the above points, will be furnished with arms, uniforms, &c., &c.

**Action! Action! should be our rallying motto, and the sentiment of Virginia's inspired Orator, "Give me Liberty or give me Death," animate every loyal son of the Old Dominion! Let us drive back the invading foot of a brutal and desperate foe, or leave a record to posterity that we died bravely defending our homes and firesides,—the honor of our wives and daughters,—and the sacred graves of our ancestors!**

**[Done by Authority.]**

**M. G. HARMAN, Maj. Command'g  
at Staunton.**

**J. M. HECK, Lt. Col. Va. Vol.  
R. E. COWAN, Maj. Va. Vol.**

May 30, 1861.



## Economic impact on the North

As the pre-war economies of North and South were complementary the war was inevitably going to damage some industries. The Northern shoe industry lost a big part of its market which was in the South. It was noticeable that the Confederate army was never short of munitions but was short of boots for its men! The cotton textile industry lost access to its raw materials – Southern cotton. Other industries directly related to the war flourished, such as the manufacture of arms and uniforms and the railroads that moved men and munitions.

It was the wealthy manufacturers and traders who tended to profit most from the war. Ordinary workers found their wages lagging behind prices as wartime taxes and INFLATION pushed them up. This was made worse by the presence in the workplace of women and boys replacing men. They were happy to accept lower wages as this represented an improvement for them. When workers pushed for wage increases they were accused of being unpatriotic and in 1864 troops were diverted from the battlefield to put down protests in war industries.

By the end of the war the industries of the North were ready for rapid growth.

## Economic impact on the South

If the effect of the war in the North was mixed, it was an economic disaster in the South. The war destroyed the railroad system as Union troops tore up tracks, bent rails and burnt rolling stock. Cotton growing was badly disrupted by the Union advances. Production fell from 4 million bales in 1861 to 300,000 bales in 1865. The only industries to grow were those associated with the war effort, such as munitions.

Food shortages became a major problem in the South towards the end of the war as agricultural crop yields fell due to manpower shortages, as the men were in the army. But there were food riots in some cities as early as 1863. Meanwhile, some plantation owners continued to grow cotton in search of profits rather than listening to their government's appeals to grow food. In one respect cotton growers did help the South. They were cut off from Britain and their European markets by the Union naval BLOCKADE but they were able to trade for food with the North, which was itself desperate for supplies for its cotton industry. So even during the fighting there was some trade across the lines.

The South also suffered from terrible inflation. The Confederate government at first tried to fund the war through new taxes but was so unsuccessful in collecting them that it resorted to printing more money. This led to HYPERINFLATION and the more money the government printed the worse it became.

## Social impact

During the war, as men went off to fight, many women volunteered as unpaid nurses while thousands took on new roles as farmers, plantation managers and munitions-plant workers. While many returned to their traditional roles when the war ended, the experience had changed the status of women. Moreover the high numbers of casualties created a generation of widows, spinsters and wives of disabled husbands. Immediately after the war, however, an appeal for the vote for women as well as for black males received little support.

### FACTFILE

#### Army nationalities

Both Confederate and Union armies frequently organised units along community and ethnic lines. The Union army had French, German, Irish, Scandinavian and Scottish Highlander units. The Confederate army had German, Mexican–Texan and Creek and Cherokee nation units. Towards the very end of the war the Confederacy was so desperate for men that it passed a law allowing the arming of 300,000 slave soldiers, although this was too late for any plan to be put into action.

### FIGURE 8

Rising inflation in the Confederacy.

1861	12%
1862	70%
1863	190%
1864	250%
1865	500%

\*Figures for May each year, although it should be noted that inflation rose still higher and then fell back between May 1863 and May 1864 when the Confederate government controlled the money supply.

### PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- 1 Describe how the Civil War damaged the Southern economy.
- 2 Describe how the lives of African Americans were affected by the Civil War.

## ● Coming to terms with the Mormons

Just as the lives of the Plains Indians were disturbed by the westward movement of travellers, settlers and miners, so too were those of the Mormons in Utah. Travellers on the Oregon and California trails complained that the Mormons charged very high prices for supplies. Moreover the conversion of some Indians to the Mormon faith raised new fears about the Mormons plotting to kill all Gentiles. Meanwhile the federal government were concerned that the Mormon practice of polygamy was illegal and that the Mormon leaders' control of Utah was actually a theocracy – a state ruled by a religion.

In July 1857 a new non-Mormon governor, along with 2,500 troops, was sent to Utah to replace Brigham Young. Although the governor's orders were not to start any hostilities, the Mormons did not trust the peaceful intentions of this expedition. Instead Brigham Young mobilised defence forces, the Nauvoo Legion. The Mormon strategy was to harass the army's advance into Utah and make it difficult for them to gather supplies. This was so successful that the troops had to spend the winter at Fort Bridger.

### Mountain Meadow Massacre

With neither side wanting to engage in full-scale fighting, the Mormon War of 1857–58 was unlikely to result in many casualties. By its end about 150 had died but most of these casualties occurred in a single incident. In early September a wagon train of families bound for California camped at Mountain Meadows and was attacked either by Paiute Indians or Mormon militia. Who started the trouble is still a matter of debate.

Historians also disagree on why the trouble started. Some point to the tensions in Utah because of the presence of what was seen as an invading US army, or the fact that in August Brigham Young had declared martial law and that he had instructed Mormons not to trade with non-Mormons. Others note that the migrants were from Arkansas and that a Mormon leader had been murdered in that state. Still others suggest that the migrants had been behaving badly and provoking either the Mormons or the Paiute Indians.

That trouble occurred is not in dispute. The first attack on the wagon train was repelled and a five-day siege ensued. When it became obvious that the migrants knew that Mormons were involved, the local Mormon militia leader took the decision to kill everyone so there would be no witnesses. After the travellers were tricked into leaving the protection of their wagons, all were killed except for 17 children under the age of 7 who were taken into Mormon homes. As part of the cover-up that followed, the Mormons spread the story that Indians had been responsible, but this was not believed. The investigation that eventually followed was hampered by the Mormons and did not result in any charges until 1874. In the end just one Mormon, a militia leader named John Lee, was convicted and executed for the crime in 1877.

News of the massacre inflamed public opinion against the Mormons back in the East and the federal government sent more troops. In response thousands of Mormon families packed up their homes to flee from the expected attack. This turned public opinion back in their favour.

In the end a peaceful settlement was negotiated. In April 1858 the Mormons were pardoned, a non-Mormon governor was installed and the US army entered Utah peacefully.

### Utah becomes a state

Utah was not allowed to enter the Union as a state until it banned polygamy. This finally happened in 1896.

**FOCUS TASK****Why did the US government find it hard to come to terms with the Mormons?**

- 1 Using page 28, make notes on the reasons why the US government found the Mormons hard to deal with under the following headings:
  - Hostility to their idea of being God's chosen
  - Envy of their economic success
  - Their armed resistance to a new governor
  - Their practice of polygamy.
- 2 In groups, use your notes to discuss which of these reasons was the most important in explaining why the US government found it hard to come to terms with the Mormons.

**ACTIVITY**

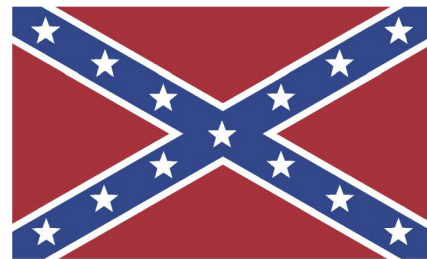
Write a paragraph to describe the events of the Mormon War. Include your judgement on whether it deserves to be labelled a war.

**TOPIC SUMMARY****Conflict across America**

- The westward spread of the United States resulted in conflicts with the Cheyenne in 1863 and the Sioux 1865–68.
- The discoveries of gold in Colorado and later in Montana in the Rocky Mountains were very disruptive events for the Plains Indians.
- The debate over the spread of slavery, together with the growth of the abolitionist movement, widened the split between the Northern and Southern states.
- The debate about slave and free states brought to the forefront of politics the question of the balance of power between federal and state government.
- Political disagreements turned into violence in Kansas and the actions of extremists such as John Brown made war more likely.
- The American Civil War 1861–65 was a devastating event in American history. Roughly 3 million men fought in the armies and with roughly 620,000 deaths it remains the bloodiest conflict in American history. It also led to great destruction across the Southern states and changed American society forever.
- The war may have begun as a war over states' rights but by the end it was a war over slavery. This has led to a disputed history of the Confederacy which still continues and which is evident in the debates over the message conveyed by its flag to this very day.
- Westward expansion also led the United States into conflict with the Mormons in 1857–58 although a political solution was eventually reached.

**FACTFILE****The Stars and Bars**

The Stars and Bars is the flag that today represents the Confederacy. To some it is a symbol of southern pride, to others it is a racist symbol. This can be seen in the decision of some southern states in 2015 to remove it from their state flag and to no longer fly it over official buildings.





## 1.3 Consolidation – forging the nation

### FOCUS

By 1865 the fighting in the American Civil War was over and the challenge facing politicians was how to rebuild the nation. While the war was over, the battle for equality for African Americans was just beginning. Meanwhile the end of the war led to a flood of settlers and soldiers onto the Great Plains. This led to more fighting, although on a much smaller scale, which was only ended by the defeat of the Plains Indians and their confinement to reservations.

In this part of the topic you will study the following:

- The aftermath of the American Civil War and the extent to which reconstruction was achieved.
- The continued settlement of the West and the extent to which the homesteaders successfully made a life for themselves there.
- The resolution of the 'Indian problem' after 1865 and the factors involved in this.

### ● The aftermath of the American Civil War

When the war ended the key task facing the United States was RECONSTRUCTION. The Union needed to be restored and the defeated South needed to be reintegrated. There were a number of questions to consider, foremost of which were how the Confederacy's leaders and soldiers should be treated and what should happen to the 3.5 million former slaves.

#### SOURCE 1

The Thirteenth Amendment, 1865.

*Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.*

*Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.*

### The balance of federal and state powers

Closely linked with the problem of the former Confederates and former slaves was the issue of the balance of federal and state powers. During the struggles of the reconstruction period the federal government was in conflict with the Southern states over the freedom and equality of African Americans, and had to intervene in matters such as the rights of CITIZENS, which those states considered were their concerns only. It was for this reason that Section 2 of the Thirteenth Amendment (see Source 1) was added and that the word 'State' was explicitly included in the Fourteenth Amendment (see Source 2).

### Presidential reconstruction under Andrew Johnson

Political arguments about how reconstruction should be carried out began well before the war itself ended. As the Union armies advanced, Southern states came back under Union control. President Lincoln's policy was to give these Southern states military governors to begin with and then they were allowed to form civil state governments with a view to them rejoining the Union. This brought Lincoln into conflict with some Republicans in Congress who wanted a slower process that would bar many ex-Confederates from political life. As the war ended Lincoln was assassinated so the task of reconstruction fell to President Andrew Johnson.

Under Johnson's plan all seven Southern states still without reconstruction governments – Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas – could return to the Union. Almost all Southerners who took an oath of allegiance would be pardoned and have their property returned. Of course their slaves could not be returned because there were now no slaves. These Southerners could then take part in the political process of elections.

Those excluded were ex-Confederate civil government officials and military officers and those with taxable property worth \$20,000 (Johnson was hostile to rich plantation owners). In practice those excluded were able to apply for a pardon and Johnson granted over 13,000.

## The Thirteenth Amendment

The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery and gave Congress the power to enforce this. To make doubly sure of this the new state governments in the South had to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment. They had to formally agree that slavery could not exist in the United States. Furthermore, to make sure that the Confederacy was dead and buried, these Southern states had to REPUDIATE the loans that the Confederacy had built up during the Civil War. Only then could they rejoin the Union. When elected, some state governments refused to do this. In some Southern states little seemed to have changed since before the war. The presidential dispute with the Republicans in Congress over reconstruction worsened.

## Black codes

Moreover all seven Southern states passed 'black codes'. Under these laws freed slaves could marry, own property, make legal contracts and testify against other black Americans in court, but most prohibited racial intermarriage, jury service by black Americans and testimony in court by blacks against whites. They also contained provisions for annual contracts between black Americans and landowners. In effect, while the ex-slaves were free, they were not fully free. The status of black Americans in the Southern states thus became a major political issue. The Republicans in Congress believed that the Southern states would not deal fairly with black Americans unless they were forced to do so.

## Civil Rights Act

In 1866 Congress passed the Civil Rights Act which President Johnson vetoed. Congress overrode his VETO and by ratifying it as the Fourteenth Amendment ensured it could not easily be overturned. The Act was intended to protect the rights of ex-slaves by making them citizens. It could not guarantee black suffrage but tried to ensure this by threatening that Southern states would have reduced representation in the federal government if they refused to give black men the vote. This was the first attempt by the federal government to limit state control of civil and political rights. This amendment also disqualified from political office all those pre-war officers, both in civil government and the military, who had supported the Confederacy. Their disqualification could be removed by Congress if two-thirds voted for it. So they were not permanently excluded from political life.

### SOURCE 4

Extract from the Fourteenth Amendment, 1866.

*All persons born or naturalised in the United States ... are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.*

### THINK

- 1 How does the passing of the black codes support the argument that the Civil War was a war fought over slavery?
- 2 After reading pages 30–31, explain why the word 'State' was inserted into the Fourteenth Amendment.

FIGURE 2

The legislative process in the United States.

All legislation begins as a **bill** in Congress.

When a bill is passed it goes to the President for approval. If the President approves it, it becomes an **Act**.

The President can veto a bill to stop it becoming a law.

Congress can overrule a Presidential veto.

FIGURE 3

Separation of government powers under the US Constitution.

Congress, the Legislature makes the law.

The President, the Executive carries out the laws passed by Congress.

The Supreme Court, the Judiciary decides cases and controversies.

Having the three separate parts of government is known as the system of checks and balances.

## Reconstruction in the South, 1866–77

President Johnson and the Republican Party in Congress remained in dispute over reconstruction. Essentially the Republicans wanted to ensure the vote for African Americans and wanted to keep ex-Confederates out of power until there was no longer a danger of a new rebellion. In 1867 Congress passed a new Act which overturned the state governments formed under the Lincoln and Johnson plans. The Act divided the South into five temporary military districts each run by a General. New elections of state governments were to be held in which all black Americans, and those whites not barred by the Fourteenth Amendment, could vote. Once the state had rewritten its constitution and approved the Fourteenth Amendment it could be re-admitted to the Union and political reconstruction would be complete.

Johnson vetoed the Act but again Congress overrode his veto and the Act became law. However, in order to put Congressional reconstruction into effect, military power was needed and Johnson hindered this by replacing military officers who were sympathetic to the idea.

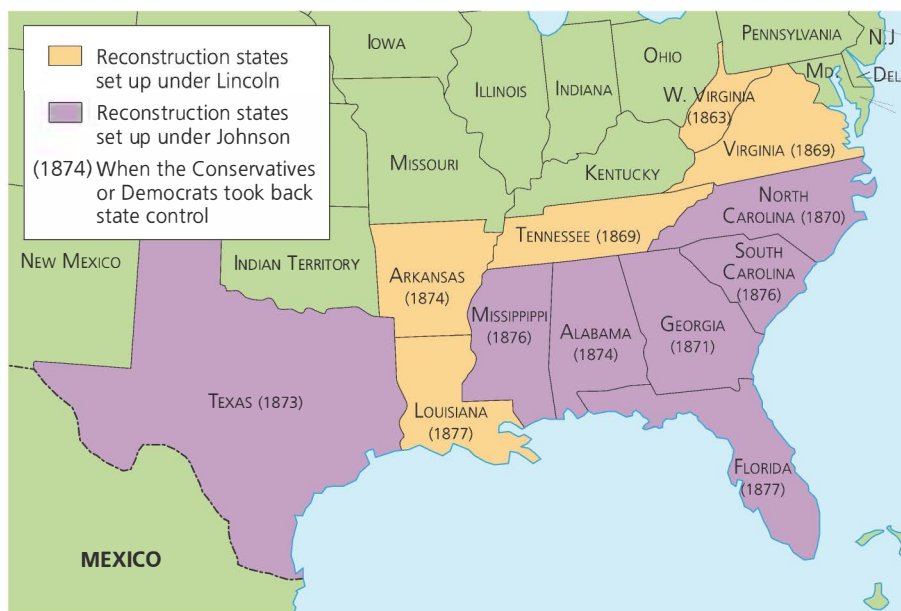
### Impeachment crisis, 1868

The political battle now moved to the power of the president. The Republicans in Congress passed two new laws that limited the power of the president. In particular they did not want the Secretary of War, Henry Stanton, removed as they needed his support to enforce their Reconstruction Acts. After Johnson removed Stanton for a second time in 1868 the Republicans IMPEACHED him. The charges were that Johnson had exceeded his powers as president and had not enforced the Reconstruction

Acts. At the end of his trial the vote was against Johnson by 35 votes to 19, just short of the two-thirds majority required to remove him from office. So Johnson continued to serve out the remaining period of his term in office.

**FIGURE 5**

Reconstruction of the Southern states.



### FACTFILE

#### Impeachment of a President

Under the United States Constitution the President can be removed from office through the process known as impeachment. The grounds for impeachment are 'treason, bribery or other high crimes and misdemeanours'. If a case can be made then the upper house of Congress, the Senate, holds a trial. This needs to find the president guilty by a two-thirds majority vote. If it does the President can be removed from office. So far in its history no US President has been removed from office.

#### The Fifteenth Amendment, 1869

The final reconstruction objective of the Republicans was to guarantee black male suffrage in both the Northern and the Southern states. This led to the Fifteenth Amendment, whose key provision was that the vote could not be denied on the basis of race or colour or previous enslavement. The Democrats' argument against this was that it violated states' rights by denying them the right to decide who could vote. The Republicans won and the Amendment was passed. However, there were loopholes in the legislation as it did not prohibit restrictions on voting such as property requirements or literacy tests, which were two ways in which Southern states stopped African Americans voting. Meanwhile efforts to win the vote for women were unsuccessful.

In 1869 Ulysses S. Grant was elected President, by 1870 all the Southern states had been re-admitted to the Union and the struggle over political reconstruction was at an end.



**FIGURE 6**

Reconstruction Amendments to the United States Constitution.

Date	Amendment	Main provisions
January 1865	Thirteenth	Prohibited slavery in the United States.
June 1866	Fourteenth	Defined citizenship as including all people born or naturalised in the United States.
February 1869	Fifteenth	Prohibited the denial of the vote because of race, colour or previous servitude.

**Reconstruction in the South – the struggle continues after 1870**

As the individual Southern states were re-admitted to the Union, political life could begin again. In each there was the same struggle over the role of African Americans, between the conservative old order, the Democrats, and the Republican new order. It was a struggle in which African Americans themselves played an important part. Although many freed slaves were uneducated and destitute there were others who had been born free and those who had served in the Union army. Military veterans' service in the army had given them experience of leadership, opportunities for education, a sense of national pride and a strong desire for freedom from white control.

The most obvious evidence of this was the establishment of independent black churches across the South. The Baptist Church, with its decentralised structure, was most popular and by 1890 there were over a million black Baptists in the South. These churches were also important in the development of black education through funding the building of schools and the payment of teachers. Freed African Americans also organised thousands of mutual-aid clubs and societies.

**SOURCE 7**

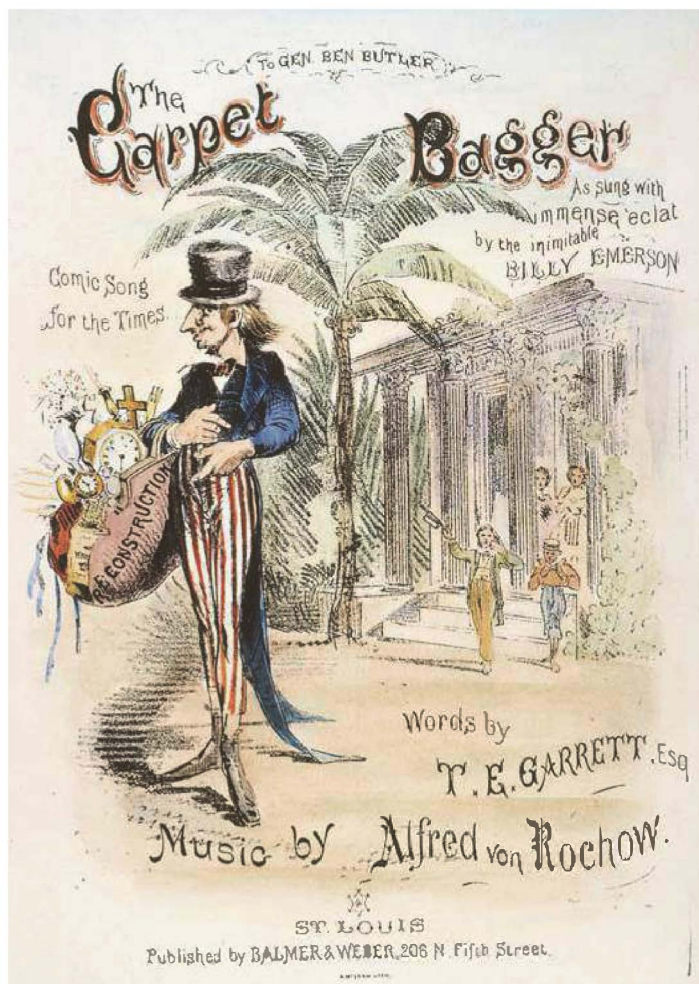
Group portrait of the first coloured senator and representatives, 1872.

**PRACTICE QUESTION**

Describe two ways in which African Americans helped themselves in the aftermath of the Civil War (or during reconstruction).

## SOURCE 8

Music-sheet cover caricature of a carpetbagger.



## Carpetbaggers and scallywags

Many African Americans entered politics. Over 600 served in state governments and a few served in Congress. However, the leading roles in state governments were played by white Republican politicians. Most influential were those originally from the North. They were committed to black rights. These included former Union soldiers who came South in search of business opportunities in land, factories and railroads; and professionals such as lawyers, teachers and preachers. They were CARICATURED by Southern Democrats as 'carpetbaggers' – Northern opportunists who came south for money and power with so few possessions that they could be stuffed into a travelling bag made of carpet material.

The other group of white Republicans were Southerners, mostly poorer farmers from the mountain regions of the Southern states. They were not part of the old plantation-owning elite, had tended to support the Union during the war and did not own slaves themselves. They were even more hated than the carpetbaggers and were called 'scallywags'. They were accused of being opportunists out to make money for themselves. They held the most political offices during reconstruction although they tended to drift back to supporting the Democrats as they were not deeply concerned about black rights.

## Reconstruction government achievements

While the Republicans remained in control they managed a number of significant achievements. They established the first state school systems with 600,000 black pupils in schools by 1877. They ensured that African Americans achieved lasting rights to an education. They also ensured

that in principle African Americans had equality before the law, the right to own property, to set up businesses and to enter the professions.

They repaired and rebuilt roads, buildings and bridges. There was corruption in some states, but then that was true in some Northern states too. So Republican reconstruction achieved some lasting benefits. However, by 1877 the conservative forces of the Democrats had regained power in all Southern states, bringing reconstruction to an end. This happened for four reasons:

- The drift of Republicans, both Southern and Northern, to the DEMOCRATIC views of their neighbours: it had been difficult holding views that were in conflict with their friends and associates.
- The loss of Republican morale due to the actions of the KU KLUX KLAN (see page 35).
- Vote rigging such as ballot stuffing where extra voting papers are added to the ballot box or simply by miscounting the votes cast.
- The lack of political will of the federal government to support black rights. The government was tired of the Southern struggle and focused instead upon other issues such as westward expansion and the Indian Wars.

## THINK

- 1 Study Source 8. Look at the figure on the left of the picture. Who does he represent and how do you know this?
- 2 What sort of bag is he carrying and what does he have in it?
- 3 What sort of house or property is shown on the right of the picture?
- 4 Using these details and anything else you can see, explain what message the artist is trying to convey.



## The Ku Klux Klan

Most white Southerners remained hostile to the idea of freedom and equality for African Americans and this lay behind political opposition to Republican reconstruction. It also gave rise to terrorism. The Ku Klux Klan began in 1866 in Tennessee and spread rapidly across the South. It drew members from all walks of Southern society. Klansmen hiding their identity behind white robes carried out acts of terrorism, including whippings and murders, to intimidate blacks and white Republicans. The federal government passed Enforcement Acts to protect black voters. These included making illegal: the wearing of disguises, conspiracies, resisting officers of the law and intimidating officials. In 1871 President Grant targeted an area of South Carolina for mass prosecutions and this broke the power of the Klan. It did not, however, stop intimidation by PARAMILITARY groups such as the White League and the Red Shirts. These continued into the twentieth century.

## Share cropping

Once freed, many ex-slaves moved away from the plantations. Some left for the south-west, such as Texas, where planters paid higher wages; more moved into towns and cities. Some spent years reuniting with their families that had been separated by sale. With little money or technical skills, freed slaves faced the prospect of becoming wage labourers, but many turned to share cropping. Under this system the landowner provided the land, housing, tools and seed and a local merchant provided food and supplies on CREDIT. At harvest time the share cropper received a share of the crop for their labour with the landowner taking the rest. The share cropper then used their share to pay off their debt to the merchant. The advantage to the white landowner was that their land was being worked and for the freed slaves they had more control over their own lives and the lives of their families. But the system was inefficient and the share croppers were in continual debt.

## Exodus to Kansas

Thousands of African Americans began migrating west to Kansas. They became known as 'EXODUSTERS' as they were looking for freedom from the racism and poverty of the post-war South just as the Israelites fled from Ancient Egypt. They became farmers, ranchers and cowboys.

## FOCUS TASK

### How successful was Republican Reconstruction in the South?

Read these two statements:

- 'Republican reconstruction was a failure.'
  - 'Republican reconstruction was a success.'
- 1 Create a table with two columns using these statements as headings. Now note down the points or examples from the text that support each side.
  - 2 Use your table to write a speech by either:
    - Jefferson Davis (see page 24), who was still alive in 1877, entitled 'Republican reconstruction is a failure'.
    - Or
    - A Republican supporter, entitled 'Republican reconstruction is a success'.

## PRACTICE QUESTION

Describe two reasons why slaves turned to share cropping.

### SOURCE 9

The new town of Nicodemus, established by black Americans in Kansas in 1877.



### SOURCE 10

The Shores family, who settled in Custer County, Nebraska, in 1887.





## FIGURE 11

Immigrants to the United States by decade, to the nearest thousand.

Decade	Immigrants
1841–50	1,713,000
1851–60	2,598,000
1861–70	2,315,000
1871–80	2,812,000
1881–90	5,247,000

## THINK

Study Source 12 carefully.

- 1 What clothes were the Bentley family wearing?
- 2 What sort of house did they live in?
- 3 What tools did they use?
- 4 What work might they have done?
- 5 They are all members of the same family. Can you work out what their relationships might be?
- 6 Look at their faces. What sort of life do you think the Bentleys lived?

## ● The continued settlement of the West

While the Civil War raged there were still some who went West, but this trickle turned into a flood when the war was over, as they came from both victorious North and defeated South.

### The homesteaders

Thousands of people moved onto the Plains – onto land occupied by the Plains Indians. These people sold their homes, left their friends and families and travelled, in some cases for thousands of miles, to settle on the Great Plains.

### Why the homesteaders went west

#### Reason 1: The actions of the US government

The US government recognised the need to populate the West and to help achieve this the Homestead Act was passed in 1862. It was intended to encourage people to settle in the West by allowing each family 160 acres of land. This land was given to them free, provided they lived on it and farmed it for five years. Two later Acts also encouraged settlers. These were:

- **The Timber Culture Act, 1873:** This gave settlers a further 160 acres of free land, provided they planted 40 acres with trees.
- **The Desert Land Act, 1877:** This gave settlers the right to buy 640 acres cheaply in areas where lack of rainfall was a particular problem.

The effect of these three Acts was to make millions of acres of land available for HOMESTEADERS to settle. Thousands of men and women seized this opportunity and became homesteaders.

## SOURCE 12

The Bentley family, homesteaders, proudly photographed outside their sod house in Custer County, Nebraska, in 1887. Remember that when people had their photographs taken at this time they had to keep perfectly still in the same pose for much longer than we do today. So they couldn't smile for the camera, in case they couldn't hold the smile for long enough! Look at the bushes in the photo. They are blurred. This is because they moved in the breeze that must have been blowing at the time.



#### Reason 2: The end of the American Civil War

The end of the Civil War marked a turning point in American history. Thousands of DEMOBILISED soldiers and their families were looking to rebuild their lives. Thousands of newly freed black slaves were looking for new beginnings. The eastern states where they had grown up did not seem to be the best place to do this, so they looked towards the West. They became the homesteaders, cowboys, miners, soldiers and railroad-builders who transformed this area.

#### Reason 3: The building of the transcontinental railroads

The US government had long wanted to build a transcontinental railroad to link east and west. In the 1860s two companies started building the Northern route, one from the east, the other from the west. Eventually they met at Promontory Point in Utah in 1869. This had three main effects: now it was easy for homesteaders to get to the Plains; it was also cheap to buy land, as the railroad companies sold off the land on either side of the line at low prices; and finally the railroad could bring new machinery quickly to the Plains.

So land was cheap, travel was easy and there were plenty of people looking for a new life. The result was a flood of homesteaders onto the Plains.

**FIGURE 13**

Routes of the transcontinental railroads.

**SOURCE 14**

A railroad land sale poster, 1875.



As well as the general reasons, each group of homesteaders had its own special reasons for moving West.

**FIGURE 15**

The 'push' and 'pull' factors that encouraged people to move West.

**PULL FACTORS**

- ← The offer of free land.
- ← The chance of a new start/adventure.
- ← Advertising by the railroad companies and by the territories and states.
- ← Letters home from those who had already gone West, and who were successfully farming, encouraged people to move.

**ENABLING FACTORS**

- ← The early homesteaders travelled by wagon, by riverboat or on foot.
- ← Later homesteaders travelled on the new railroads.
- ← The Indians were cleared from these lands, defeated by the US army and confined to reservations or pushed further west.

**PUSH FACTORS****Europe**

- ← Scandinavians wanted good farming land that was no longer available at home.
- ← English, Germans, Irish, Russians and Scots were looking to escape from poverty and unemployment at home.
- ← Jews and other religious groups, such as the Amish and Mennonites, were looking to escape from religious persecution at home.
- ← Thousands of EMIGRANTS left Europe to settle in Iowa, Minnesota and the Dakotas.

**The eastern states**

- ← Ex-soldiers from both sides in the Civil War saw a lack of opportunity when they returned to their homes.
- ← Other easterners wanted farming land or opportunities to get on that were no longer available in the settled eastern states.

**The Southern states**

- ← The after-effects of the Civil War: black ex-slaves were persecuted in the South and many Southerners lost their land and income.
- ← Serious economic problems, when crops failed and people went hungry.
- ← Ex-slaves, Exodusters, from the Southern states mainly went to Kansas. In 1879, the peak year of migration, up to 40,000 went west.



## The problems of living on the Great Plains

The journey of the homesteaders to their new farms might not have been quite as demanding as that of the early pioneers but once they arrived they faced significant problems.

### Water shortages

In many places water was scarce. In such places it was difficult for people to keep either themselves or their clothing clean.

### Extremes of weather

The extreme weather, hot in summer and cold in winter, with a low rainfall, made life on the Great Plains very uncomfortable. The nomadic Indians moved with the seasons but the homesteaders remained rooted on one spot. Many grew to hate the fierce winds that howled around their houses for days on end.

### Fuel

There was no wood to burn for heating and cooking. Instead homesteaders used buffalo or cow 'chips' – dried dung.

### Building materials

Homesteaders who settled in river valleys might be able to use wood for building homes, and wood was also transported from the East to the small number who could afford it. But for the vast majority the only material available for house-building was earth. Blocks of earth (sods) were cut out by hand or with a special plough. These were then used as building bricks to construct the house walls. Windows and doors were fitted. Then the house was roofed with boards, grass and more sods. Finally, the outside walls were plastered with clay-like mud. Such houses were very cheap to build. They could be warm in winter and cool in summer if well-built but it was very difficult to stop water leaking in when it rained.

### Dirt and disease

SOD HOUSES with earth floors, walls and roofs were very difficult to keep clean. They harboured all sorts of pests, such as bed bugs, fleas, mice and snakes. Living in such conditions it was difficult for people to keep clean, especially where a shortage of water was also a problem. It was all too easy for disease to develop and illness was common among homesteaders, particularly children.

## The problems of farming on the Plains

To simply live on the Plains the homesteaders overcame many problems but there were more problems to be surmounted if they were to farm successfully.

### SOURCE 16

A woman collecting cattle chips for fuel in Kansas in the 1880s.



### SOURCE 17

A family outside their sod house in Nebraska, c.1890.



### Water shortages

The shortage of water was a major problem. It could lead to the total failure of crops. This would lead in turn to bankruptcy or starvation. For the Mormons of Salt Lake City, irrigation was a solution but out on the Great Plains there were no rivers or lakes from which to draw water. Wells were a possible solution but digging a well was expensive and gave no guarantee of finding water.



## Extremes of weather

The extremes of weather were a major problem. Drought in summer and cold in winter could damage or destroy crops. In Kansas, for example, no rain fell between January 1859 and November 1860.

## Ploughing

The Great Plains had never been farmed before. So the first task for the homesteader was to plough the land. The grasses had dense, tangled roots and the early cast-iron ploughs needed constant repairs. Ploughing was a slow, back-breaking task.

## Protecting crops

There was no wood for fencing so there was nothing to protect growing crops from buffalo or straying cattle. Nor was it possible to mark land boundaries clearly, and this could lead to disputes.

## Growing crops

The homesteaders planted the crops they had always grown, such as maize and soft winter and spring wheats. These were not well suited to the weather conditions on the Great Plains.

## Natural hazards

In the summer, when the grass was so dry, it was easy for prairie fires to start. If they were too big for the people to fight then their crops would be destroyed. The plagues of grasshoppers which swept across the Plains in 1871, 1874 and 1875 were another natural hazard. The insects descended on the land in columns 240 km wide and 160 km long. Hundred-acre cornfields vanished in a few hours.

## Living and farming on the Great Plains: solutions to problems

Despite the many problems of living and farming on the Great Plains, the majority of homesteaders stayed on after their first year. Not all of them were successful. One crucial factor was the exact location of their land. Some parts of the Great Plains were less fertile than others. A second factor was the adaptability of homesteaders. The Great Plains required them to adapt their farming to the conditions. Those who did not adapt failed. A third factor outside their control was the weather. The severe droughts of the 1870s and 1880s forced thousands into bankruptcy. For example, approximately 11,000 homesteads were REPOSSESSED in Kansas between 1889 and 1893. Those who survived and prospered were helped by a number of inventions and developments.

## Windmills

As you have already seen, a lack of water was a major problem on the Great Plains. There were two solutions to this. The first was developed in 1874, when Daniel Halliday invented a self-governing windmill: it always kept in line with the wind so that it did not get damaged by the strong winds. This windmill could be used to pump water from underground. First, a high-powered drill was used to get down to the water. Then the wind pump was fitted. It would pump water night and day for people to use in their homes and to irrigate their crops.

## FOCUS TASK

### How successful were the homesteaders at settling on the Plains?

- 1 Create your own large copy of the following table:

	Problems	Solutions
Homesteaders living on the Plains		
Homesteaders farming on the Plains		

- 2 Begin by listing the problems faced by homesteaders living on the Plains and those faced by homesteaders working on the Plains.
- 3 Now write a few words to give further explanation where it is needed.
- 4 Next complete the third column by matching the solutions to the problems.
- 5 Were there any problems for which there was no solution?
- 6 Now highlight those solutions that were helped by the building of the railroads.

## PRACTICE QUESTION

In what ways were the lives of homesteaders on the Great Plains affected by the arrival of the railroads? Explain your answer.

### Dry farming

The second solution was dry farming. Farmers ploughed their land when there had been heavy rain or snow. This left a thin layer of dust over the surface, which trapped and preserved the moisture in the soil. The land was then left fallow ready for the following year's crop.

### Growing a surplus

In their early years on the Great Plains homesteaders would plough enough land to grow food to feed their family. In later years they could plough more land and grow more crops. This would produce a surplus that they could sell. With this money they could buy better equipment and increase their surplus.

### Hard winter wheat

Homesteaders recognised that wheat was a more suitable crop than corn. Those who settled on the high Plains realised that it was better to keep animals – sheep and cattle – rather than just to grow crops.

Russian Mennonite immigrants introduced hard winter wheat (Turkey Red wheat). The climatic conditions on the Great Plains were similar to those on the Russian steppes, so these crops flourished and homesteaders who grew it were successful. The Russians accidentally brought Russian weeds mixed in with the wheat seed. These also flourished, notably the tumbleweed (Russian thistle) seen in so many Westerns.

### Barbed wire

In 1874 Joseph Glidden invented barbed wire. This provided a cheap and effective solution to the problem of fencing and protecting crops.

### Sod-buster

John Deere invented a particularly strong plough which could deal with the tough grass roots. This was known as a 'sod-buster', the nickname sometimes given to homesteaders by the cowboys.

### Other machinery

From the 1880s other new farming machinery was developed. This included reapers, binders and threshers. These could be easily transported by railroad to the Great Plains and were affordable. The machines increased the area that a homesteader could manage to farm and were well suited to the wide open spaces of the Great Plains.

### Hard work

By the 1890s a combination of all these inventions and developments had helped the homesteaders to solve the problems of farming on the Great Plains. The Great Plains became a fertile area for wheat production and the majority of homesteaders prospered. Their success can be explained by their determination, hard work and adaptability. They were supported by the railroads which took them there, brought them equipment and carried their crops to market.

## ● The resolution of the ‘Indian problem’ after 1865

The movement of homesteaders onto the Plains had an increasing impact on the Plains Indians. So too did the cattle drives that had started at the end of the Civil War northwards from Texas to the new railroads. All this disrupted the buffalo herd migration routes and led to increasing tension. The influx of people meant that the small reservations policy that underlay the second Fort Laramie Treaty 1868 was destined to fail. This was because:

- not all Plains Indian bands had ever agreed to live on the reservations
- whenever there was a conflict between preserving the Indian reservations and the interests of cattle drivers, railroad engineers, miners or settlers, the United States government favoured the latter group.

## Attitudes to the Native Americans

Since the forced removal of the eastern Indian Nations to Indian territory, the view of the United States government had changed from seeing the Plains Indians as nations to be negotiated with on equal terms, to simply Americans subject to the rule of the United States government. Meanwhile the old debate between negotiators and exterminators still continued.

### The US army

With the end of the Civil War the US army was better prepared to campaign in the West.

- **New troops:** Many seasoned troops became available so the army had far superior numbers and if it lost men they could be quickly replaced. Not so the Indians.
- **Forts:** The army benefited from the network of forts built to protect the overland routes and to keep watch over reservations. These served as a base from which soldiers could patrol and watch. Although Plains Indians attacked forts on a number of occasions, they never managed to capture one. The combination of men and artillery, sometimes protected by walls, was too strong.
- **‘TOTAL WAR’:** Officers also brought new strategies to the Indian Wars – the first was that of ‘total war’. This had been successfully used by Generals Sherman and Sheridan during the Civil War. ‘Total war’ meant waging war against a whole enemy population, not just against the fighting troops. It did not mean the killing of women and children. Instead it meant destroying all the food, shelter, clothing, possessions and animals of the Plains Indians. This left them with a choice between starvation, or else going into the reservation and surrendering. This strategy demoralised the Plains Indians and strengthened the arguments of those in favour of peace.
- **Winter campaigns:** The second strategy was that of winter campaigns. With the heavy snow and sub-zero temperatures on the Plains it was the time of year when the Plains Indians needed to stay in one place and conserve food supplies and the strength of their ponies. Defeat at such a time could be devastating. The US army were able to campaign in the winter months.

The combination of all four factors ensured that the army would be able to defeat the Plains Indians if war broke out, and break out it did for two reasons. The first was associated with the new railroads and the buffalo, and the second was gold again.

### FACTFILE

#### Terminology

In our period 1840–95, the Plains Indians were either known as Plains Indians, or by the name of their individual nations such as the Sioux. Today historians use the term Native Americans or First Nations, while their descendants still know themselves by their own names, e.g. the Sioux call themselves the Lakota.

### FACTFILE

#### The biggest problem facing the US army

The biggest problem faced by the US army was forcing the Indians to fight. If a village was attacked the warriors would fight a delaying action until the women and children were taken away to safety. Then they too would retreat. In winter this was harder and abandoning the village would leave them without shelter.

### ACTIVITY

Rank the following four factors why the US army could defeat the Plains Indians in war, in order of importance:

- The end of the Civil War
- Forts
- The strategy of total war
- Winter campaigns.

Write a paragraph to explain which of the four you consider to be the most important. You should also refer to the other factors.



### SOURCE 18

Figures for buffalo hides shipped east by railroads, 1872–74. These figures are from Colonel Dodge's book, *Hunting Grounds of the Great West*.

Year	Hides carried
1872	497,163
1873	754,329
1874	126,867

### THINK

- 1 Study Source 18. What pattern can you see in these figures?
- 2 How would you explain this pattern?
- 3 Read Sources 19 and 20. Which key point do Tall Bull and General Sheridan agree on?

## War on the Southern plains

As the new railroads were constructed across the Plains their workforce needed feeding and buffalo hunters were employed. This disrupted buffalo herd movements but a new development in 1871 led to a dramatic increase in buffalo hunting. This was the discovery by an eastern tannery of a process to produce high-quality leather from buffalo hides. The price of buffalo hides shot up and now that the railroads had reached the Great Plains the hides could easily be transported back east to the tanning industry. The buffalo hunting industry was centred on Dodge City and Fort Worth. Hunters flooded onto the Southern Plains, shooting buffalo for their hides. The carcasses were left to rot.

The hunting method used could not have been more different from that of the Indians, who only killed what they could use. These hunters were armed with powerful long-range rifles. They would take up a position some distance from the buffalo and first shoot the leading animal. They would then shoot individual animals one at a time. If each shot killed the buffalo instantly then the rest of the group would not be alarmed and the hunter could stay in position and continue the killing. This was known as a stand. By the end of 1875 the Southern buffalo herd was destroyed.

The Indians who depended upon the buffalo for their survival were not blind to what was happening. In the summer of 1874, in an attempt to force the hunters from the Southern Plains before the last of the herds vanished, 700 Arapahos, Cheyennes, Comanches and Kiowas attacked the buffalo hunters based near Adobe Walls. The Indians launched repeated attacks against the settlement, but they were no match for the defending hunters with their powerful buffalo guns.

### SOURCE 19

Tall Bull, a Cheyenne (dog soldier) chief, talking to General Winfield Scott Hancock, 1867.

*The buffalo are diminishing fast. The antelope, that were plenty a few years ago, they are now thin. When they shall all die we shall be hungry; we shall want something to eat, and we will be compelled to come into the fort.*

### PRACTICE QUESTION

In what ways did the destruction of the buffalo affect the lives of the Plains Indians?

Explain your answer.

### SOURCE 20

General Philip H. Sheridan in a speech to the Texas legislature in 1873.

*These men [the buffalo hunters] have done more in the last two years, and will do more in the next year to settle the vexed Indian question, than the entire regular army has done in the last 30 years. They are destroying the Indians' food supply ... Send them powder and lead if you will; but for the sake of a lasting peace, let them kill, skin and sell until the buffalos are exterminated.*

## The Great Sioux War, 1876–77

The destruction of the buffalo affected the Sioux too but it was the discovery of gold in the Black Hills that triggered the most serious fighting. In 1874 an expedition of the Seventh Cavalry led by George Armstrong Custer was sent into the Black Hills. They were there to protect railway surveyors and to find out if there was gold in the area. This expedition broke the Fort Laramie Treaty signed six years earlier.

Custer reported that the hills were filled with gold 'from the grassroots down' and from that moment the Black Hills were invaded by miners. In 1875 General Crook found over 1,000 miners there. The US army was unable to prevent this influx of miners, and the government was unwilling to do so. Some miners were attacked by the Sioux.

The government then made an offer of \$6,000,000 to buy the Black Hills or \$400,000 a year for the mineral rights. This was a ridiculous offer to the Sioux: to them the Black Hills were sacred as the place where their nation began. The government offer was rejected. At this point, relations between the Sioux and the government were very poor.

In December 1875 all Sioux were ordered to return to their reservation. In winter it was impossible for them to obey this order even if they wished to. There were approximately 7,000 Indians with Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse in the Powder River country, mainly Sioux but also Arapaho and Cheyenne. This number shows two things: the strength of the Indians' anger over the Black Hills, and Sitting Bull's great reputation as a leader. He had been consistently hostile to outside authorities and refused to live on the reservation. Many Sioux had turned to his leadership.

### Sheridan's plan

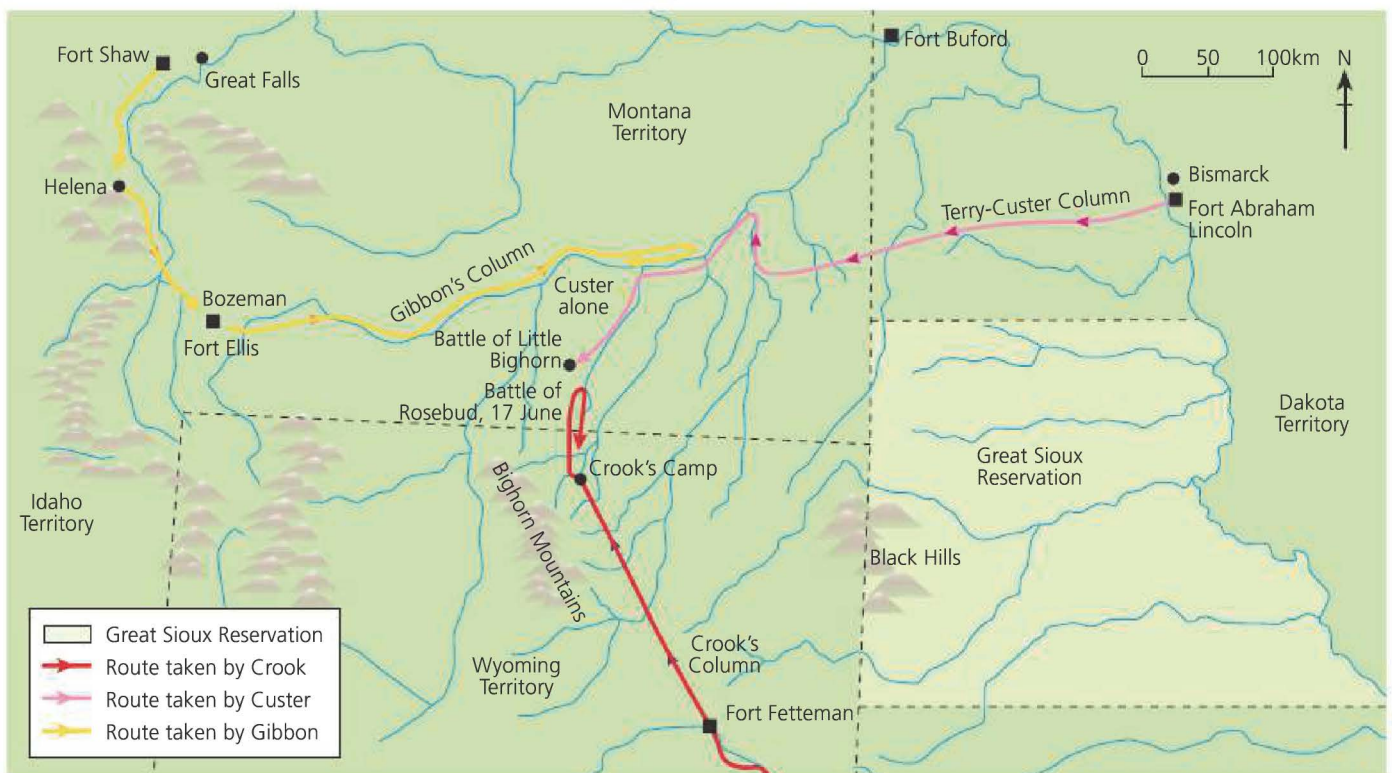
By February 1876 the army was instructed to treat all Indians outside the reservation as hostile. General Philip Sheridan planned and ordered a three-pronged campaign. It involved three columns co-ordinating their movements. General George Crook would lead a column of 1,049 cavalry and infantry northwards from Fort Fetterman. Colonel Gibbon would lead a column of 450 infantry eastwards from Fort Shaw. General Terry, accompanied by Custer, would lead a column of 1,000 cavalry, infantry and GATLING GUNS westwards from Fort Abraham Lincoln. The three would trap the Indians between them.

#### THINK

Study Figure 21. Roughly how far apart are the three columns at the start of the campaign? What problems might this lead to?

**FIGURE 21**

A map showing the plan of General Sheridan's campaign.



## The plan's weaknesses

This plan had two major weaknesses. First, there was no effective liaison between Terry and Crook. Second, there was no serious attempt to find out how many Indians they might be facing. It was wrongly assumed that the Indians would number approximately 800 warriors, which any one of the three columns could have defeated. This estimate was based upon information from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, whose job it was to supervise the Sioux reservation.

## The Battle of the Rosebud

The campaign started well. However, on 17 June 1876 it began to go wrong. General Crook's column was halted for a coffee break on the Rosebud Creek. While the officers were playing a game of whist, Crazy Horse led a full-frontal attack with about 1,500 warriors. By the end of the day Crook had lost 28 men killed and 63 wounded, and had fired 25,000 rounds of ammunition. He retreated southwards towards Fort Fetterman.

Meanwhile, Crazy Horse took his forces to join Sitting Bull on the Little Bighorn. His losses were 36 killed and 63 wounded. These were terribly high casualties for the Sioux.

## Terry divided his forces

Four days later Gibbon and Terry joined forces on the Yellowstone River. General Terry again divided his forces. This time the infantry was to march along the Yellowstone towards the Little Bighorn. Custer was ordered to follow the Indian trail found by Major Reno – which was, in fact, the trail left by Crazy Horse – and approach the Little Bighorn from the south. He was offered 180 extra men from the Second Cavalry and Gatling guns, but refused them.

Custer rode south but then deliberately disobeyed orders. Instead of circling the Wolf Mountains he rode straight across them. By marching through the night and driving his men and horses hard he succeeded in arriving at the Little Bighorn a day early. The Indians camped there were not expecting an attack. But Custer's men and their horses were exhausted.

### THINK

- 1 Do Sources 22, 23 and 24 all have the same view of Custer?
- 2 What faults do they accuse him of having?

### SOURCE 22

Private Theodore Ewert, Seventh Cavalry.

*The hardships and danger to his [Custer's] men, as well as the probable loss of life were worthy of but little consideration when dim visions of a star [indication of rank] floated before our Lieutenant Colonel.*

### SOURCE 23

Corporal Jacob Horner, Seventh Cavalry.

*He [Custer] was too hard on the men and horses. He changed his mind too often. He was always right. He never conferred enough with his officers. When he got a notion, we had to go.*

### SOURCE 24

Major Marcus Reno, Seventh Cavalry.

*Well sir, I had known General Custer a long time and I had no confidence in his ability as a soldier.*



## The Battle of the Little Bighorn, 1876

On the afternoon of 25 June Custer reached the camp of Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse on the Little Bighorn. Despite the warnings of his scouts he decided to attack. One scout, Mitch Bouyer, warned, 'If we go in there we will never come out.' Custer may have been afraid that the Indians would escape. He wanted a glorious victory. He supposedly said: 'The largest Indian camp on the North American continent is ahead and I am going to attack it.'

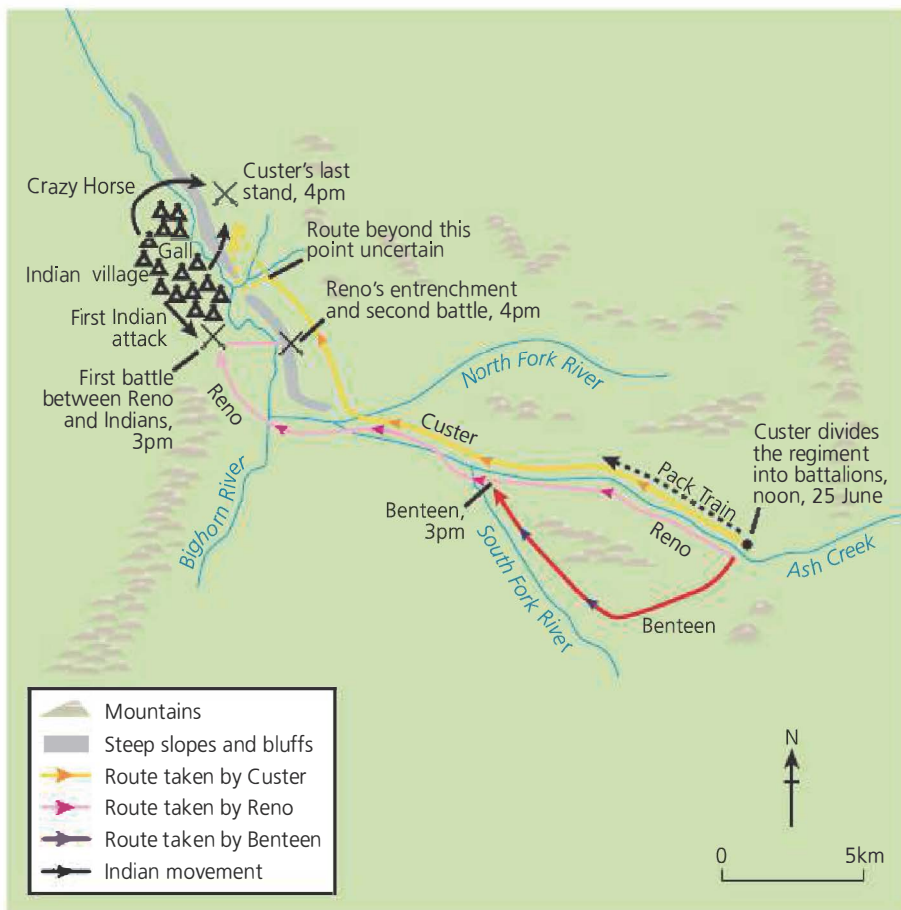
Having taken the decision to attack, Custer then split his forces. He sent Major Reno with 125 men to attack the southern end of the Indian camp. Captain Benteen, with 125 men, was sent to the south. Captain McDougall took charge of B Company and the pack train. Custer himself took 260 men further north to cross the river to attack the Indian camp.

Major Reno's attack was stopped by the Sioux and he retreated across the river, where he took up a defensive position. Reno was then joined by Benteen and his men. For the rest of the day they were surrounded and suffered many casualties. They had received an order from Custer to support him but did not do so. In the enquiry that took place after the battle, they argued that they were unable to follow Custer's last order because they were under attack.

What happened to Custer and his men is not clear as there were no survivors from his force. The evidence pieced together from archaeological excavations and the oral accounts of Indians indicates that Custer failed to cross the river. He turned back and made for higher ground but was overwhelmed by Crazy Horse's attack. Without the support of Reno and Benteen his force was totally outnumbered. Some of Custer's men may have panicked and tried to surrender or run away. Others fought together to the end. The only survivor was Curley, a Crow Indian scout, who disguised himself as a Sioux warrior.

**FIGURE 25**

A map showing the events of the Battle of the Little Bighorn.



### PROFILE

#### George Armstrong Custer



- Born 5 December 1839 in New Rumley, Ohio.
- Attended West Point Military Academy and on graduating went straight into the Union army.
- Served with distinction during the Civil War and went into the army in the West when it ended.
- Highly ambitious and controversial figure.
- Defeated Cheyenne at Battle of Washita, although some now view this as an attack on a village rather than a battle. He split his forces and some were cut off and killed
- Defeated and killed at the Battle of the Little Bighorn on 25 June 1876.

The Indians had the advantage of vastly superior numbers, 2,000 against 600. Some of them were better armed than the cavalymen. These warriors had Winchester repeating rifles, which had been supplied to them by traders, while the cavalymen were armed with Springfield single-shot rifles. While half the Indian forces defended their camp, Crazy Horse led the rest to surround Custer and his men. For Indians to fight a pitched battle was entirely new. Their normal tactic was to fight a delaying action while the women and children escaped and then withdraw themselves. This change reflected the leadership qualities of Crazy Horse.

### ACTIVITY

#### Who was responsible for the defeat of the US army at the Battle of the Little Bighorn?

From the evidence on pages 42–46 write a paragraph on each of the following to explain how their actions contributed to the defeat of the US army at the Battle of the Little Bighorn:

- Custer
- His subordinates Reno and Benteen
- His superiors Terry, Crook and Sheridan
- The Sioux and their allies
- Crazy Horse.

Then write a final paragraph explaining which person or persons you think were most responsible for the defeat.

### The aftermath

News of the defeat reached the rest of America on 4 July – the hundredth anniversary of the USA's independence. The public reaction was one of great shock. No effort was spared in supporting the army campaign that followed. Two new forts were built on the Yellowstone River and 2,500 reinforcements were sent west.

After the Battle of the Little Bighorn, the Indians split up into their bands. These bands were followed and attacked throughout the autumn and winter. One by one, the bands gave in and returned to the reservation. By the autumn most were back. On 5 May 1877, Crazy Horse and his followers rode into the reservation and surrendered. The day before, Sitting Bull and his followers had escaped over the border into Canada. The armed resistance of the Sioux was over.

With the Sioux defeated and the Northern Pacific Railroad having reached Bismarck, the destruction of the Northern buffalo herd began. By 1882 an estimated 5,000 hunters and skinners were at work, and by 1883 the Northern herd was destroyed.

Thereafter the government followed a deliberate policy of destroying all aspects of Indian culture. Through a series of laws the Sioux were forced to sell the Black Hills, the Powder River country and the Bighorn Mountains and were put under military rule. Eventually the reservation itself was split up into smaller reservations which split up the Sioux into smaller groups. Finally, their horses and weapons were taken. Never again were the Sioux able to fight in any great numbers against the army.

At first, rations on the reservations were given to the chiefs to distribute. Later, this policy was changed. Heads of families were encouraged to collect their own rations. This weakened the political power and authority of chiefs. In 1885 the government took control of all legal matters. Indians had lost any power to judge and punish members of their bands.

### THINK

After studying both the battle and its aftermath do you think the Battle of the Little Bighorn should be seen as an Indian victory or defeat?

## The Dawes General Allotment Act, 1887

In 1887 the DAWES GENERAL ALLOTMENT ACT was passed. This allowed the communal reservation lands to be broken up into individual plots. This was intended to completely destroy the power of chiefs and the tribal structure. Individual Indians who accepted a plot would become land-owning farmers and citizens of the United States. They would no longer need to go to their chiefs, or even see them, as they became self-sufficient. The Act also allowed any land left over to be sold to non-Indian farmers. It was another opportunity for land-grabbers to make money.

The ban on the Sioux leaving their reservations to hunt or make war on their enemies destroyed the economic foundations of their society. There was no buffalo meat for food, no buffalo hides for *tipis*, clothing and 97 other uses; and no opportunity to increase their wealth by stealing horses.

Feasts, dances and ceremonies, such as the Sun Dance, were banned. The power of the medicine men was undermined. There was little need for young men to seek visions to give them power in war and in the buffalo hunt. This spiritual 'gap' was then filled by the arrival of Christian missionaries.

Children, girls and boys, were taken from their parents and sent away to boarding school. There they were to be prepared for life in 'the white man's world'. One boarding-school founder defined his aim as to 'kill the Indian in him and save the man'. Children in the schools were not allowed to speak their own language and were punished if they did. They lived under military conditions and were taught to have no respect for their traditional way of life. By 1887, 2,020 Indian children were in the 117 boarding schools and 2,500 in the 110 day schools. The Sioux were unable to prevent their children being taken. If they resisted their rations were stopped until they had to give in. When the children returned from boarding school they often found that they fitted neither the Sioux world nor the world of other Americans.

### SOURCE 26

Three Sioux boys at the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania. The boys are photographed as new arrivals and again six months later.



### THINK

Study Source 26. Look at the before and after photographs. What would have been the likely reaction of the boys' family to the changes? What would have been the likely reaction of the school's founder?

### PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- 1 Describe two ways in which the Dawes Act contributed to the destruction of Plains Indian society.
- 2 Which of the following was the more important reason for the destruction of the Plains Indians way of life on the reservations?
  - Banning feasts, dances and ceremonies
  - Forcing children to be sent away to boarding schools.

Explain your answer with reference to both reasons.



## SOURCE 27

### Black Elk on Wounded Knee.

*When I look back now from this high hill of my old age, I can still see the butchered women and children lying heaped and scattered all along the crooked ditch as plain as I saw them with eyes still young. And I can see something else died there in that bloody mud, and was buried in the blizzard. A people's dream died there. It was a beautiful dream. The Nation's hoop is broken and scattered. There is no centre any longer and the sacred tree is dead.*

## PROFILE

### Sitting Bull



- Born at Grand River, South Dakota, in around 1834.
- He became an important chief of the Sioux after Red Cloud made peace in 1868.
- Refused to live on the Great Sioux Reservation.
- After the Battle of the Little Bighorn he led his followers to safety in Canada.
- By 1881 hunger forced him and his followers to return to live on the reservation. He was still widely respected among the Sioux.
- On his return from Canada he took part in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show for a while but returned to the reservation when there was a government attempt to take more Sioux lands.
- He became involved in the Ghost Dance Movement and was shot and killed by Indian police sent to arrest him on 15 December 1890.

## The Battle of Wounded Knee

The effect of all these measures was to damage tribal structures and to weaken the Indians' self-belief. All the problems on the reservations led to an atmosphere of despair, and it was in that atmosphere that the final tragedy was played out. Just before dawn on New Year's Day 1889, a Paiute holy man called Wovoka received a vision. An Indian Messiah was coming. If the Indians remained peaceful and danced the Ghost Dance, then a new world would come. All the whites would disappear, the buffalo would return and all the dead Indians would come back to life. This Ghost Dance religion spread rapidly across the reservations in the West and reached the Sioux in 1890. It coincided with a time of great hunger on the reservations. The Sioux rations had been cut by the government and the drought in the summer of 1890 led their crops to fail. In this climate of hunger and despair the Ghost Dance held great appeal and it spread quickly among the Sioux.

The Indian agents were seriously worried. They tried to ban the Ghost Dance. When that failed they called in the army to help. The army treated it as a war situation. An attempt by Sioux Indian police was made to arrest Sitting Bull because of his involvement. His followers tried to prevent this, a scuffle broke out and Sitting Bull was shot dead by one of the Sioux policeman. Many of his followers fled to join the band of Big Foot, another of the chiefs leading the dance, whom the army were also moving to arrest.

On 28 December soldiers of the Seventh Cavalry caught up with Big Foot and his band. They were then taken under guard to camp at Wounded Knee. Next morning the soldiers obeying orders moved to disarm the Sioux. At least one Sioux warrior resisted and in the confusion that followed firing started. Were the Seventh Cavalry looking for a chance to revenge the Little Bighorn? Regardless of who was to blame, the soldiers were ready for trouble. They opened fire with repeating rifles and four Hotchkiss cannon. By the time the firing stopped 146 Indians and 25 soldiers were dead. The Indian dead were 102 adult men and women, 24 old men, 7 old women, 6 boys aged between five and eight years and 7 babies under the age of two. As one soldier said, 'It was a thing to melt the heart of a man, if it was not stone, to see those little children with their bodies shot to pieces.' Afterwards, the many Indian wounded were taken to the agency church. This awful massacre marked the end of the Plains Wars.

## The end of the Indian Wars

Following the ending of the Indian Wars the western territories were settled. Once their governments were organised they were able to apply to join the Union. By 1890 Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Washington, Idaho and Wyoming had all achieved statehood. Utah would have qualified for admission too but for the failure to make polygamy illegal there.

In 1889, the federal government opened up 2 million acres in Oklahoma for settlement. This was reservation land that had been occupied by the Creek and Seminole Indian nations. Before the opening date, many settlers, known as 'Sooners' because they were too soon, tried to sneak across the boundary to claim the best sites. Most were removed by the army, showing this could be done peacefully if the federal government possessed the will. At noon on 22 April 1889, a starting gun signalled that the territory was open for settlement. An estimated 50,000 settlers crossed the boundary, racing to claim the best land. By the end of the year Oklahoma had a population of 60,000.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

**Interpretation A** *Custer's Last Stand*, a painting completed by Edgar Paxson in 1893 after years of research.



**Interpretation B** *Here Fell Custer*, a painting by Eric von Schmidt in 1976 based upon years of research and used by the US National Park service on their battlefield information leaflet.



- 1 How does Interpretation A differ from Interpretation B in its portrayal of the Battle of the Little Bighorn?  
Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B.
- 2 Why might the painters of Interpretations A and B have painted different interpretations of the Battle of the Little Bighorn?  
Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your own contextual knowledge.
- 3 Which interpretation do you find more convincing of the Battle of the Little Bighorn?  
Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your own contextual knowledge.



## The closing of the frontier

In 1890, the US Census Bureau announced the end of the frontier. There was no longer a frontier line in the West. Nor were there any large areas of unsettled land. In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner wrote an influential essay, 'The Significance of the Frontier in American History'. He claimed that American history had been a continual process of expansion and settlement of a series of 'wests': the west beyond the Atlantic Coast, over the Appalachian Mountains, the Mississippi Valley, onto the Great Plains and across the Rocky Mountains to the far west. He claimed that this had a great influence on the character of the American people. What Turner did not write about though was the experience of the Native Americans confined to reservations or those Hispanic Americans who had once lived in Mexico. Nor did he discuss the changes for African Americans. In 1895 all of these groups still had frontiers to cross.

### FOCUS TASK

#### Which factors explain the resolution of the 'Indian problem'?

The resolution of the 'Indian problem' involved their military defeat, confinement to reservations and the destruction of their way of life.

- 1 Place each one of the following factors which played a part in this on a hexagon card. Write a brief summary on the back of each card.
  - US government policy
  - Manifest Destiny
  - Gold
  - The development of homesteading
  - The transcontinental railroads
  - The end of the American Civil War
  - The US army
  - Indian society and organisation
  - Indian tactics and weapons
  - The destruction of the buffalo
  - Reservations
  - Sioux beliefs about land
  - Total war
  - The Dawes Act.
- 2 Now arrange the factor hexagon cards until they fit together into the best explanation of how this happened.

### KEY WORDS

Make sure you know what these terms mean and are able to define them confidently:

- Civil war
- Congress
- Conscription
- The Dawes Act
- Exodusters
- Federal
- Fort Laramie Treaty
- Forty-niner
- Immigration
- Ku Klux Klan
- Manifest Destiny
- Mormon
- Nation
- New Deal
- Perpetual Emigrating Fund
- President
- Reconstruction
- Reservation
- Settler
- Slavery
- Sod house
- State
- Territory
- Total War
- Veto
- Vigilante

### TOPIC SUMMARY

#### Consolidation: Forging the nation

- The end of the Civil War in 1865 was a turning point in American history.
- After the Civil War a long process of reconstruction in the South took place.
- Black equality was not achieved due to the re-establishment of conservative white rule by 1877 in all Southern states and the failure of the federal government to fully enforce measures.
- The Indian Wars ending in 1877 saw the Plains Indians confined to reservations, the buffalo herds gone, and their way of life destroyed by government measures such as the Dawes Act of 1887.
- Meanwhile the population of the United States was swelled by massive immigration. Fourteen million people arrived between 1840 and 1890.
- Thousands flooded onto the Great Plains as homesteaders, encouraged by government legislation. There they solved the problems of living and farming and as their population grew the western territories became states and were admitted to the Union.
- By 1890 the US Census could announce that the frontier was closed.



# ASSESSMENT FOCUS

Your exam will include six questions on this topic. The question types will be the same every year, but the questions could be on any content from the specification, so you need to know it all!

We have provided one example of each kind of question. For questions based on interpretations we have used interpretations that you have already come across in this chapter. We have analysed each of the questions to highlight what you are being asked to do and written a sample answer with comments on how it could be improved.

## Key

### Focus words

### Command words

### Interpretation/knowledge reminder words

Read Interpretations A and B and then answer questions 1–3. Interpretation A is Interpretation A, page 25. Interpretation B is Interpretation B, page 25.

**Q1 How** does Interpretation B **differ** from Interpretation A about what the conflict between the North and the South was about in the American Civil War?

**Explain** your answer **using Interpretations A and B**.

(4 marks)

### Sample answer

Interpretation A says that the American Civil War was fought over slavery. Interpretation B says that it was fought over the right to withdraw from the Union and that slavery was only a minor issue.

- This answer provides a basic comparison between Interpretations A and B, but it needs to provide more detailed evidence.
- You need to be able to *explain* the differences in the content of the sources.
- *What extra evidence could you add to highlight the differences more completely?*

**Q2 Why** might the authors of Interpretations A and B have **a different interpretation** of what the conflict between the North and South in the American Civil War was about?

**Explain** your answer using **Interpretations A and B** and your **contextual knowledge**.

(4 marks)

### Sample answer

Interpretation A comes from a book written by a man who was a slave. Interpretation B is taken from the memoirs of the President of the Confederacy who is bound to be biased.

- This answer provides a good basis for development, but it would benefit from more analysis of the provenance. For example, you could explain how the impact of the Civil War on the two men's lives were so different, one freed from slavery and the other driven from political office, and how this would be likely to create differences. So make sure you think about the writers' viewpoints.
- Also think about the purpose of Interpretation B. This was written many years after the Civil War ended, after the end of Southern Reconstruction too, and Davis wanted to justify his actions.
- *Write two sentences for each source on the provenance of each. You should focus on the purpose and attitudes of the two authors.*

**Q3 Which** interpretation do you find **more convincing** about what the conflict between the North and the South in the American Civil War was about?

**Explain** your answer using **Interpretations A and B** and your **contextual knowledge**.

(8 marks)

### Sample answer

Interpretation A is right to say that the American Civil War was a war over slavery and certainly that is how many Americans would have viewed it by the end of the century. On the other hand, in Interpretation B, while the writer downplays slavery as a minor issue, he does have a point. For many people in the Confederacy it was a war to defend the power of the individual states against their being taken over by the federal government.

However, after Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 it certainly did become a war fought for the abolition of slavery. So Interpretation A is more convincing as an explanation.

- This answer provides a basic analysis of the two interpretations through the use of some factual knowledge. Ideally you could extend it further to argue in more depth.
- However, it is important that the knowledge is used as part of the analysis of the content of the source, rather than being 'free-standing' as 'what I know about the topic'.
- *Think about the tone and language of each source. What words and phrases could you use to describe them? Does one seem more objective than the other?*

**Q4 Describe two** problems faced by the Mormons in settling at **Salt Lake**.  
(4 marks)

**Sample answer**

- The Mormons faced the problem of a lack of water when they arrived in the area of the Great Salt Lake under their leader Brigham Young. They also had to decide how to divide up the land.

**Q5 In what ways** were the lives of the Plains Indians affected by the arrival of the railroads on the Great Plains from the **1870s** onwards?

**Explain** your answer. (8 marks)

**Sample answer**

- Plains Indians suffered great changes in their lives from the 1870s onwards. The railroads disturbed the buffalo and brought the buffalo hunters. The railroad companies sold land to the homesteaders who flooded onto Indian lands. The railroads also shipped cattle back east from the cattle ranches. When the Indians were at war with the US army the railroads could quickly bring reinforcements.

**Q6 Which** of the following was the **more important reason** why homesteaders flooded onto the Great Plains in the 1860s and 1870s?

- The ending of the Civil War 1865
- The actions of the US government

**Explain** your answer with reference to **both reasons**. (12 marks)

**Sample answer**

- The end of the Civil War in 1865 was an important point in the settlement of the West. Thousands of soldiers were demobilised. Many of them were unable to settle back into their old lives and they wanted to head west to start a new life.

In the Southern states many ex-slaves wanted an escape from the poverty of share cropping and from prejudice and persecution. They too went west in search of a new life. In the 1880s many of them, the 'Exodusters', went to Kansas.

The end of the Civil War also meant that the capital and labour (including ex-soldiers) were available to build the transcontinental railroads. Railroad companies took prospective settlers out onto the Plains, sold them the land and supported them by bringing the materials they needed to farm successfully.

Finally, the end of the Civil War meant that the civilian militias could be replaced by seasoned soldiers who were able to protect the settlers from attack by the Plains Indians.

On the other hand, the US government played an important part too. The Homestead Act passed in 1862 was deliberately intended to encourage settlement. Each family could claim 160 acres of free land. All they had to do was settle on it, build a home and farm it for five years. Not only did this encourage the ex-soldiers to become homesteaders but also thousands of the immigrants who arrived in the United States of America from Europe. Later Acts, the Timber Culture Act and the Desert Land Act encouraged the settlement of less fertile areas too.

It was also the US government that gave the railroad companies great grants of land to help finance the building of the transcontinental railroads that were so important to the homesteaders.

Therefore, both were important in explaining why homesteaders flooded onto the Great Plains in the 1860s and 1870s. The ending of the Civil War freed up the manpower and money but it was the actions of the government that were crucial. Without the attraction of free land provided by the Homestead Act and the aid of the railroads made possible by government land grants and support, the settlement would not have taken place at anything like the rate it did. Therefore it can be argued that the actions of the US government were more important.

– This brief answer introduces two problems, but they are only stated, and so need to be more fully described.

– List TWO details that you could add to EACH of the two short sentences above in order to make the description more precise for each.

– This answer mentions several aspects of how Plains Indians were affected. However, they could be presented with much more factual detail, rather than just a list.

– Write a list of evidence that could be included to support each of the sentences in the answer.

– This answer evaluates both bullet points in turn. It reaches a judgement based on precise arguments. The relationships between the two bullet points are explored.

– Working backwards, read through the essay again and write out the plan that it must have been based on. You can then look at the plan and see why it was the starting point for this comprehensive answer.

Now write your own answers to the questions on pages 51–52 using the teacher's feedback to help you.

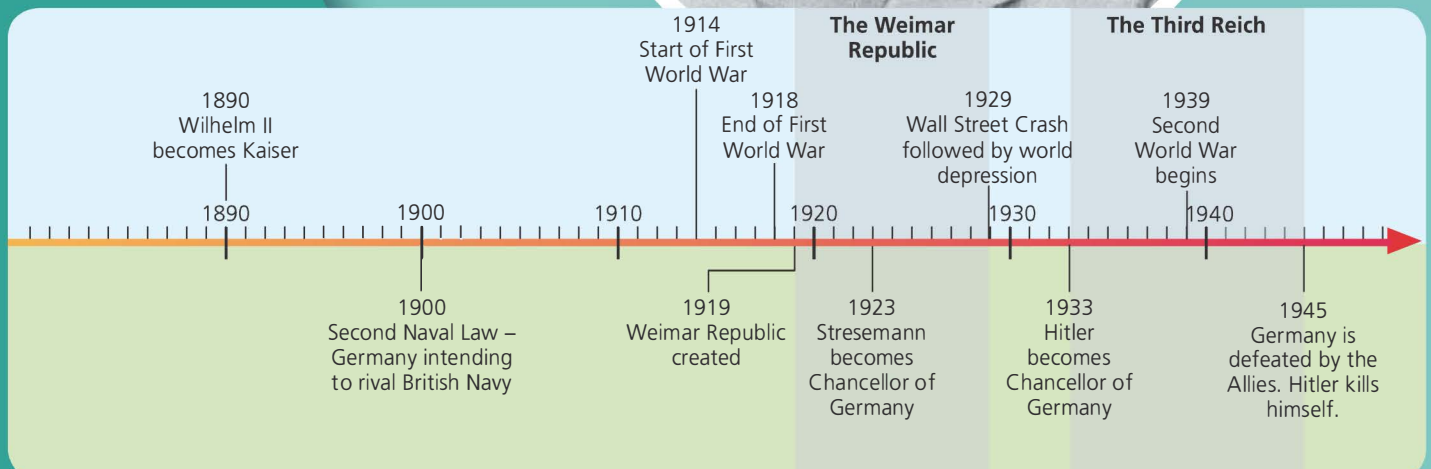
# Germany 1890–1945: Democracy and Dictatorship

2

This period study focuses on the development of Germany during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of democracy and dictatorship – the development and collapse of the Weimar Republic and the rise and fall of Nazi Germany.

You will be studying the following aspects of this development of democracy and dictatorship:

- The political aspects of a changing country, as Germany shifted from the rule of an autocratic Kaiser, to a Republic with a President, and finally to a dictatorship.
- The economic aspects of a country which saw times of progression and depression across the period.
- The social and cultural reflection of Germany's development, in the form of shifting ideas on freedom of expression.
- The role of ideas in influencing change, such as nationalism before the First World War and Nazism between the wars.
- The role of key individuals and groups in shaping change, and the impact the development of Germany had on them, for example, Kaiser Wilhelm II, Stresemann, and Hitler.





## FOCUS

In the quarter-century before the First World War, Germany was ruled by Kaiser Wilhelm II. This was at a time when Germany, as a new nation, was ambitious and keen to increase its power and expand its territory. In 1918 Germany faced the consequences of defeat and in the 1920s a period of attempted recovery.

In this part of the topic you will study the following:

- Kaiser Wilhelm II, the difficulties of ruling Germany and the strength of autocracy by 1914.
- The impact of the First World War and the extent to which Germany was altered by 1918.
- The Weimar Republic: Economic and political challenges and its condition by 1929.

# 2.1 Germany and the growth of dictatorship

## ● Kaiser Wilhelm II and the difficulties of ruling Germany

Germany had only been a united country since 1871. Before that what we call Germany had been made up of several independent states, the most important of which was Prussia.

This new empire was created in 1871 after victory against France in 1870. Berlin, the capital of Prussia, became the capital of the empire. The KAISER (Emperor) had complete control over the appointment of the Chancellor, the chief minister of Germany. The Chancellor had power over policies and appointments and was answerable only to the Kaiser. There was a parliament – the REICHSTAG – but this had very limited power and could be ignored by the Chancellor.

FIGURE 1

The German Empire, 1871.



In the 1870s and 1880s, Otto von Bismarck was Chancellor, and in practice wielded more power than the Kaiser, Wilhelm I. Bismarck had done much to unify the country, by introducing a national coinage, postal service, law system, railway network and army. Bismarck also attempted to assimilate ethnic minority groups within the new empire, such as the Poles in the east, the Danes in the north and the French in Alsace-Lorraine in the west. However, he was less successful in making these other nationalities adopt German IMPERIAL ambitions.

Germany wanted an empire, like Britain, and therefore wanted to expand its territory in Europe and in other continents.

Wilhelm I's son became Kaiser in 1888 at the age of 31. Unlike his father, Kaiser Wilhelm II was determined to control German affairs himself rather than the Chancellor. Indeed, none of his four Chancellors could rival the power that Bismarck had enjoyed. Wilhelm II's youthful optimism seemed to match well the ambitions of the new empire.

However, Wilhelm II's character did not suit his position as Kaiser. He was somewhat unstable in mood and prone to violent rages. It has also been suggested that he was a repressed homosexual. He had been born with a withered left hand and was acutely aware of this defect, especially in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. Historians are not in full agreement about his character, but they all agree that he lacked the ability to govern effectively or command the army.

Kaiser Wilhelm II was determined not to rule Germany in the same way as Bismarck. He wanted Germany to adopt a new course with the focus on its international position and status. He wanted a world policy (*WELTPOLITIK*). He believed that with Germany's industrial growth, rising population and nationalist ambition, it could achieve its 'place in the sun'. He had seen the European powers seize colonies in Africa (the so-called 'Scramble for Africa'), and wanted Germany to join in – to build an overseas empire in Africa and elsewhere, for example in the Far East. To achieve this he believed that Germany needed a navy to match Great Britain's and an army that could defeat all other powers in Europe. Many Germans agreed with him.

## FACTFILE

### Wilhelm II's European relations

A complicating factor in Germany's foreign policy was the inter-relationship of the royal families of Europe. Wilhelm was a grandchild of Queen Victoria, and therefore her eldest son, Bertie, who became Edward VII in 1901, was his uncle. He resented his uncle (a mere heir to the throne!) treating him, not as Kaiser, but just as a nephew. He was a first cousin of Bertie's eldest son who became George V in 1910. He was also a cousin of Nicholas who became Tsar Nicholas II of Russia in 1894 and also a cousin of his wife, Alexandra. He was also related to other royal families in Norway, Spain and Greece. Wilhelm's character did not endear him to many of the royal family members who found him overbearing and arrogant. Nevertheless, Wilhelm stayed on close terms with Queen Victoria, and was at her bedside when she died in January 1901. However, this relationship did not prevent the two countries going to war against each other in 1914.

## SOURCE 2

From a letter to Philip Eulenburg, Wilhelm's close friend, from von Bülow shortly after he became Chancellor in 1900.

*I place my faith increasingly in the Emperor. He is so impressive! He is the most impressive Hohenzollern [family name] who has ever lived. In a manner which I have never seen before, he combines genius – the most genuine and original genius – with the clearest good sense.*

## SOURCE 3

From a secret letter written by Eulenburg to Bülow, during the Kaiser's North Sea cruise in 1903.

*His [Wilhelm's] face is completely distorted by rage ... There can no longer be any question of self-control ... I predict a breakdown of the nerves.*

## SOURCE 4

From *Kaiser Wilhelm II, New Interpretations* by J. G. C. Rohl, 1982.

*There were periods when Wilhelm II became totally obsessed with one idea to such a degree that everything touching upon it even remotely produced in him a violent rage ... It was at this stage, surely, with his utterly relentless pursuit of one goal and angry determination to brook no opposition, that Kaiser Wilhelm's personality had the greatest impact on policy making.*

## THINK

- 1 Study Sources 2–4. For each of the three sources, summarise what is said about the character of Kaiser Wilhelm II.
- 2 In what ways do the sources agree or disagree?

## FACTFILE

### Right-wing political parties

Parties that supported traditional values and the rights of landowners and property owners. They were usually nationalistic and keen to support the expansion of the German Empire.

### Left-wing political parties

Parties that were more concerned with the rights of the workers. They gained most support from the expanding numbers working in German industries.

## The growth of parliamentary government

The Kaiser had extensive powers. He alone had the right to appoint and dismiss the Chancellor and his State Secretaries, completely independently of any views in the Reichstag. Government ministers were answerable only to the Kaiser. No major decision could be taken without the Kaiser's agreement.

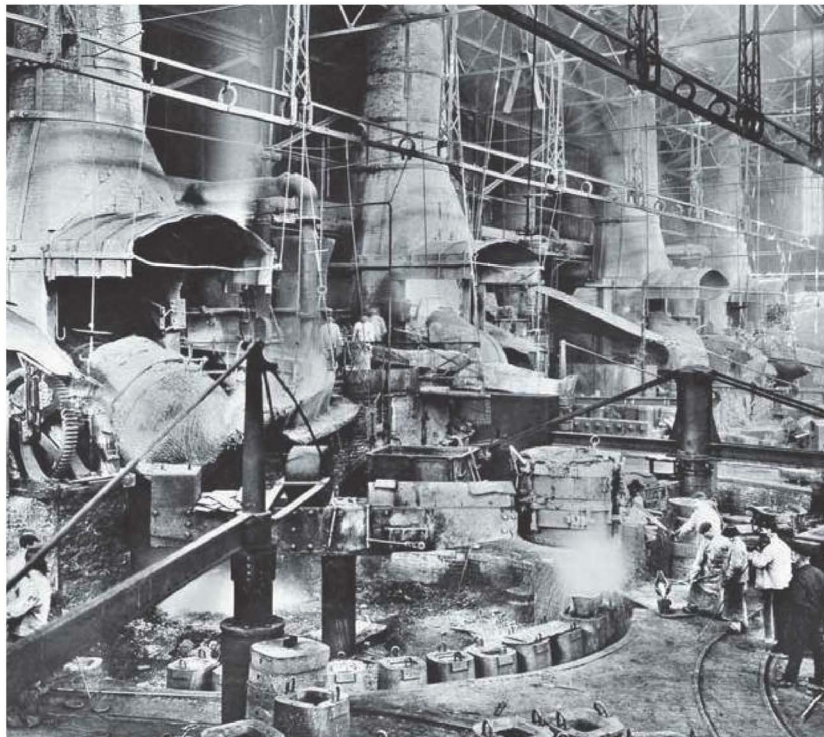
The Reichstag could discuss, amend and vote on new legislation, but it could not decide on the topics in question. That was totally under the control of the Kaiser and his ministers. Even if it had had more powers, the Reichstag would have been limited in its decision-making.

Yet, at the same time as the Kaiser dominated decision-making, political parties developed in terms of organisation and importance. There were several main political parties, but never in the years 1871–1914 did any one of them come close to gaining a majority. In the early years of Wilhelm II's reign, the RIGHT-WING conservative parties usually joined together to pass government laws. However, by 1914 these parties had declined in influence. Others gained support, especially the more LEFT-WING SOCIAL DEMOCRAT PARTY, which appealed to Germany's growing numbers of industrial workers.

Each of Germany's 25 states had control over their own domestic matters. However, this control diminished as the national government passed legislation in areas such as communications, expansion of the army and navy, and social insurance schemes.

## SOURCE 5

A photograph from the Krupp Steel Works in the 1880s. It shows Bessemer converters in action. The process was the first cheap method for MASS PRODUCTION of steel.



This meant that, while all men were eligible to vote, in practice the direction of government policy was controlled almost entirely by the Kaiser and his ministers. Many members of the middle class were happy with this right-wing dominated government because they were afraid of the growing political strength of the industrial workers. This meant that the people in power were mostly nationalist in their views. They were also traditionally hostile to the Jews. This is known as anti-Semitism.

## Industrialisation

The industrial strength of Germany increased rapidly under Wilhelm II. For example, in 1880 Germany had only been producing half the amount of steel produced by Britain, but by 1914 was producing more than twice as much. By 1914 Germany was producing one-third of the world's electrical goods. Its telephone system was more advanced than that of any other country. Germany led the world in the chemical and steel industries. The engineering firms of Bosch and Siemens were known worldwide. Foreign trade flourished as exports rose rapidly.



The population grew from just over 40 million in 1871 to nearly 68 million in 1914. This rapid increase helped to provide manpower for the growing industrial cities. By 1914 only one-third of the labour force still worked in agriculture, and as a result food imports rose quickly, reaching about one-fifth of Germany's needs by 1914.

## Social reform and the growth of socialism

German society was dominated by the traditional ruling classes – both in the cities and on the land. **AUTHORITARIANISM** was accepted by most as the norm in society as a whole. In particular, the middle-class elements in society supported the social structure of the empire, happy to thrive in its developing wealth and power. Thus most political parties, both right-wing and centre, accepted the authoritarian nature of German rule.

However, the growing numbers of industrial workers did pose a possible threat to the traditional structure of society based on a land-owning aristocracy – as they did in other European countries. The ruling classes were afraid of the socialist movement that was growing in strength. Successive governments had tried to pacify socialist demands by enacting social reforms, such as the introduction of old age pensions in 1889 – 20 years before their introduction in Britain. Sickness and accident insurance schemes were also introduced at the same time, and by 1911 this covered nearly 14 million Germans. However, many workers remained dissatisfied and this led to a continued growth in support for the Social Democrat Party (SPD), whose socialism encompassed the **COMMUNIST** ideology of Karl Marx. In 1912 the Social Democrats gained nearly one-third of the seats in the Reichstag.

## The influence of Prussian militarism

Prussia was by far the most important of the 25 states within Germany. It had two-thirds of the population and over half the territory. Prussia had a proud tradition of military activity and the army swore an oath of allegiance to the Kaiser. The influence of the military chiefs often determined German foreign policy which was concerned with expansion. Long-established countries on Germany's borders were often viewed with suspicion. This special status of the army did not help the development of **DEMOCRATIC** systems of government. Indeed, the government and many civilians admired the army and what it stood for in this newly created country.

## The domestic importance of the Navy Laws

To Wilhelm II a large powerful navy was essential to his ambitions for Germany. In addition to expanding the size of the German army, he wanted to develop a navy that could match the British Royal Navy. It was Admiral von Tirpitz who argued that Germany needed large battleships that could compete with those of Britain. Success over the British navy would ensure that Germany could achieve world power for itself. A large ship-building programme would frighten the British government which would then be more amenable to Germany gaining colonies and trade overseas. Thus, after Tirpitz became State Secretary of the Navy in 1897, several laws were passed. These had a profound effect on Anglo-German relations, as well as affecting the lives and attitudes of millions of Germans.

The First Navy Law was passed in 1898, in spite of opposition from the Conservative Party and the Social Democrat Party. The law allowed for the addition of seven battleships, which would be built in the next three years in addition to the twelve Germany already possessed. These extra battleships would not be enough to match either the British or the French navies, but this law marked a turning point in German foreign policy.

**FIGURE 6**

Germany's foreign trade (in millions of marks).

Year	Marks
1880	2,977
1890	3,410
1900	4,753
1910	7,475
1913	10,097

### FACTFILE

#### Karl Marx and Communism

Karl Marx (1818–83) was a German writer. He believed that history was dominated by class struggle – that is, conflict between the different classes in society. Those who believed in his theories believed that the middle classes would take over from the aristocracy and monarchy, and then a further revolution would result in rule by the working classes.

Marx is regarded as the founder of modern **COMMUNISM**.

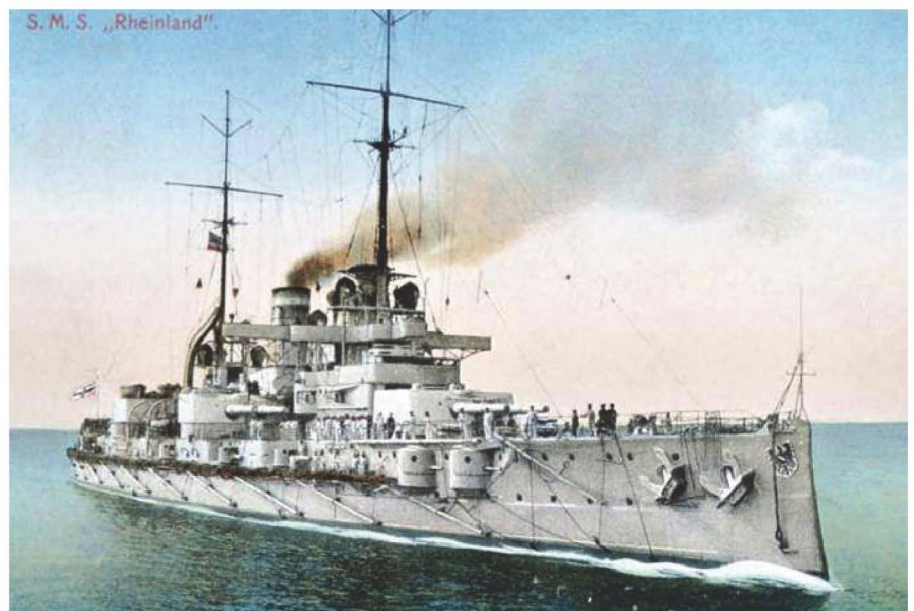
In 1900, during the Boer War conflict in South Africa, the Second Naval Law was passed. The German government took the opportunity to sympathise with the Boers, who were fighting against the British. This Second Naval Law doubled the size of the fleet to 38 battleships. It was clear that the German navy was not just patrolling its coastlines; it saw its primary objective as rivalling the British navy. In Germany the policy had the effect of encouraging imperialist attitudes and a fear of British ambitions.

In the early 1900s, more Naval Laws were passed in the Reichstag, increasing the size of the navy slightly and illustrating its importance. International crises (see Chapter 5, page 210) encouraged the belief among many Germans that Britain had ambitions to be even more powerful and that its policy was to deny German ambitions to become a colonial empire. Therefore, from 1902 onwards an Anglo-German naval ARMS RACE developed.

The Kaiser was an enthusiastic supporter of naval expansion. He believed that it was the key to fulfilling his ambitions for the creation of a more powerful German Empire. Meanwhile, traditional military leaders argued that it would be the army that would be the key to success in future conflict, and therefore the armed forces also needed to be maintained ready for any conflict.

### SOURCE 7

*SMS Rhineland*, launched in 1908. This battleship was 146 metres long, it could travel at 20 knots and could carry over 1,000 men. It had 40 guns of different sizes and 5 torpedoes.



### FOCUS TASK

#### How strong was autocratic rule in Germany by 1914?

- 1** Create your own spider diagram to assess the strength of autocratic rule in Germany. In the centre of your page write the following statement:  
'Strength of traditional, autocratic rule'
- 2** On one side of your diagram, in one colour, add points that show that the Kaiser had full control and that AUTOCRACY was strong in Germany. On the other side, in a different colour, note the factors that were threatening to weaken autocracy.
- 3** Once you have completed your diagram, write a paragraph to sum up the strength of autocratic rule in Germany by 1914.

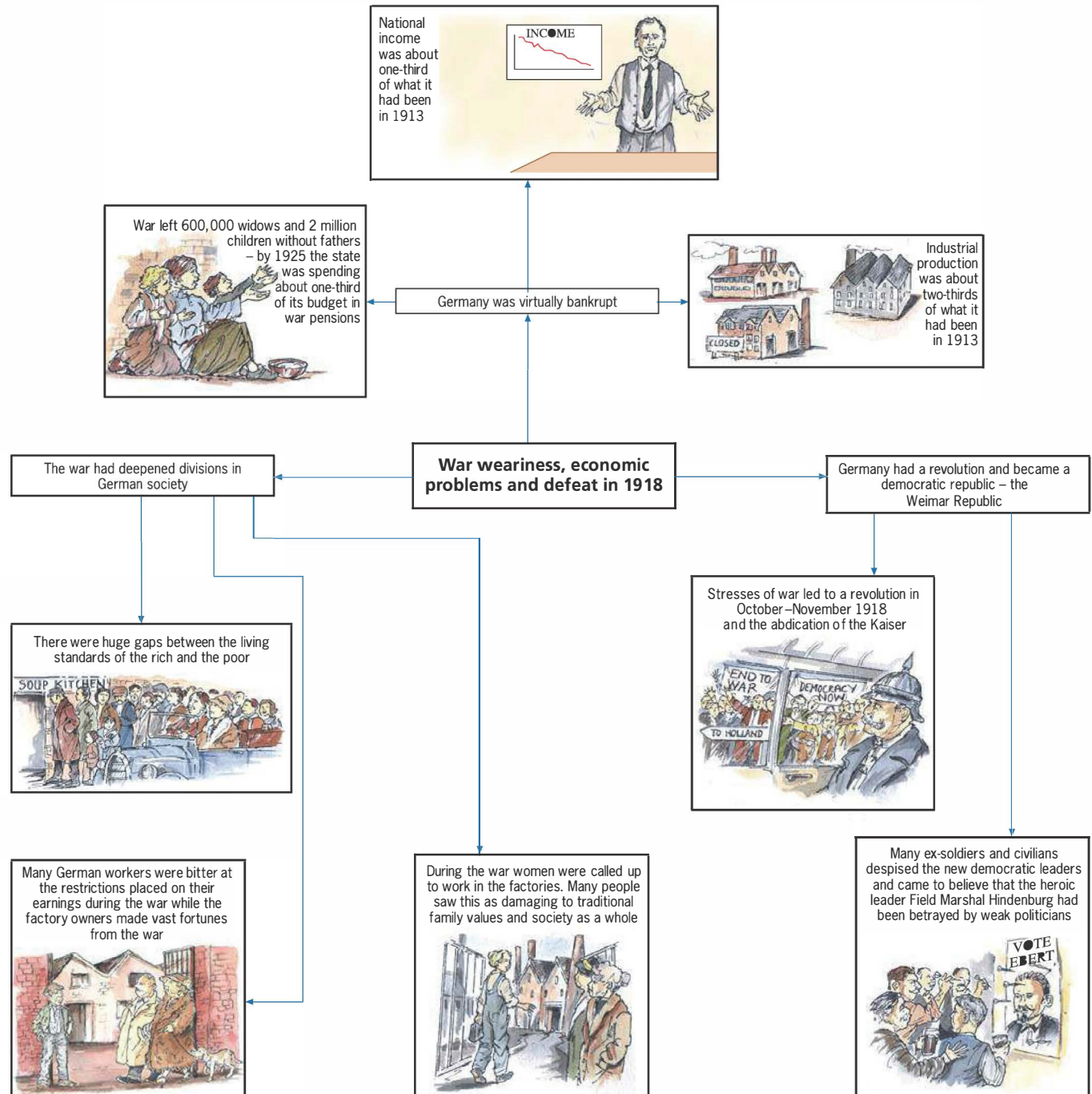
## ● The impact of the First World War

In 1914 the Germans were a proud people. Their Kaiser, virtually a dictator, was celebrated for his achievements. Their army was probably the finest in the world. A journey through the streets of Berlin in 1914 would have revealed prospering businesses and a well-educated and well-fed workforce. There was great optimism about the power and strength of Germany.

Four years later a similar journey would have revealed a very different picture. Although little fighting had taken place in Germany itself, the war had still destroyed much of the old Germany. The proud German army was defeated. The German people were surviving on turnips and bread. A flu epidemic was sweeping the country, killing thousands of people already weakened by rations.

**FIGURE 8**

War weariness, economic problems and defeat in 1918.





## SOURCE 9

A cartoon from *Punch* magazine, 1919.



### GIVING HIM ROPE?

CHAMBERLAIN (to Allied Police), "HERE, I SAY, STOP! YOU'RE HURTING ME! [sobbing] IF I ONLY WHINE ENOUGH I MAY BE ABLE TO WRIGGLE OUT OF THIS YET."

## The end of the monarchy, November 1918

In autumn 1918 the Allies had clearly won the war. Germany was in a state of chaos, as you have seen in Figure 8. The Allies offered Germany peace, but under strict conditions. One condition was that Germany should become more democratic. When the Kaiser refused, sailors in northern Germany mutinied and took over the town of Kiel. This triggered other revolts. The Kaiser's old enemies, the Socialists, led uprisings of workers and soldiers in other German ports. Soon, other German cities followed. In Bavaria an independent Socialist REPUBLIC was declared. On 9 November 1918 the Kaiser, realising he had little choice, abdicated his throne and left Germany for the Netherlands.

## Post-war problems in Germany

Germans felt betrayed. The end of the war had come suddenly and unexpectedly; their Kaiser had run away; the new government had to face all the problems that existed – political uncertainties, economic problems, and a crisis in German society. In addition, a devastating outbreak of flu had swept across western Europe and killed many Germans who were suffering from malnourishment and had little resistance to germs.

## German reparations

At the end of any conflict, the victorious countries sought compensation from those NATIONS responsible for starting the war. At the conclusion to the First World War, Germany's REPARATIONS were spelt out in the Treaty of Versailles, decided upon by the British, American and French leaders.

## FACTFILE

### Treaty of Versailles terms

As a result of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, signed in June 1919, Germany:

- was blamed for the war (WAR GUILT clause)
- lost its overseas empire
- lost some territory in Europe
- was forbidden to join with Austria
- could not join the League of Nations
- was limited in its armed forces.

As a result of the Treaty of Versailles, Germany lost:

- approximately 10 per cent of its territory
- 12.5 per cent of its population
- 16 per cent of its coal fields and almost half of its iron and steel industry.

The details of this are covered in Chapter 6 on pages 245–50, but the main terms are given in the Factfile here.

Financial reparations were also enforced by the treaty. The bill, announced in April 1921, was set at £6,600 million, to be paid in annual instalments. This was 2 per cent of Germany's annual output. The Germans protested that this was an intolerable strain on the economy, which they were struggling to rebuild after the war, but their protests were ignored.

## The invasion of the Ruhr

The first instalment of £50 million was paid in 1921, but in 1922 nothing was paid. Ebert, Socialist leader and German Chancellor, did his best to play for time and to negotiate concessions from the Allies, but the French in particular ran out of patience. They too had war debts to pay to the USA. So in January 1923 French and Belgian troops entered the Ruhr, an industrial area of Germany near the French border. This was quite legal under the Treaty of Versailles. They began to take what was owed to them in the form of raw materials and goods.

The results of the occupation of the Ruhr were disastrous for Germany. The government ordered the workers to carry out passive resistance, which meant to go on strike. That way, there would be nothing for the French to take away. The French reacted harshly, killing over 100 workers and expelling over 100,000 protesters from the region. More importantly, the halt in industrial production in Germany's most important region caused the collapse of the German currency.

## SOURCE 10

A 1923 German poster discouraging people from buying French and Belgian goods, as long as Germany is under occupation.



## SOURCE 11

The memories of Jutta Rudiger, a German woman living in the Ruhr during the French occupation.

*There was a lot of official harassment. There was widespread hunger, squalor and poverty and – what really affected us – there was humiliation. The French ruled with an iron hand. If they disliked you walking on the pavement, for instance, they'd come along with their riding crops and you'd have to walk in the road.*

## FOCUS TASK

### How had the war and post-war settlement changed Germany?

Use the information on pages 53–60 and your own research to complete the following task.

- 1 Use the map on page 54 to draw a simple outline of Germany in 1914. Annotate your map in one colour with words and images to indicate the situation in Germany at that time. Include who was in charge, the population of Germany, its main industries, etc.
- 2 Now annotate your map in a similar way, using a second colour, to show how things have changed by 1919. Shade in any areas of land which have been removed, and cross out any resources which have been lost. Add words and drawings to indicate the situation by 1919.
- 3 Now write a paragraph under your map to summarise the main changes which have taken place in Germany between 1914 and 1919.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Read Interpretations A and B and then answer Questions 1–3.

**Interpretation A** The imposition of reparations on the Weimar Republic. This was written in 1976 by Egon Larsen, who had been a German journalist in the 1920s.

*As the terms of peace became known, we came to realise what it meant to lose a war against two dozen countries. The cost of reparations, to be paid by a Germany which had lost its economic power, was shattering.*

**Interpretation B** Another view of reparations. It is taken from a recent British history textbook.

*Reparations to be paid by Germany were agreed in 1921 by the League of Nations. The sum of £6,600 million was only half of what France had demanded. It was less than the sum that Germany would have demanded if they had won the war, and Germany had until 1984 to pay off the debt in instalments.*

- 1 How does Interpretation B differ from Interpretation A about the impact of reparations on Germans in the early 1920s? Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B.
- 2 Why might the authors of Interpretations A and B have a different interpretation about the impact of reparations on Germans? Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge.
- 3 Which interpretation do you find more convincing about the impact of reparations on Germany in the early 1920s? Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge.



## FIGURE 12

The rising cost of a loaf of bread in Berlin.

Date	Number of marks
1918	0.63
1922	163
January 1923	250
July 1923	3,465
September 1923	1,512,000
November 1923	201,000,000,000

## FIGURE 13

The exchange rate value of the mark in pounds.

1921 £1 = 500 marks

Nov 1923 £1 = 14,000,000,000,000 marks

## SOURCE 14

E. Dobert, *Convert to Freedom*, 1941.

*Billion-mark notes were quickly handed on as though they burned one's fingers, for tomorrow one would no longer pay in notes but in bundles of notes ... One afternoon I rang Aunt Louise's bell. The door was opened merely a crack. From the dark came an odd broken voice: 'I've used 60 billion marks' worth of gas. My milk bill is 1 million. But all I have left is 2,000 marks. I don't understand any more.'*

## THINK

- 1 Use Figure 12 to work out how much bread a one-billion mark banknote could buy in July 1923 and November 1923.
- 2 Use the sources and figures on this page to describe in your own words how ordinary Germans were affected by the collapse of the mark.

## PRACTICE QUESTION

Which of the following was the more important reason for the collapse of the German economy by 1923?

- The harshness of the Treaty of Versailles, including reparations payments.
- The hyperinflation that had developed by 1923.

Explain your answer with reference to both reasons.

## Hyperinflation

## SOURCE 15

A photograph taken in 1923 showing a woman using banknotes to start her fire.



Because it had no goods to trade, the government simply printed more money. For the government this seemed an attractive solution. It paid off its debts in worthless marks, including war loans of over £2,200 million. The great industrialists were able to pay off all their debts as well.

This set off a chain reaction. With so much money in circulation, prices and wages rocketed, but people soon realised that this money was worthless. Wages began to be paid daily instead of weekly. Workers needed wheelbarrows to carry home their wages. The price of goods could rise between joining the back of a queue in a shop and reaching the front!

Poor people suffered, but the greatest casualties were the richer Germans – those with savings. Prosperous middle-class families would find that their savings in the bank, which might have bought them a house in 1921, by 1923 would not even buy a loaf of bread. Pensioners found that their previously ample monthly pension would not even buy a cup of coffee.

It was clear to all, both inside and outside Germany, that the situation needed urgent action. In August 1923 a new government under Gustav Stresemann took over. He called off the passive resistance in the Ruhr. He called in the worthless marks and burned them, replacing them with a new currency called the Rentenmark. He negotiated to receive American loans under the Dawes Plan. He even renegotiated the reparations payments (see page 69). The economic crisis was solved very quickly. Some historians suggest that this is evidence that Germany's problems were not as severe as its politicians had made out.

It was also increasingly clear, however, that the HYPERINFLATION had done great political damage to the Weimar government. Right-wing opponents had yet another problem to blame the government for, and the government had lost the support of the middle classes.



## ● Weimar Germany

The day after the Kaiser fled, Friedrich Ebert became the new leader of the Republic of Germany. He immediately signed an **ARMISTICE** with the Allies. The war was over. He also announced to the German people that the new Republic was giving them freedom of speech, freedom of worship and better working conditions. A new constitution was drawn up (see Factfile and Figure 16).

The success of the new government depended on the German people accepting an almost instant change from the traditional, **AUTOCRATIC** German system of government to this new democratic system. The prospects for this did not look good.

### Weimar democracy

The reaction of politicians in Germany was unenthusiastic. Ebert had opposition from both right and left. On the right wing, nearly all the Kaiser's former advisers remained in their positions in the army, judiciary, civil service and industry. They restricted what the new government could do. Many still hoped for a return to rule by the Kaiser. A powerful myth developed that men such as Ebert had stabbed Germany in the back and caused German defeat in the war. On the left wing there were many Communists who believed that at this stage what Germany actually needed was a Communist revolution just like Russia's in 1917.

Despite this opposition, in January 1919 free elections took place for the first time in Germany's history. Ebert's party won a majority and he became the President of the Weimar Republic. It was called this because, to start with, the new government met in the small town of Weimar rather than in the German capital, Berlin. Even in February 1919, Berlin was thought to be too violent and unstable.

### THINK

Study the Factfile on the Weimar Constitution and Figure 16.

- 1 What aspects of the Constitution made Weimar Germany seem very democratic?
- 2 What aspects might suggest the possibility of either weak government or one person being able to take charge?

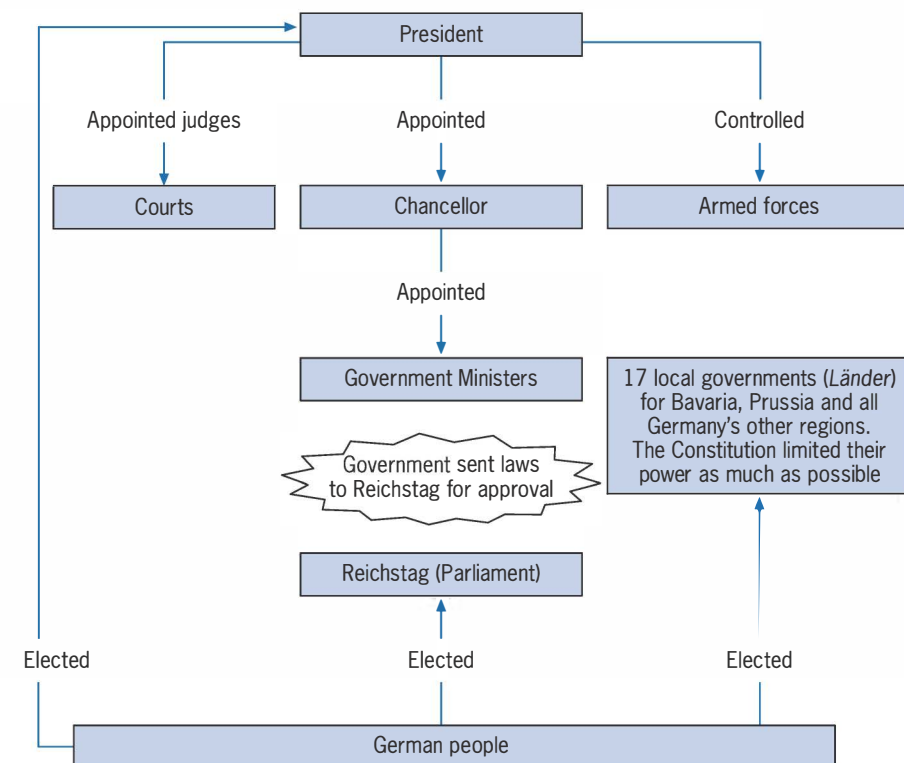
### FACTFILE

#### The Weimar Constitution

- Before the war Germany had had no real **DEMOCRACY**. The Kaiser was virtually a dictator.
- The Weimar Constitution, on the other hand, attempted to set up probably the most democratic system in the world where no individual could gain too much power.
- All Germans over the age of 20 could vote.
- There was a system of **PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION** – if a party gained 20 per cent of the votes, they gained 20 per cent of the seats in the Parliament (Reichstag).
- The Chancellor was responsible for day-to-day government, but he needed the support of half the Reichstag.
- The Head of State was the President. The President stayed out of day-to-day government. In a crisis he could rule the country directly through Article 48 of the Constitution. This gave him emergency powers, which meant he did not have to consult the Reichstag.

**FIGURE 16**

The Weimar Constitution.



## Weimar Germany: Political change and unrest, 1919–23

From the start the new government had to establish itself at a time of political unrest as well as economic and social problems.

### The threat from the Left: The Spartacists

One left-wing group was a Communist party known as the SPARTACISTS. They were led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. Their party was much like Lenin's BOLSHEVIKS, who had just taken power in Russia. They argued strongly against Ebert's plans for a democratic Germany. They wanted a Germany ruled by workers' councils or soviets.

Early in 1919 the Spartacists launched their bid for power. Joined by rebel soldiers and sailors, they set up soviets in many towns. Not all soldiers were on the side of the Spartacists, however. Some anti-Communist ex-soldiers had formed themselves into VIGILANTE groups called *FREIKORPS*. Ebert made an agreement with the commanders of the army and the *Freikorps* to put down the Spartacist rebellion. Bitter street fighting followed between the Spartacists and *Freikorps*. Both sides were heavily armed and casualties were high. The *Freikorps* crushed the rebellion and Liebknecht and Luxemburg were murdered. The Spartacists had failed, but another Communist revolt was soon to follow.

This time it emerged in Bavaria in the south of Germany. Bavaria was still an independent socialist state led by Kurt Eisner, who was Ebert's ally. In February 1919 he was murdered by political opponents. The Communists in Bavaria seized the opportunity to declare a soviet republic there. Ebert used the same tactics as he had against the Spartacists. The *Freikorps* moved in to crush the revolt in May 1919 and around 600 Communists were killed.

In 1920 there was more Communist agitation in the Ruhr industrial area. Again police, army and *Freikorps* clashed with Communists, resulting in 2,000 casualties.

Ebert's ruthless measures against the Communists created lasting bitterness between them and his Socialist Party. However, it gained approval from many in Germany. Ebert was terrified that Germany might go the same way as Russia (at that time rocked by bloody CIVIL WAR). Many Germans shared his fears. Even so, despite these defeats, the Communists remained a powerful anti-government force in Germany throughout the 1920s.

### SOURCE 17

Spartacists – the Communists who felt that Germany was ready to follow Russia's example of Communist revolution.



### SOURCE 18

The *Freikorps* – ex-servicemen who were totally opposed to Communism.



### The threat from the right: The Kapp Putsch

Ebert's government also faced violent opposition from the right. His right-wing opponents were largely people who had grown up in, and benefited from, the successful days of the Kaiser's rule. As a result they preferred Germany under a dictatorial-style government, than under a democracy; they wanted a strong German army in order for Germany to expand its territory, and to regain the empire lost through the Treaty of Versailles; and they were proud of Germany's powerful industry.

In March 1920 Dr Wolfgang Kapp led 5,000 *Freikorps* into Berlin in a rebellion known as the Kapp PUTSCH ('Putsch' means rebellion). The army refused to fire on the *Freikorps* and it looked as if Ebert's government was doomed. However, it was saved by the German people, especially the industrial workers of Berlin. They declared a general strike which brought the capital to a halt with no transport, power or water (see Source 19). After a few days Kapp realised he could not succeed and left the country. He was hunted down and died while awaiting trial. It seemed that Weimar had support and power after all. Even so, the rest of the rebels went unpunished by the courts and judges.

Ebert's government struggled to deal with the political violence in Germany. Political ASSASSINATIONS were frequent. In the summer of 1922, Ebert's Foreign Minister Walther Rathenau was murdered by extremists. Then, in November 1923, Adolf Hitler led an attempted rebellion in Munich, known as the Munich Putsch (see page 67). Both Hitler and the murderers of Rathenau received short prison sentences. Strangely, Hitler's judge at the trial was the same judge who had tried him two years earlier for disorder. Both times he got off very lightly. It seemed that Weimar's right-wing opponents had friends in high places.

### PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- 1 Describe two ways in which the *Freikorps* disagreed with the policies of the new Weimar government.
- 2 In what ways were the Spartacists a problem for the Weimar government in the early 1920s? Explain your answer.

### THINK

- 1 Why might right-wingers dislike the Weimar Constitution (see Factfile on page 63)?
- 2 From reading pages 64–65, what differences can you see between the treatment of left-wing and right-wing extremists? Can you explain this?

### SOURCE 19

Workers being bussed to work privately during the 1920 general strike.





## The beginnings of the Nazi Party

### PROFILE

#### Adolf Hitler – the early years, 1889–1919



- Born in Austria in 1889.
- He got on badly with his father but was fond of his mother.
- At the age of 16 he left school and went to Vienna to pursue his ambition of becoming an artist. However, things went wrong for him and between 1909 and 1914 he was virtually a 'down and out' on the streets of Vienna.
- During this period he developed his hatred of foreigners and Jews.
- When war broke out in 1914, Hitler joined the German army and served with distinction, winning the Iron Cross.
- Hitler found it very hard to accept the armistice and was completely opposed to the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.
- He despised Weimar democracy and like many Germans looked back to the 'glorious days' of the Kaiser.
- Hitler stayed in the army after the war, working in Munich for the intelligence services. It was in this job that he came across the DAP or German Workers' Party led by Anton Drexler. He liked the ideas of the party and joined in 1919.

### FACTFILE

#### The 25-Point Programme of the Nazi Party

The most important pledges of the Programme were:

- the abolition of the Treaty of Versailles
- union of Germany and Austria
- only 'true' Germans to be allowed to live in Germany; Jews in particular were to be excluded
- large industries and businesses to be nationalised
- generous provision for old age pensioners
- a strong central government in Germany.

Germany faced another crisis in 1923. The Nazi Party (National Socialist German Workers' Party) had been formed in 1920. It had a 25-point programme (see Factfile) which combined right-wing and left-wing policies in an attempt to appeal to as many Germans as possible. In 1921 Hitler became its leader.

#### SOURCE 20

American intelligence report on political activities in Germany, 1922.

*The most active political force in Bavaria at the present time is the National Socialist Party ... It has recently acquired a political influence quite disproportionate to its actual numerical strength ... Adolf Hitler from the very first has been the dominating force in the movement and the personality of this man has undoubtedly been one of the most important factors contributing to its success ... His ability to influence a popular assembly is uncanny.*

#### SOURCE 21

A person who went to Nazi meetings describes the impact of Hitler's speeches. From *A Part of Myself: Portrait of an Epoch*, by C. Zuckmayer.

*Hitler knew how to whip up those crowds jammed closely in a dense cloud of cigarette smoke – not by argument, but by his manner: the roaring and especially the power of his repetitions delivered in a certain infectious rhythm ... He would draw up a list of existing evils and imaginary abuses and after listing them, in higher and higher crescendo, he screamed: 'And whose fault is it? It's all ... the fault ... of the Jews!'*

Hitler had a clear and simple appeal. He stirred nationalist passions in his audiences. He gave them SCAPEGOATS to blame for Germany's problems: the Allies, the Versailles Treaty, the 'November Criminals' (the Socialist politicians who signed the Treaty), the Communists and the Jews.

His meetings were so successful that his opponents tried to disrupt them. To counter this, he set up the SA, also known as the storm troopers or brownshirts, in 1921. These hired thugs protected Hitler's meetings but also disrupted those of other parties.

By 1923 the Nazis were still very much a minority party, but Hitler had given them a high profile.

## The Munich Putsch, 1923

By November 1923 Hitler believed that the moment had come for him to topple the Weimar government. The government was preoccupied with the economic crisis. Stresemann had just called off Germany's passive resistance in the Ruhr (see page 62). On 8 November, Hitler hijacked a local government meeting and announced he was taking over the government of Bavaria. He was joined by the old war hero Ludendorff.

Nazi storm troopers began taking over official buildings. The next day, however, the Weimar government forces hit back. Police rounded up the storm troopers and in a brief exchange of shots 16 Nazis were killed by the police. The rebellion broke up in chaos. Hitler escaped in a car, while Ludendorff and others stayed to face the armed police.

Hitler had miscalculated the mood of the German people. In the short term, the Munich Putsch was a disaster for him. People did not rise up to support him. He and other leading Nazis were arrested and charged with treason. At the trial, however, Hitler gained enormous publicity for himself and his ideas, as his every word was reported in the newspapers.

In fact, Hitler so impressed the judges that he and his accomplices got off very lightly. Ludendorff was freed altogether and Hitler was given only five years in prison, even though the legal guidelines said that high treason should carry a life sentence. In the end, Hitler served only nine months of the sentence and did so in great comfort in Landsberg castle.

This last point is very significant. It was clear that Hitler had some sympathy and support from important figures in the legal system. Because of his links with Ludendorff, Hitler probably gained the attention of important figures in the army. Time would show that Hitler was down, but not out.

### ACTIVITY

It is 1923. Use the information and sources on pages 66–67 to write a newspaper article about the rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party. Your opening sentences could be:

*'In recent months, a new force seems to be arising in German politics. Adolf Hitler and the Nazis have hit the headlines with their meetings, banners and radical ideas. What makes this man successful? ...'*

Your article should tell readers about:

- Hitler's background
- his qualities
- what he and the Nazis believe.

### THINK

What can you learn from Sources 22–24 about Hitler's attitude towards attempting to seize power in 1923?

#### SOURCE 22

Leading Nazi Otto Strasser recalls a conversation with Hitler in the early 1920s.

*'Power!' screamed Adolf. 'We must have power!' 'Before we gain it,' I replied firmly, 'let us decide what we propose to do with it.'*

*Hitler, who even then could hardly bear contradiction, thumped the table and barked: 'Power first – afterwards we can act as circumstances dictate.'*

#### SOURCE 23

Hitler declares the revolution, 8 November 1923.

*The Bavarian Ministry is removed. I propose that a Bavarian government be formed consisting of a Regent and a Prime Minister invested with dictatorial powers ... The government of the November Criminals and the Reich president are declared to be removed ... I propose that, until accounts have been finally settled with the November Criminals, the direction of policy in the National Government be taken over by me ...*

#### SOURCE 24

Hitler at his trial in January 1924.

*I alone bear the responsibility but I am not a criminal because of that ... There is no such thing as high treason against the traitors of 1918 ... I feel myself the best of Germans who wanted the best for the German people.*

## PROFILE

### Gustav Stresemann



- Born in 1878.
- University educated.
- Politician – tending towards right-wing beliefs.
- August 1923 appointed Chancellor.
- In 1923–29 served as foreign minister, but dominated the government.
- Awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 1926.
- Died in October 1929, just before the Wall Street Crash.

## The extent of recovery during the Stresemann era, 1924–29

In the later 1920s Germany appeared to be recovering from the political and economic crises of the early 1920s. Life in Germany was getting back to normal. There was less support for political parties that wanted to destroy the Weimar Republic. Yet at the same time there were still underlying problems in society that were exposed when the WALL STREET CRASH occurred in 1929. At the same time, Germany was gradually being accepted within Europe with various agreements and treaties (see Chapter 6, page 257).

### Political achievements under Stresemann

Politics became more stable. There were no more attempted revolutions after 1923. Figure 25 shows that the parties that supported Weimar democracy did well in these years. By 1928 the moderate parties had 136 more seats in the Reichstag than the radical parties. Hitler's Nazi Party gained less than 3 per cent of the vote in the 1928 election. Just as important, some of the parties who had co-operated in the revolution of 1918 began to co-operate again. The Socialists (SPD), Catholic Centre Party, German Democratic Party (DDP) and the German People's Party (DVP) generally worked well together in the years 1924–29.

### Political problems under Stresemann

Despite the relative stability of Weimar politics in this period, both the Nazis and Communists were building up their party organisations. Even during these stable years there were four different Chancellors and it was only the influence of party leaders that held the party coalitions together.

More worrying for the Republic, despite increased support for more moderate parties, was that around 30 per cent of the vote regularly went to parties opposed to the Republic. Most serious of all, the right-wing organisations which posed the greatest threat to the Republic were quiet rather than destroyed. The right-wing Nationalist Party (DNVP) and the Nazis began to collaborate closely and make themselves appear more respectable. Another event which would turn out to be very significant was that the German people elected Hindenburg as President in 1926. He was opposed to democracy and wrote to the Kaiser in exile for approval before he took up the post! It was clear that the Weimar Republic had not yet won the loyalty of all sections of German society.

**FIGURE 25**

Support for the main political parties in Germany, 1919–28.

Date	Number of MPs elected
1919	350 left wing supporting the Republic 60 right wing opposed to the Republic
May 1924	60 left wing opposed to the Republic 200 left wing supporting the Republic 160 right wing opposed to the Republic
1928	50 left wing opposed to the Republic 250 left wing supporting the Republic 140 right wing opposed to the Republic

### The Nazi Party in the late 1920s

After the failed Munich Putsch, Hitler used his time in prison to write a book, *Mein Kampf* (*My Struggle*). It set out at great length his ideas about how the Nazis should develop as a party. He came to the conclusion that trying to seize power by force was a mistake. The Nazi Party would have to work within the democratic system to achieve power, but once they had achieved it, this system could be destroyed.

Once out of prison, Hitler copied the Communist Party by seeking to strengthen the party, for example, by setting up youth organisations and recruitment drives. Hitler was encouraged that the Nazi Party gained 32 seats in the Reichstag elections of 1924. However in 1928 the Nazis gained only 12 seats. The party was gaining little support from the industrial workers who were more inclined to support the Communist groups. Therefore he decided to focus much more on other groups in society.



## Economic developments: The new currency and the Dawes and Young Plans

Although Chancellor for only a few months, Stresemann was a leading member of every government from 1923 to 1929. He was a more skilful politician than Ebert, and, as a right-winger, he had wider support from business interests. He was also helped by the fact that through the 1920s the rest of Europe was gradually coming out of its post-war DEPRESSION. Slowly but surely, he built up Germany's prosperity again. First he called in the worthless marks and replaced them with a new currency called the Rentenmark. This provided confidence and stability.

After the crisis of 1923 the American government stepped in to offer financial support for Germany. It was in the USA's interest for Germany to be able to build up her international trade again. Under the Dawes Plan of 1924, reparations payments were spread over a longer period of time, and the USA provided 800 million marks in loans.

Some of the money went into German industry, replacing old equipment with the latest technology. Some of the money went into public works like swimming pools, sports stadiums and apartment blocks. As well as providing facilities, these projects created jobs.

By 1927 German industry seemed to have recovered very well. In 1928 Germany finally achieved the same levels of production as before the war and regained its place as the world's second greatest industrial power (behind the USA). Wages for industrial workers rose and for many Germans there was a higher standard of living. Reparations were being paid and exports were on the increase. The government was even able to increase welfare benefits and wages for state employees.

### The impact of international agreements on recovery

Stresemann worked hard to improve Germany's international reputation during this period. In 1925 the Locarno Treaties were agreed in which Germany promised to respect its existing borders with France and Belgium. Consequently, in 1926, Germany was admitted into the League of Nations. This in turn aided German recovery, as trade between the increasingly trusted and respected Germany, and other countries, increased.

In 1929, under the Young Plan, German reparations payments were to be reduced to £2.2 billion, and the country given longer to pay. In the event, the Wall Street Crash destroyed the intentions of this plan, and in 1932 the Allies agreed to cancel reparations payments altogether.

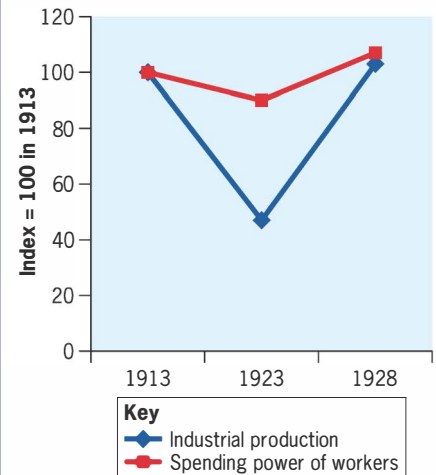
### Stresemann: A balance sheet

Although many of Stresemann's actions strengthened the German economy, the picture was mixed. The economic boom in Weimar Germany was precarious as US loans could be called in at short notice, which would cause ruin in Germany.

The main economic winners in Germany were big businesses (such as the steel and chemical industries) which controlled about half of Germany's industrial production. Other winners were big landowners, particularly if they owned land in towns – the value of land in Berlin rose by 700 per cent in this period. The workers in the big industries gained as well. Most Weimar governments were sympathetic towards the unions, which led to improved pay and conditions. However, even here there were concerns as unemployment began to rise – it was 6 per cent of the working population by 1928.

**FIGURE 26**

Comparison of aspects of the German economy in 1913, 1923 and 1928. The figures show how badly industrial production was harmed by the economic crisis in the Ruhr in 1923.



### THINK

What factors helped Germany's economy to recover?

### PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- 1 Describe two reasons why Germany was able to improve relations with other countries in the later 1920s.
- 2 In what ways did the Dawes Plan and the Young Plan help the lives of German people under Stresemann? Explain your answer.

The main losers were the peasant farmers and sections of the middle classes. The peasant farmers had increased production during the war. In peacetime, they found themselves overproducing. They had mortgages to pay but not enough demand for the food they produced. Many small business owners became disillusioned during this period. Small shopkeepers saw their businesses threatened by large department stores (many of which were owned by Jews). A university lecturer in 1913 earned ten times as much as a coal miner. In the 1920s he earned twice as much. These people began to feel that the Weimar government offered them little.

#### SOURCE 27

A Nazi election poster from 1928, saying 'Work, freedom and bread! Vote for the National Socialists!'



#### THINK

Explain how Source 27 is trying to get more support for the Nazi Party.



## Weimar culture

During the 1920s there was also a cultural revival in Germany. In the Kaiser's time there had been strict censorship, but the Weimar Constitution allowed free expression of ideas. Writers and poets flourished, especially in Berlin. Artists in Weimar Germany turned their back on old styles of painting and tried to represent the reality of everyday life, even when that reality was sometimes harsh and shocking. Artists like George Grosz produced powerful paintings like Source 29, which criticised the politicians of the Weimar period. Other paintings by Grosz showed how many soldiers had been traumatised by their experiences in the war. Otto Dix produced paintings which highlighted the gaps between the rich and poor in Germany at the time.

The famous Bauhaus style of design and architecture developed. Artists such as Walter Gropius, Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky taught at the Bauhaus design college in Dessau. The Bauhaus architects rejected traditional styles to create new and exciting buildings. They produced designs for anything from houses and shops to art galleries and factories. The first Bauhaus exhibition attracted 15,000 visitors.

The 1920s were a golden age for German cinema, producing one of its greatest ever international stars, Marlene Dietrich, and one of its most celebrated directors, Fritz Lang. Berlin was famous for its daring and liberated night life. Going to clubs was a major pastime. In 1927 there were 900 dance bands in Berlin alone. Cabaret artists performed songs criticising political leaders that would have been banned in the Kaiser's days. These included songs about sex that would have shocked an earlier generation of Germans.

### SOURCE 28

The Bauhaus design college in Dessau, built between 1925 and 1926.

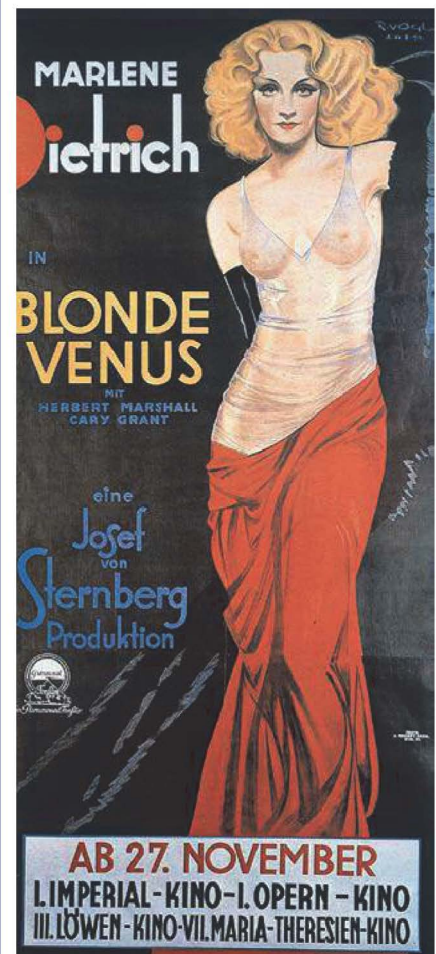


### SOURCE 29

*Pillars of Society* by George Grosz, 1926. Grosz criticised Weimar Germany because he felt too many leading figures in society still believed in the ideals of the Kaiser's Germany. In this painting you can see that the civilians still dream of military glory.

### SOURCE 30

Poster for one of Marlene Dietrich's films.





## FOCUS TASK

### How strong was the Weimar Republic by 1929?

Work in pairs.

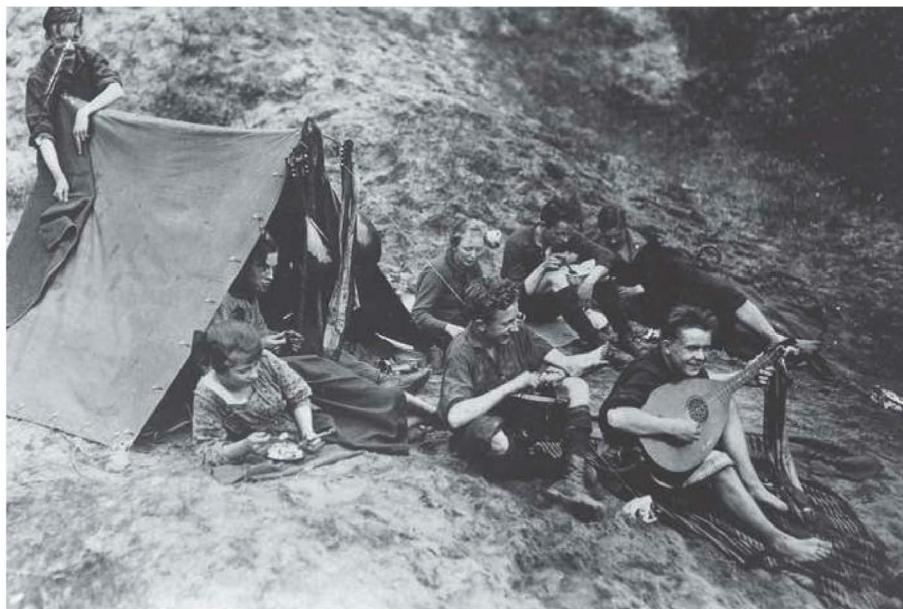
- 1 One of you take a small note card and write the heading 'The Weimar Republic – in good health' at the top.
- 2 Add five bullet points and list evidence of the strengths of the Weimar Republic.
- 3 The other person should take another card and write the heading 'The Weimar Republic – in poor health' at the top.
- 4 Add five bullet points and list evidence of the weaknesses of the Weimar Republic.
- 5 Now share your findings with each other and discuss whether you think the Weimar Republic was in good or poor health by 1929.

The Weimar culture was colourful and exciting to many. However, in many of Germany's villages and country towns, the culture of the cities seemed to represent a moral decline, made worse by American immigrants and Jewish artists and musicians. As you have read, the Bauhaus design college was in Dessau. It was situated there because it was forced out of Weimar by hostile town officials.

Organisations such as the Wandervogel movement were a reaction to Weimar's culture. The Wandervogel wanted a return to simple country values and wanted to see more help for the countryside and less decadence in the towns. It was a powerful feeling which the Nazis successfully harnessed in later years.

## SOURCE 31

A Wandervogel camp in the 1920s.



## TOPIC SUMMARY

### Germany and the growth of democracy

- Wilhelm II became Kaiser of Germany in 1890. His character was likely to pose problems.
- In the period 1890–1914, the new German government was increasingly dominated by militarism and nationalism.
- In the decades before the First World War Germany was becoming more industrialised.
- Germany suffered badly in the First World War, with civilians in cities experiencing food and fuel shortages.
- In November 1918, days before the end of the war, Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated.
- In 1919 the Treaty of Versailles punished Germany, setting out severe reparations terms.
- The Weimar Republic was established in 1919, but it faced political and economic problems arising from the chaos in Germany after the war.
- In 1923 the French occupied the Ruhr to try to claim their reparations payments.
- The same year also saw the economic crisis caused by hyperinflation and Hitler's attempt to seize power (the Munich Putsch).
- From 1924 onwards Stresemann was the leading minister, and Germany began to recover economically and improve its relations with other countries.
- In October 1929 the Wall Street Crash shattered the German recovery.

## 2.2 Germany and the Depression

### FOCUS

In 1929 the American stock market crashed and sent the USA into a disastrous economic depression. In a very short time, countries around the world began to feel the effects of this depression. Germany was particularly badly affected. American bankers and businessmen lost huge amounts of money in the crash. To pay off their debts they asked German banks to repay the money they had borrowed. The result was economic collapse in Germany. Businesses went bankrupt, workers were laid off and unemployment rocketed.

In this part of the topic you will study the following:

- The impact of the Depression and why people supported the Nazis.
- The failure of Weimar democracy, and how Hitler became Chancellor in 1933.
- How Hitler established his DICTATORSHIP by 1934.

### • The impact of the Depression

#### SOURCE 1

Upper Silesia in 1932: unemployed miners and their families moved into shacks in a shanty town because they had no money to pay their rent.



#### SOURCE 2

An eyewitness describes the unemployed vagrants in Germany in 1932.

*No one knew how many there were of them. They completely filled the streets. They stood or lay about in the streets as if they had taken root there. They sat or lay on the pavements or in the roadway and gravely shared out scraps of newspapers among themselves.*

The Depression was a worldwide problem. It was not just Germany that suffered. Nor was the Weimar government the only government grappling with the problem of unemployment. However, because Germany had been so dependent on American loans, and because it still had to pay reparations to the Allies, the problems were most acute in Germany.

In addition, it seemed that the Weimar Constitution, with its careful balance of power, made firm and decisive action by the government very difficult indeed (see Factfile, page 63).

Thus all sections of society were affected in different ways – from business leaders to industrial workers. The effects were not just economic. The recently gained mood of optimism vanished, and the defects of Weimar Germany, mostly hidden in the later 1920s, suddenly became glaringly obvious.

#### ACTIVITY

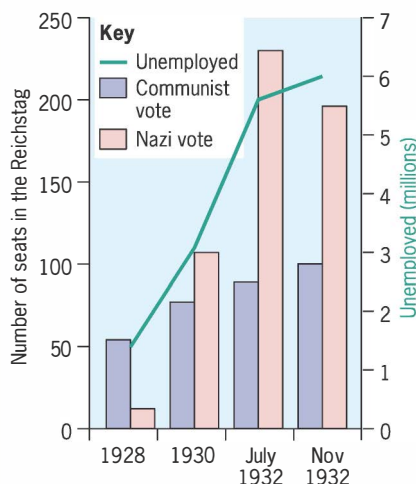
Draw a diagram to show how the Wall Street Crash could lead to miners losing their jobs in Silesia.

#### PRACTICE QUESTION

Describe two economic problems for Germans caused by the Wall Street Crash.

**FIGURE 3**

Support for the Nazis and Communists, and unemployment, 1928–32.



**SOURCE 4**

Albert Speer, writing in 1931. Later, he was to become an important and powerful Nazi leader.

*My mother saw a storm trooper parade in the streets of Heidelberg. The sight of discipline in a time of chaos, the impression of energy in an atmosphere of universal hopelessness seems to have won her over.*

## Growth in support for extremist parties, 1928–32

The effects of the Wall Street Crash, leading to economic depression in Germany, convinced many Germans that the government of the Weimar Republic had failed. Therefore many turned to the Communists who promised a workers' revolution, or they looked to the right-wing parties, especially the Nazis with their promises of a return to strong rule and the restoration of Germany's status in the world.

## The appeal of the Nazi Party

Hitler's ideas now had a special relevance:

- Is the Weimar government indecisive? Then Germany needs a strong leader!
- Are reparations adding to Germany's problems? Then kick out the Treaty of Versailles!
- Is unemployment a problem? Let the unemployed join the army, build Germany's armaments and be used for public works like road building!

The Nazis' 25-Point Programme (see page 66) was very attractive to those most vulnerable to the effects of the Depression: the unemployed, the elderly and the middle classes. Hitler offered them culprits to blame for Germany's troubles – the Allies, the 'November Criminals' and the Jews. None of these messages was new but they had not won support for the Nazis in the Stresemann years. The difference now was that the democratic parties simply could not get Germany back to work.

In the 1930 elections the Nazis won 107 seats. In November 1932 they won 196 seats. They did not yet have an overall majority, but they were now the biggest single party.

## Why did the Nazis succeed in elections?

The Nazis came to power because Hitler and his supporters made promises that appealed to many people. Hitler's PROPAGANDA chief, Joseph Goebbels, simplified the main policies put forward by the Nazi Party so that they could be easily understood by everyone.

**SOURCE 5**

A Nazi Party rally in Frankfurt in 1932.



## The use of propaganda

The promises made by the Nazi Party during this period were generalised statements of their beliefs:

- They talked about a return to traditional values.
- They criticised the democratic system of the Weimar Republic and its failure to solve the nation's economic problems.
- They promised employment and economic strength.
- They cited the Jews, Communists, Weimar politicians and the Treaty of Versailles as the root causes of Germany's problems.

Because these were expressed as generalised beliefs, rather than detailed policies, it was difficult to criticise them, and they appealed to large sections of society. When the Nazis were criticised over a specific policy, they were very likely to drop it. This happened when their plans to nationalise industry were criticised by industrialists.

There is no doubt that Nazi campaign methods were modern and effective. Goebbels understood how effectively propaganda could be used and the Nazis' posters and pamphlets could be found everywhere. Their rallies impressed people with their energy, enthusiasm and sheer size.



## The role of the SA

The Nazi Party was also seen as a party of order, in a time of chaos. During this period there were frequent street battles between Communist gangs and the police. In contrast, the SA and SS gave an impression of discipline and order. Many people welcomed the fact that the SA were prepared to fight the Communists (page 76). The SA were better organised and usually had the support of the police and army when they beat up opponents and disrupted meetings and rallies.

## Hitler's appeal

The Nazis' greatest campaigning asset was Hitler. He was a powerful speaker who was years ahead of his time as a communicator. Hitler ran for president in 1932, winning 13 million votes to Hindenburg's 19 million. Despite Hitler's defeat, the campaign raised his profile hugely. Using films, radio and records he brought his message to millions. He travelled by plane on a hectic tour of rallies all over Germany. He appeared as a dynamic man of the moment, the leader of a modern party with modern ideas. At the same time, he was able to appear to be a man of the people, someone who knew and understood the Germans and their problems.

### FACTFILE

#### The SA

This military group was important in the Nazi rise to power. It protected Nazi rallies and disrupted the meetings of political opponents. Although the organisation gave the impression of order, its members were not always strictly disciplined and were not fully under Hitler's control. They were known as the Brownshirts.

#### The SS

Originally part of the SA in the 1920s, but the organisation became separate under Heinrich Himmler. The SS swore total loyalty to Hitler, were tightly disciplined, and were known as the Blackshirts.

### SOURCE 6

A Nazi election poster from July 1932. The Nazis proclaim 'We build!' and promise to provide work, freedom and bread. They accuse the opposing parties of planning to use terror, corruption, lies and other strategies as the basis for their government.



### SOURCE 7

Hitler speaking at an election rally, July 1932.

*Our opponents accuse us National Socialists, and me in particular, of being intolerant and quarrelsome. They say that we don't want to work with other parties. They say the National Socialists are not German at all, because they refuse to work with other political parties. So is it typically German to have thirty political parties? I have to admit one thing – these gentlemen are quite right. We are intolerant. I have given myself this one goal – to sweep these thirty political parties out of Germany.*

### SOURCE 8

An eyewitness account of one of Hitler's meetings in the 1920s.

*He began to speak and I immediately disliked him. I didn't know then what he would later become. I found him rather comical, with his funny moustache. He had a scratchy voice and a rather strange appearance, and he shouted so much. He was shouting in this small room, and what he was saying was very simplistic. I thought he wasn't quite normal. I found him spooky.*

### 'Negative cohesion'

Not everyone was taken in by Nazi campaigning methods and Hitler's magnetism (see Source 8). But even some of the sceptics supported the Nazis. The historian Gordon Craig believed that this was because of something he called 'negative cohesion'. This meant that people supported the Nazis not because they shared Nazi views (that would be positive cohesion) but because they shared Nazi fears and dislikes. In what was seen as a modern, decadent culture, the Nazis could count on the support of those who felt traditional German values were under threat.

The SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY made a grave mistake in thinking that German people would not fall for these vague promises and accusations. They underestimated the fear and anger that German people felt towards the Weimar Republic.

## The Communist threat

As the crisis deepened, Communist support was rising too. The Nazis turned this to their advantage. 'Fear of Communism' was another shared negative. The Communist Red Fighting League broke up opposition party meetings, just like the SA. They fought street battles with police. So, out on the streets, the Nazi SA storm troopers met Communist violence with their own violence.

Many middle-class business owners had read about how the Communist Party in the USSR had discriminated against people like them. The owners of the big industries feared the Communists because of their plans to introduce state control of businesses. The industrialists were also concerned about the growing strength of Germany's trade unions. They felt the Nazis would combat these threats and some began to put money into Nazi campaign funds.

All farmers were alarmed by the Communists. They had read about Communist farming policies in the USSR where the Soviet government had taken over all of the land. Millions of peasants had been killed or imprisoned in the process. In contrast, the Nazis promised to help Germany's desperately struggling small farmers.

### SOURCE 9

'Little Adolf tries on the spiked moustache' – a cartoon by a British cartoonist, commenting on Hitler's ambitions, 27 September 1930.



### THINK

What is the cartoon (Source 9) trying to say to the British public in early 1933?

## ● The failure of Weimar democracy

Perhaps the biggest negative factor that explained the popularity of the Nazis was a shared dislike of democracy in Weimar Germany. Politicians seemed unable to tackle the problems of the Depression. When the Depression began to bite in 1930 the Chancellor, Heinrich Brüning, pursued a tough economic policy. He cut government spending and welfare benefits. He urged Germans to make sacrifices. Some historians think that he was deliberately making the situation worse in order to get the international community to cancel reparations payments. Other historians think that he was afraid of hyperinflation recurring as in 1923. In protest, the SPD (still the main party in the Reichstag) pulled out of the government. To get his measures passed, Brüning relied on President Hindenburg to use his powers under Article 48 (see Factfile, page 63) to bypass the Reichstag.

Brüning and Hindenburg decided to call new elections in 1930. This was a disastrous decision, as it gave the Nazis the opportunity to exploit the fear and discontent in Germany and make the gains you have seen in Figure 3 on page 74. The new elections resulted in another divided Reichstag, and the problems continued into 1931 and 1932. The impression was that democracy involved politicians squabbling over which job they would get in the Cabinet. Meanwhile, they did nothing about the real world, where unemployment was heading towards 6 million and the average German's income had fallen by 40 per cent since 1929. The Reichstag met fewer and fewer times (for only five days in 1932). Brüning had to continue to rely on Hindenburg using his emergency powers, bypassing the democratic process altogether.

### PRACTICE QUESTION

Which of the following was a more important reason for Hitler and the Nazis coming to power in Germany in 1933:

- The Wall Street Crash
- Nazi propaganda?

Explain your answer with reference to both reasons.

**FOCUS TASK****Why did people support the Nazis?**

Do you agree with Goebbels' view that people rallied to support Hitler for positive reasons, or do you think that Gordon Craig was right that people supported the Nazis out of fear and disillusionment? Work through Questions 1–4 to help you make up your mind.

- 1** Look carefully at Figure 3 and Sources 2, 4, 5 and 6 on pages 73–75. For each, write two sentences explaining whether you think it is evidence that:
  - supports Goebbels' view
  - supports Craig's view
  - could be used to support either interpretation.
- 2** Now work through the text and other sources on this page. Make a list of examples and evidence that seem to support either viewpoint.
- 3** Decide how far you agree with each of the following statements and give them a score on a scale of 1–5, with 1 meaning you totally agree.
  - Very few people fully supported the Nazis.
  - The key factor was the economic depression. Without it, the Nazis would have remained a minority fringe party.
  - The politicians of the Weimar Republic were mainly responsible for the rise of the Nazis.
- 4** Write a short paragraph explaining your score for each statement.

**SOURCE 10**

S. Williams, in *The Rise and Fall of Hitler's Germany*, published in 1986, assesses the reasons for Hitler's success.

*The majority of Germans never voted for the Nazis.*

*The Nazis made it clear they would destroy democracy and all who stood in their way. Why then didn't their enemies join together to stop Hitler? ... Had the Communists and Socialists joined forces they would probably have been strong enough both in the Reichstag and on the streets to have blocked the Nazis. The fact was that by 1932–33 there were simply not enough Germans who believed in democracy and individual freedom to save the Weimar Republic.*

**THINK**

Look at the last sentence of Source 10. Write a list of reasons why this might be true.

## How Hitler became Chancellor: The role of Papen and Hindenburg

After the Reichstag elections of July 1932 the Nazis were the largest single party (with 230 seats) but not a majority party. Hitler demanded the post of Chancellor from the President, the old war hero Hindenburg. However, Hindenburg was suspicious of Hitler and refused. He allowed the current Chancellor Franz von Papen (an old friend of Hindenburg) to carry on as Chancellor. He then used his emergency powers to pass the measures that von Papen had hoped would solve the unemployment problem.

However, von Papen was soon in trouble. He had virtually no support at all in the Reichstag and so called yet another election in November 1932. The Nazis again came out as the largest party, although their share of the vote fell.

Hitler regarded the election as a disaster for the Nazis. The signs were that the Hitler flood tide had finally turned. The Nazis started to run out of funds. Hitler is said to have threatened suicide.

Hindenburg again refused to appoint Hitler as Chancellor. In December 1932 he chose Kurt von Schleicher, one of his own advisers and a bitter rival of von Papen. Von Papen remained as an adviser to Hindenburg. Within a month, however, von Schleicher too was forced to resign. By this time it was clear that the Weimar system of government was not working. In one sense, Hindenburg had already overthrown the principles of democracy by running Germany with emergency powers. If he was to rescue the democratic system, he needed a Chancellor who actually had support in the Reichstag.

Through January 1933 Hindenburg and von Papen met secretly with industrialists, army leaders and politicians. And on 30 January, to everyone's great surprise, they offered Hitler the post of Chancellor. Why did they do this? With only a few Nazis in the Cabinet and von Papen as Vice Chancellor, they were confident that they could limit Hitler's influence and resist his extremist demands. The idea was that the policies would be made by the Cabinet, which was filled with conservatives



like von Papen. Hitler would be there to get support in the Reichstag for those policies and to control the Communists. So Hitler ended up as Chancellor not because of the will of the German people, but through a behind-the-scenes deal by some German aristocrats. Both Hindenburg and von Papen were sure that they could control Hitler. Both were very wrong.

## FOCUS TASK

### How did Hitler become Chancellor in 1933?

Here is a list of factors that helped Hitler come to power.

#### Nazi strengths

- Hitler's speaking skills
- Nazi propaganda campaigns
- The Nazis' violent treatment of their opponents
- Nazis' criticisms of the Weimar system of government
- Nazi policies
- Support from big business

#### Opponents' weaknesses

- Failure to deal with the Depression
- Failure to co-operate with one another
- Attitudes of Germans to the democratic parties

#### Other factors

- Weaknesses of the Weimar Republic
- Scheming of Hindenburg and von Papen
- The impact of the Depression
- The Treaty of Versailles
- Memories of the problems of 1923

- 1 For each factor, write down one example of how it helped Hitler.
- 2 Give each factor a mark out of 10 for its importance in bringing Hitler to power, with 1 being the most important.
- 3 Choose what you think are the five most important factors and write a short paragraph on each, explaining why you have chosen it.
- 4 If you took away any of those factors, would Hitler still have become Chancellor in 1933?
- 5 Were any of those five factors also present in the 1920s?
- 6 If so, explain why the Nazis were not successful in the 1920s.

## SOURCE 11

The Reichstag Fire.



## ● The establishment of Hitler's dictatorship

It is easy to forget, but when Hitler became Chancellor in January 1933 he was in a very precarious position. Few people thought he would hold on to power for long. Even fewer thought that by the summer of 1934 he would be the supreme dictator of Germany. He achieved this through a clever combination of methods – some legal, others dubious. He also managed to defeat or reach agreements with those who could have stopped him.

### The Reichstag Fire and the March 1933 election

Once he was Chancellor, Hitler took steps to complete a Nazi takeover of Germany. He called another election for March 1933 to try to get an overall Nazi majority in the Reichstag. Germany's cities again witnessed speeches, rallies, processions and street fighting. Hitler was using the same tactics as in previous elections, but now he had the resources of state media and control of the streets. Even so, success was in the balance. Then on 27 February there was a dramatic development; the Reichstag building burned down. Hitler blamed the Communists and declared that the fire was the beginning of a Communist uprising. A young Dutch Communist, named Marinus van der Lubbe, was arrested at the scene and was said to have confessed to starting the fire. Hitler demanded special emergency powers to deal with the situation and was given them by President Hindenburg. The Nazis used these powers to arrest Communists, break up meetings and frighten voters.

There have been many theories about what caused the fire, including that it was an accident, the work of a madman, or a Communist plot. Many Germans at the time thought that the Nazis might have started the fire themselves.

## THINK

Some people suggest that the Nazis burnt down the Reichstag themselves. Explain why the Nazis might have wanted to do this.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

**Interpretation A:** One view about the Reichstag Fire, February 1933. It comes from an account written in 1950 by Rudolph Diels, a Nazi and head of police in Berlin in 1933.

*I think van der Lubbe started the Reichstag Fire on his own. When I arrived at the burning building, some police officers were already questioning him. His voluntary confession made me think that he was such an expert arsonist that he did not need any helpers. Why could not one person set fire to the old furniture, the heavy curtains and the bone-dry wood panelling? He had lit several dozen fires using firefighters and his burning shirt, which he was holding in his right hand like a torch when he was overpowered by Reichstag officials.*

**Interpretation B:** Another view of the Reichstag Fire. It comes from the records of the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial, 1945. General Halder, Chief of the German General Staff, was asked about the fire.

*At a luncheon on the birthday of the Führer in 1942, the conversation turned to the topic of the Reichstag building. I heard with my own ears when Goering interrupted the conversation and shouted: 'The only one who really knows about the Reichstag is I, because I set it on fire!'*

Read Interpretations A and B and then answer Questions 1–3.

- 1 How does Interpretation B differ from Interpretation A about the cause of the Reichstag Fire?  
Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B.
- 2 Why might the authors of Interpretations A and B have a different interpretation about the cause of the fire?  
Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge.
- 3 Which interpretation do you find more convincing about the cause of the fire?  
Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge.

## The Enabling Act, March 1933

In the election of early March 1933, the Nazis won their largest-ever share of the votes and, with the support of the smaller Nationalist Party who got 52 seats, Hitler had an overall majority. He could use this to destroy the Constitution of the Weimar Republic.

Using the SA and SS, Hitler then intimidated the Reichstag into passing the Enabling Act which allowed him to make laws without consulting the Reichstag. Only the SPD voted against him. Following the election, the Communists had been banned. The Catholic Centre Party decided to co-operate with the Nazis rather than be treated like the Communists. In return, they retained control of Catholic schools. The Enabling Act made Hitler a virtual dictator. For the next four years if he wanted a new law he could just pass it. There was nothing President Hindenburg or anyone else could do.

## The elimination of political opposition in 1933

Within six months of Hitler becoming Chancellor, all political opposition had been silenced:

- 30 January** Hitler appointed Chancellor.
- 27 February** Reichstag Fire. Arrest of 4,000 Communists.
- 28 February** Emergency Decree issued by Hindenburg.
- 5 March** Reichstag elections – Nazis gained 44 per cent of votes.  
With support of Nationalist Party, Nazis had 52 per cent of votes.
- 13 March** Goebbels took control of all media.
- 24 March** Enabling Act – Hitler could pass decrees without the President being involved.
- April** Civil service, law courts and education purged of opponents of the Nazis.
- 2 May** Trade unions banned. All German workers to belong to new German Labour Front.
- 14 July** Law Against Formation of New Parties. Germany becomes a one-party state.
- 20 July** Concordat (agreement) between state and Catholic Church.

**FIGURE 12**

Election results from March 1933 compared to the previous election in November 1932.

Party	Number of seats	Seats in 1932
Nazi Party	288	196
Social Democrats (SPD)	120	121
Communist Party	81	100
Catholic Centre Party	73	70
Others	85	97

## The Night of the Long Knives, June 1934

Hitler was still not entirely secure, however. The leading officers in the army were not impressed by him and were particularly suspicious of Hitler's SA and its leader, Ernst Röhm. The SA was a badly disciplined force and, what's more, Röhm talked of making the SA into a second German army. Hitler himself was also suspicious of Röhm. Hitler feared that Röhm's control over the 4 million SA men made him a potentially dangerous rival.

Hitler had to choose between the army and the SA. He made his choice and acted ruthlessly. On the weekend of 29–30 June 1934 squads of SS men broke into the homes of Röhm and other leading figures in the SA and arrested them. Hitler accused Röhm of plotting to overthrow and murder him. Over the weekend Röhm and possibly as many as 400 others were executed. These included the former Chancellor von Schleicher, a fierce critic of Hitler, and others who actually had no connection with Röhm. Although the killings took place over the whole weekend, this purge came to be known as the Night of the Long Knives.

Hindenburg thanked Hitler for his 'determined action which has nipped treason in the bud'. The army said it was well satisfied with the events of the weekend.

The SA was not disbanded afterwards. It remained as a Nazi PARAMILITARY organisation, but was very much subordinate to the SS and never regained the influence of 1933. Many of its members were absorbed by the army and the SS.

## Der Führer, August 1934

Soon after the Night of the Long Knives, Hindenburg died and Hitler took over as Supreme Leader (*Führer*) of Germany. On 2 August 1934 the entire army swore an oath of personal loyalty to Adolf Hitler as Führer of Germany. The army agreed to stay out of politics and to serve Hitler. In return, Hitler spent vast sums on REARMAMENT, brought back CONSCRIPTION and made plans to make Germany a great military power again. Hitler had total control, in theory, over the government and the armed forces.

### FOCUS TASK

#### How did Hitler establish his dictatorship, 1933–34?

- 1 Study the information and sources on pages 78–80. Make a list of examples of:
  - Nazis using force against their opponents
  - Nazis making deals with their opponents
  - Nazis combining these two methods.
- 2 Explain why the Enabling Act was so important to Hitler.
- 3 Why might Hitler have executed people such as von Schleicher who were nothing to do with the SA?
- 4 Why do you think Hitler chose the support of the army over the support of the SA?

### TOPIC SUMMARY

#### Germany and the Depression

- In 1929 the STOCK MARKET collapse in Wall Street, New York, USA, led to economic chaos across the world.
- There were worsening economic problems in Germany in 1930–32.
- Extremist parties gained more support – the Nazis and the Communists.
- In May 1932 Hitler stood for President, but was defeated by Hindenburg. However, the Nazis were the largest party in two successive Reichstag elections.
- In January 1933 Hitler was invited to be Chancellor, with von Papen as Vice-Chancellor.
- The Reichstag Fire in February 1933 gave Hitler the excuse to act against the Communists.
- In March 1933 the Reichstag passed the Enabling Act, which gave Hitler the ability to pass his own laws.
- In April 1933 all civil servants and teachers who were not Nazi supporters were removed from their posts.
- In May 1933 no political party other than the Nazis was allowed. Trade unions were banned.
- Hitler saw the SA as a possible threat to his power, and in the Night of the Long Knives, June 1934, leading SA members were killed.
- Hitler became Führer in August 1934 after the death of President Hindenburg.



**FOCUS**

This section explains how a fundamental change affected the lives of Germans, both in the 1930s and during the Second World War. Democracy had been replaced by dictatorship. Personal freedoms were lost. Initially, many people were pleased to see the Nazis in charge – creating order and restoring the economy. However, by 1939 many saw the dark side of Nazi rule, and this became obvious to all, within and outside Germany, during the Second World War.

In this part of the topic you will study the following:

- Economic changes in peacetime and war and their effects on German society.
- Social policy and practice and its effects on:
  - women
  - youth
  - the Churches
  - ethnic minorities.
- The use of persuasion, propaganda and repression, and why so few opposed the regime.

**SOURCE 1**

A completed *autobahn*.



## 2.3 The experiences of Germans under the Nazis

### ● Economic changes: Employment and rearmament

**FOCUS TASK****Part 1: The Nazis' economic policies**

As you read through pages 81–83, you will come across a number of individuals, organisations and terms in bold type in the text, **like this**. You could add more of your own if you wish. Draw up a table containing definitions of the words, or explanations of their importance to the Nazis' economic policies. The completed table will help you with your revision. You could organise your table like this:

Key word/term/person	Definition/explanation

Hitler and the Nazis came to power because they promised to use radical methods to solve the country's two main problems – desperate unemployment and a crisis in German farming. In return for work and other benefits, the majority of the German people gave up their political freedom. Was it worth it?

At first, many Germans felt it was, particularly the 5 million who were unemployed in 1933. Hitler was fortunate in that by 1933 the worst of the Depression was over. Even so, there is no doubt that the Nazis acted with energy and commitment to solve some of the main problems. The brilliant economist **Dr Hjalmar Schacht** organised Germany's finances to fund a huge programme of work creation. The National Labour Service sent men on **public works projects** and conservation programmes, in particular to build a network of motorways or **autobahns**. Railways were extended or built from scratch. There were major house-building programmes and grandiose new public building projects such as the Reich Chancellery in Berlin.

**SOURCE 2**

Previously unemployed men assemble for the building of a public works project, September 1933.

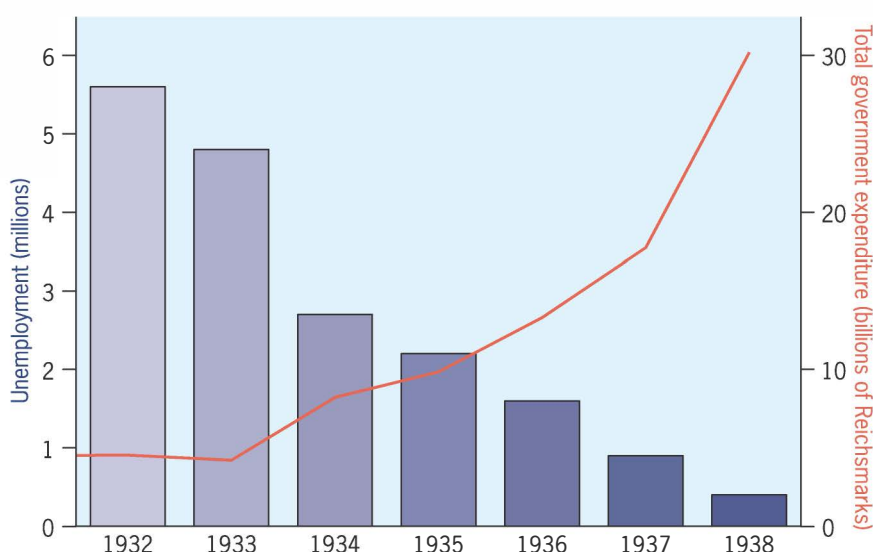


Other measures brought increasing prosperity. One of Hitler's most cherished plans was **rearmament**. In 1935 he reintroduced **conscription** for the German army. In 1936 he announced a **Four-Year Plan** under the control of **Goering** to get the German economy ready for war (it was one of the very few clear policy documents that Hitler ever wrote). The aim was to achieve self-sufficiency in as many aspects of the economy as possible.

Conscription reduced unemployment. The need for weapons, equipment and uniforms created jobs in the coal mines, steel industry and textile mills. Engineers and designers gained new opportunities, particularly when Hitler decreed that Germany would have a world-class air force (the *Luftwaffe*). As well as bringing economic recovery, these measures boosted Hitler's popularity because they boosted **national pride**. Germans began to feel that their country was finally emerging from the humiliation of the Great War and the Treaty of Versailles, and putting itself on an equal footing with the other GREAT POWERS.

**FIGURE 3**

Unemployment and government expenditure in Germany, 1932–38. Economic recovery was almost entirely funded by the state rather than from Germans investing their own savings. Despite this, unemployment fell steadily and Germany was actually running short of workers by 1939.



## Economic change: Benefits and drawbacks

Hitler's economic miracle – as the Nazis saw it – provided initial advantages for many Germans. The disadvantages were either ignored or not appreciated. Later in the period, it was the drawbacks that came to the fore.

### Industrial workers

Hitler promised (and delivered) lower unemployment which helped to ensure popularity among **industrial workers**. These workers were important to the Nazis: Hitler needed good workers to create the industries that would help to make Germany great and establish a new German empire in eastern Europe. This was an area containing essential raw materials and good farming land. The Slav people of eastern Europe were viewed as inferior to the Nazis, which provided a justification in itself.

It was very important for Hitler to keep the loyalty of industrial workers, particularly as he had abolished trade unions in stages from spring 1933.

Firstly, the Nazis took over trade union offices, confiscated their funds and arrested the leaders. The May Day parades, traditionally organised by the trade unions, were taken over by the Nazis as a new national holiday. Hitler went on to abolish all political parties other than the Nazis, thus removing the left-wing parties that many industrial workers supported.

In place of the unions, a new organisation was set up – the German Labour Front (DAF) – headed by **Dr Robert Ley**. The DAF kept strict control of workers. It was forbidden to strike for better pay and conditions and in some areas workers were prevented from moving to better paid jobs. Wages remained comparatively low, although prices were also strictly controlled. Even so, by the late 1930s, many workers were grumbling that their standard of living was still lower than it had been before the Depression.

With all these restrictions on workers, the Nazis had to work very hard to gain and maintain the loyalty of the working class, many of whom had voted Communist before Hitler became Chancellor. The DAF appealed to the patriotism of the workers. It was a national organisation, whereas the trade unions had represented sections of workers. The workers were referred to as a 'labour force' – the people who would work to make Germany great again after the disgrace of the Treaty of Versailles; the people who would rebuild Germany's reputation as a major world power.

Propaganda was extremely important in getting and maintaining support from this labour force. The message was clear: the re-building of Germany was in the hands of the workers; the nation was going to regain its greatness, at a time when other European countries were suffering from the consequences of the Great Depression. All the visual aspects of propaganda played on the emotions of the workers – the posters, the parades, the music, the films, helped by the Nazis' total control of the newspapers and radio.

Hitler also won the loyalty of industrial workers by a variety of initiatives:

- Schemes such as **Strength through Joy (KDF)** gave them cheap theatre and cinema tickets, and organised courses, trips and sports events. Workers were offered cut-price cruises on the latest luxury liners.
- Many thousands of workers saved five marks a week in the state scheme to buy the **Volkswagen Beetle**, the 'people's car'. It was designed by Ferdinand Porsche and became a symbol of the prosperous new Germany, even though no workers ever received a car because all car production was halted by the war in 1939.
- Another important scheme was the **Beauty of Labour** movement. This improved working conditions in factories. It introduced features not seen in many workplaces before, such as washing facilities and low-cost canteens.

Although some workers continued to grumble and to sympathise with Communist beliefs, most toed the Nazi line, as did other groups in society. By 1939 over 21 million workers were members of the German Labour Front. Hitler had his workforce, to build factories and roads and to re-arm the country for future war.

### Farming communities

The farmers had been an important factor in the Nazis' rise to power. Hitler did not forget this and introduced a series of measures to help them. In September 1933 he introduced the **Reich Food Estate**. This set up central boards to buy agricultural produce from the farmers and distribute it to markets across Germany. It gave the peasant farmers a guaranteed market for their goods at guaranteed prices.

The second main measure was the **Reich Entailed Farm Law**. It gave peasants state protection for their farms: banks could

not seize their land if they could not pay loans or mortgages. This ensured that peasants' farms stayed in their hands.

The Reich Entailed Farm Law also had a racial aim. Part of the Nazi philosophy was '**Blood and Soil**', the belief that the peasant farmers were the basis of Germany's master race. They would be the backbone of the new German Empire in the east. As a result, their way of life had to be protected. As Source 4 shows, the measures were widely appreciated.

However, rather like the industrial workers, some peasants were not thrilled with the regime's measures. The Reich Food Estate meant that efficient, go-ahead farmers were held back by having to work through the same processes as less efficient farmers. Because of the Reich Entailed Farm Law, banks were unwilling to lend money to farmers. It also meant that only the eldest child inherited the farm. As a result, many children of farmers left the land to work for better pay in Germany's industries. **Rural depopulation** ran at about 3 per cent per year in the 1930s – the exact opposite of the Nazis' aims!

#### SOURCE 4

Lusse Essig's memories of harvest festivals in the 1930s. Lusse was a farm worker who went on to work for the Agriculture Ministry between 1937 and 1945.

*Thousands of people came from all over Germany to the Harvest Festival celebrations ... We all felt the same happiness and joy. Harvest festival was the thank you for us farmers having a future again. I believe no statesman has ever been as well loved as Adolf Hitler was at that time. Those were happy times.*

### Big business and the middle classes

The record of the Nazis with the **middle classes** was also mixed. Certainly many middle-class business people were grateful to the Nazis for eliminating the Communist threat to their businesses and properties. They also liked the way in which the Nazis seemed to be bringing order to Germany. For the owners of small businesses it was a mixed picture. If you owned a small engineering firm, you were likely to do well from government orders as rearmament spending grew in the 1930s. However, if you produced consumer goods or ran a small shop, you might well struggle. Despite Hitler's promises, the large department stores which were taking business away from local shops were not closed.

#### PRACTICE QUESTION

Which of the following groups benefited more from Nazi economic policy?

- Industrial workers
- The owners of big business.

Explain your answer with reference to both groups.



## FOCUS TASK

### Part 2: How did the Nazis' economic policies affect German society?

Using your table that you created in the Focus Task on page 81, write two paragraphs to summarise how the Nazis' economic policies affected different groups in German society.

## THINK

- 1 Study Source 5. What are the clues that this is propaganda?
- 2 Why was it so important for the Nazis to produce propaganda like this two years after the start of the Second World War?

It was **big business** that really benefited from Nazi rule. The big companies no longer had to worry about troublesome trade unions and strikes. Companies such as the chemicals giant IG Farben gained huge government contracts to make explosives, fertilisers and even artificial oil from coal. Other household names today, such as Mercedes and Volkswagen, prospered from Nazi policies.

## Impact of the war on the German economy and the people

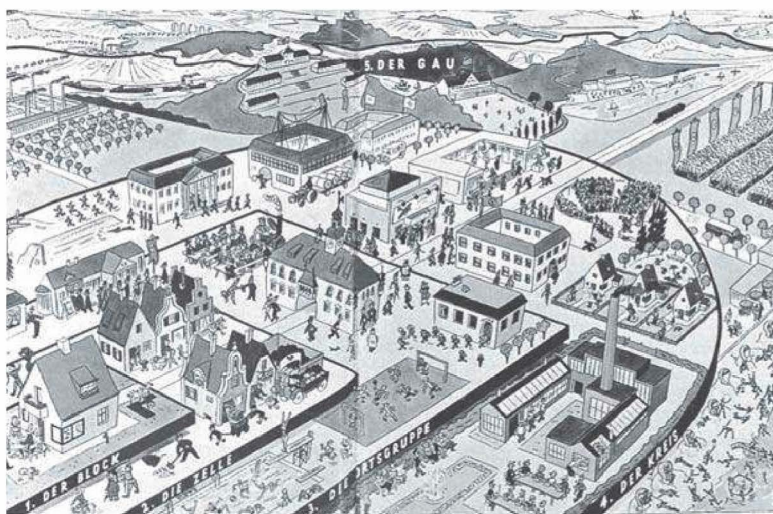
Germans had no great enthusiasm for war. People still had memories of the First World War. But in war, as in peacetime, the Nazis used all methods available to make the German people support the regime.

Food rationing was introduced soon after war began in September 1939. Clothes rationing followed in November 1939. Even so, from 1939 to 1941 it was not difficult to keep up civilian morale because the war went spectacularly well for Germany. Hitler was in control of much of western and eastern Europe and supplies of luxury goods flowed into Germany from captured territories.

However, in 1941 Hitler took the massive gamble of invading the Soviet Union, and for the next three years his troops were engaged in an increasingly expensive war with Russian forces who 'tore the heart out of the German army', as the British war leader, Winston Churchill, put it. As the tide turned against the German armies, civilians found their lives increasingly disrupted. They had to cut back on heating, work longer hours and recycle their rubbish. Goebbels redoubled his censorship efforts. He tried to maintain people's support for the war by involving them in it through asking them to make sacrifices. They donated an estimated 1.5 million fur coats to help to clothe the German army in Russia.

## SOURCE 5

From the Nazi propaganda magazine *Signal*, 1941, showing life in Germany continuing as normal despite the war.



## State control of the economy from 1942 onwards

From 1942, Albert Speer (as Minister of Armaments and War Production) began to direct Germany's war economy. All effort focused on the armament industries. Postal services were suspended and letter boxes were closed. All places of entertainment were closed, except cinemas – Goebbels needed these to show propaganda films. Women were drafted into the labour force in increasing numbers. Country areas had to take evacuees from the cities and refugees from eastern Europe.

These measures were increasingly carried out by the SS. In fact, the SS became virtually a state within the German state. This SS empire had its own armed forces, armaments industries and labour camps. It developed a business empire that was worth a fortune. However, even the SS could not win the war, let alone keep up German morale.

### Bombing on German cities

British bombing on German cities began in 1942 when the north German city of Lubeck was virtually destroyed. Between 1943 and 1945, with American help, major bombing assaults were made on cities such as Hamburg and Dresden. Overall, it is estimated that about half a million German civilians died and three-quarters of a million were wounded, while 7.5 million German civilians were made homeless.

### The loss of morale among German civilians

With defeat looming, support for the Nazis weakened. Germans stopped declaring food they had. They stayed away from Nazi rallies. They refused to give the 'Heil Hitler' salute when asked to do so. Himmler even contacted the Allies to ask about possible peace terms.

### Refugees

By 1945 the German people were in a desperate state. As well as those made homeless by Allied bombings, refugees were fleeing the advancing Russian armies in the east. In eastern Germany over 3 million Germans were fleeing, but they got no help from the retreating German army. No transport was easily available as priority was given to retreating German troops and to moving equipment. Most of those fleeing were forced to walk hundreds of miles, with attendant cold, hunger and disease. Over half a million died on the journey. When the survivors reached western Germany they found cities devastated by bombing and chronic food shortages.

## FACTFILE

### Germany and the Second World War

<b>Sept 1939</b>	German invasion of Poland
<b>Spring 1940</b>	German invasion of Holland, Belgium and France
<b>Summer 1940</b>	Start of the Battle of Britain
<b>Spring 1941</b>	German invasion of Balkans
<b>June 1941</b>	German invasion of the USSR
<b>October 1942</b>	German defeat at El Alamein in North Africa
<b>February 1943</b>	German army surrenders to Russians at Stalingrad
<b>June 1944</b>	Allied invasion of Europe (D-Day landings)
<b>January 1945</b>	Russian and Allied troops move in on Germany
<b>May 1945</b>	End of war in Europe; Hitler commits suicide.

### SOURCE 6

The text on this poster reads 'Hard times, hard tasks, hard hearts'.



### SOURCE 7

A 1943 poster telling people to black out their windows: 'The enemy sees your light!'



## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- 1 Describe two problems faced by German civilians during the Second World War.
- 2 In what ways were the living standards of German civilians affected by the Second World War? Explain your answer.

## THINK

What techniques do Sources 6 and 7 use to make them effective propaganda posters?



## • Social policy and practice

Hitler wanted all Germans to think of themselves as part of a national community. Their first loyalty would be to Germany and the Führer, not to their regional area or group within society. They would be proud to belong to a great nation. Hitler's policies towards each group were designed to encourage this kind of loyalty to the Nazi state. In part, Hitler succeeded. The apparent benefits of Nazi rule made most Germans willing to accept some social control in the interests of making Germany great again.

### SOURCE 8

A painting showing the Nazis' view of an ideal German family.



### Effects on women

The Nazis were a very male-dominated organisation, and all the Nazi leaders were men. Hitler had a very traditional view of the role of the German woman as wife and mother. It is worth remembering that many women at the time agreed with him. In the traditional rural areas and small towns, many women felt that the proper role of a woman was to support her husband. There was also resentment towards working women in the early 1930s, since they were seen as keeping men out of jobs. It all created a lot of pressure on women to conform to what the Nazis called 'the traditional balance' between men and women. Women's role in society was summed up as '*Kinder, Küche, Kirche*' ('Children, Cooking, Church').

Alarmed at the falling birth rate, Hitler offered tempting financial incentives for married couples to have at least four children. Women who had eight children received a 'Gold Cross', and were given a privileged seat at Nazi meetings. Posters, radio broadcasts and newsreels all celebrated the ideas of motherhood and homebuilding. The German Maidens' League reinforced these ideas, focusing on a combination of good physical health and housekeeping skills. This was reinforced at school (see Source 14 on page 88).

With all these encouragements the birth rate did increase from 15 per thousand in 1933 to 20 per thousand in 1939. There was also an increase in pregnancies outside marriage. These girls were looked after in state maternity hostels.

### THINK

- 1 In what ways does Source 8 show typical Nazi values?
- 2 Using Source 9 and your contextual knowledge, why were camps such as the ones shown important in Nazi Germany in the 1930s?

### SOURCE 9

Girls from the German Maidens' League camping. The League offered excitement and escape from boring duties in the home.





However, by 1939 there was a shortage of labour to work in factories. Many women were encouraged back into work – and this process accelerated during the early 1940s with the huge demands for war materials.

### SOURCE 10

Leni Riefenstahl directing the shooting of her film of the 1936 Olympics.



### SOURCE 11

Albert Speer, *Inside The Third Reich*, 1970. Speer was Minister of Armaments and War Production.

*I went to Sauckel [the Nazi minister in charge of labour] with the proposition that we should recruit our labour from the ranks of German women. He replied brusquely that where to obtain which workers was his business. Moreover, he said, as Gauleiter [a regional governor] he was Hitler's subordinate and responsible to the Führer alone ... Sauckel offered to put the question to Goering as Commissioner of the Four-Year Plan ... but I was scarcely allowed to advance my arguments. Sauckel and Goering continually interrupted me. Sauckel laid great weight on the danger that factory work might inflict moral harm on German womanhood; not only might their 'psychic and emotional life' be affected but also their ability to bear children.*

*Goering totally concurred. But just to be absolutely sure, Sauckel went immediately to Hitler and had him confirm the decision. All my good arguments were therefore blown to the winds.*

### FOCUS TASK

#### How successful were the Nazi policies for women?

Read these two statements:

- 'Nazi policy for women was confused.'
- 'Nazi policy for women was a failure.'

For each statement explain whether you agree or disagree with it and use examples from the text to support your explanation.

## Nazi policies towards young people and their impact

It was Hitler's aim to control every aspect of life in Germany, including the daily life of ordinary people. The Nazis had reorganised every aspect of the school curriculum to make children loyal to them.

### Education policies and their impact

At school you would have learned about the history of Germany. You would have been outraged to find out how the German army was 'stabbed in the back' by the weak politicians who had made peace. You might well remember the hardships of the 1920s for yourself, but at school you would have been told how these were caused by Jews squeezing profits out of honest Germans. By the time you were a senior pupil, your studies in history would have made you confident that loyalty to the Führer was right and good. Your biology lessons would have informed you that you were special, as one of the Aryan race which was so superior in intelligence and strength to the *Untermenschen* or sub-human Jews and Slavs of eastern Europe. In maths you would have been set questions like the one in Source 13.

#### SOURCE 12

Dr Robert Ley, who was Chief of the Labour Front and in charge of making 'good citizens' out of the German people.

*Our state is an educational state ... It does not let a man go free from the cradle to the grave. We begin with the child when he is three years old. As soon as he begins to think, he is made to carry a little flag. Then follows school, the Hitler Youth, the storm troopers and military training. We don't let him go; and when all that is done, comes the Labour Front, which takes possession of him again, and does not let him go till he dies, even if he does not like it.*

#### SOURCE 13

A question from a Nazi maths textbook, 1933.

*The Jews are aliens in Germany. In 1933 there were 66,060,000 inhabitants of the German Reich of whom 499,862 were Jews. What is the percentage of aliens in Germany?*

#### THINK

- 1 Read Source 12. Do you think that the speaker is proud of what he is saying?
- 2 Do you think the real aim of the question in Source 13 is to improve mathematical skills?
- 3 Read Source 14. Eugenics is the study of how to produce perfect offspring by choosing ideal qualities in the parents. How would this help the Nazis?

#### SOURCE 14

The daily timetable for a girls' school in Nazi Germany.

8.00	German (every day)
8.50	Geography, History or Singing (alternate days)
9.40	Race Studies and Ideology (every day)
10.25	Recess, Sports and Special Announcements (every day)
11.00	Domestic Science or Maths (alternate days)
12.10	Eugenics or Health Biology (alternate days)
1.00–6.00	Sport
Evenings	Sex education, Ideology or Domestic Science (one evening each)

#### SOURCE 15

A German newspaper, heavily controlled by the Nazis, approves of the curriculum in 1939.

*All subjects – German language, History, Geography, Chemistry and Mathematics – must concentrate on military subjects, the glorification of military service and of German heroes and leaders and the strength of a rebuilt Germany. Chemistry will develop a knowledge of chemical warfare, explosives, etc., while Mathematics will help the young to understand artillery, calculations, ballistics.*

As a member of the Hitler Youth (boys) or League of German Maidens (girls), you would have marched in exciting parades with loud bands. You would probably be physically fit. Your leisure time would also be devoted to Hitler and the Nazis. You would be a strong cross-country runner, and confident at reading maps. After years of summer camps, you would be comfortable camping out of doors and if you were a boy you would know how to clean a rifle and keep it in good condition.

### Youth organisations

As a child in Nazi Germany, you might well feel slightly alienated (estranged) from your parents because they are not as keen on the Nazis as you are. They expect your first loyalty to be to your family, whereas your Hitler Youth leader makes it clear that your first loyalty is to Adolf Hitler. You find it hard to understand why your father grumbles about Nazi regulation of his working practices – surely the Führer (Hitler) is protecting him? Your parents find the idea of Nazi inspectors checking up on the teachers rather strange. For you it is normal.

## SOURCE 16

A young German describes his feelings after a Hitler Youth rally.

*Hitler looked over the stand, and I know he looked into my eyes, and he said: 'You my boys are the standard bearers, you will inherit what we have created.' From that moment there was not any doubt I was bound to Adolf Hitler until long after our defeat. Afterwards I told my friends how Hitler had looked into my eyes, but they all said: 'No! It was my eyes he was looking into.'*

## THINK

Study Sources 17 and 18. In what ways do they illustrate how the Nazis gained support for their policies?

## SOURCE 17

Members of the Hitler Youth in the 1930s. From a very early age children were encouraged to join the Nazi youth organisations. It was not compulsory, but most young people did join.



## SOURCE 18

Illustration from a Nazi children's book. The children are being taught to distrust Jews.



## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Read Interpretations A and B and then answer Questions 1–3.

**Interpretation A** An account of life in a Hitler Youth Camp in the 1930s. It is from *This is Germany* by C. W. Domville-Fife, a British writer, published in 1939. It was written to explain what the author had seen in a recent visit to a Hitler Youth Camp.

*Life in the camp appeared to be one of healthy exercise in sports and games, but absolute discipline was maintained. By this I do not mean that it was harshly enforced. The boys were happy to accept it.*

*It seemed to me also that, although every boy was conscious of his approaching military service, there was little if any drill performed in the camp. The leader has, of course, served in the German army, and military enthusiasm is part of the healthy and cheerful pattern of the German Boy Scout movement.*

**Interpretation B** A description of a Hitler Youth Camp in the 1930s. It comes from a book published in 1938, *Just Back from Germany* by J. A. Cole, a British writer.

*It is claimed that the work of the Hitler Youth is in no way pre-military training. All the same, I should think it is a good preparation for the army. The children learn discipline. They march in ranks. They drill. When I attended a Hitler Youth Camp, I asked a boy what they had done last night. In the presence of several others and one of the leaders, he said pistol-shooting. Very good fun, and not necessarily a military pastime. However, it hardly justifies the claim that the youth movements have nothing to do with military training.*

- 1 How does Interpretation B differ from Interpretation A about the Hitler Youth Camps?  
Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B.
- 2 Why might the authors of Interpretations A and B have a different interpretation about Hitler Youth Camps?  
Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge.
- 3 Which interpretation do you find more convincing about the Hitler Youth Camps?  
Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge.



## FOCUS TASK

### How did young people react to the Nazi regime?

- 1 Young people were among the most fanatical supporters of the Nazi regime. Use pages 88–90 to write three paragraphs to explain why the Nazis were successful in winning them over. Include the following points:
  - Why the Nazis wanted to control young people.
  - How they set about doing it.
  - What the attractions of the youth movements were.
- 2 The Nazi regime was not successful in keeping the loyalty of all young people. Add a fourth paragraph to your essay to explain why some young people rejected the Nazi youth movements.

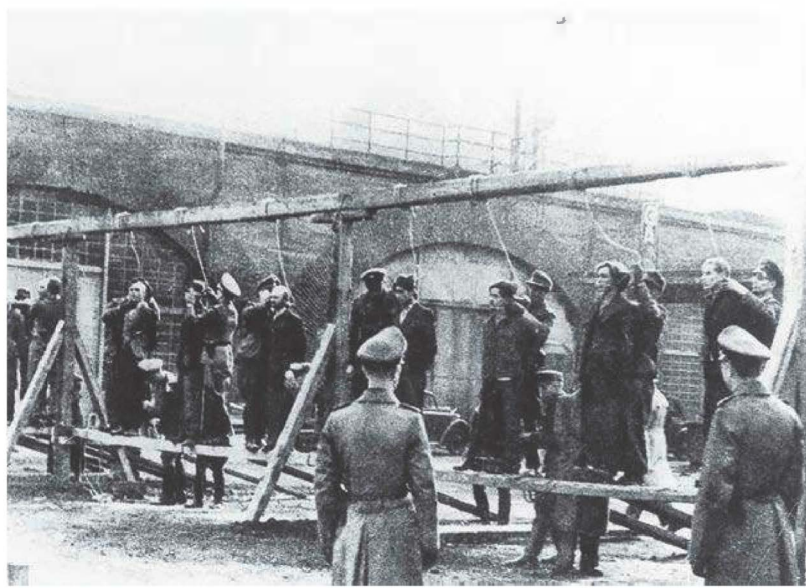
### SOURCE 19

From a report by the Nazi youth leadership, 1942.

*The formation of cliques, i.e. groupings of young people outside the Hitler Youth, has been on the increase before and particularly during the war to such a degree that one must speak of a serious risk of political, moral and criminal subversion of our youth.*

### SOURCE 20

The public hanging of twelve Edelweiss Pirates in Cologne in 1944.



## Did all young people support the Nazis?

This is a difficult question to answer because many factors have to be taken into account. It depended on whether you were a young person from a working-class or middle-class background. It depended on you as a person of course. It also depended on when we ask that question. Levels of support for the Nazis differed at different times. Many young people were attracted to the Nazi youth movements by the leisure opportunities they offered. There were really no alternatives. All other youth organisations had been either absorbed or made illegal. Even so, only half of all German boys were members of the Hitler Youth in 1933 and only 15 per cent of girls were members of the League of German Maidens. As with all other sections of society, young people were monitored closely and the reports of the security services threw up some interesting groups, such as the 'Swing' youth movement and the Edelweiss Pirates. Neither of these groups had strong political views. They were not political opponents of the Nazis. But they resented and resisted Nazi control of their lives.

- **The 'Swing' youth:** This was made up mainly of middle-class teenagers. They went to parties where they listened to English and American music and sang English songs. They danced American dances such as the 'jitterbug' to jazz music which the Nazis had banned. They accepted Jews at their clubs. They talked about and enjoyed sex. They were deliberately 'slovenly'.
- **The Edelweiss Pirates:** The Edelweiss Pirates were working-class teenagers. They were not an organised movement, and groups in various cities took different names. The Pirates were mainly aged between 14 and 17 (Germans could leave school at fourteen, but they did not have to sign on for military service until they were seventeen). At the weekends, the Pirates went camping. They sang songs, just like the Hitler Youth, but they changed the lyrics of songs to mock Germany and when they spotted bands of Hitler Youth they taunted and sometimes attacked them. In contrast with the Hitler Youth, the Pirates included boys and girls.

## The impact of the war

In 1939 membership of a Nazi youth movement was made compulsory. But by this time the youth movements were going through a crisis. Many of the experienced leaders had been drafted into the German army. Others, particularly those who had been leaders in the pre-Nazi days, had been replaced by keener Nazis. Many of the movements were now run by older teenagers who rigidly enforced Nazi rules. They even forbade other teenagers to meet informally with their friends.

As the war progressed, the activities of the youth movements focused increasingly on the war effort and military drill. The popularity of the movements decreased and indeed the popularity of anti-Hitler Youth movements increased. The Pirates' activities became increasingly serious during the war. In Cologne, for example, Pirates helped to shelter army deserters and escaped prisoners. They stole armaments and took part in an attack on the GESTAPO during which its chief was killed. The Nazi response was to round up the so-called 'ringleaders'. Twelve were publicly hanged in November 1944.

## Control of Churches and religion

The relationship between the Churches and the Nazis was complicated. In the early stages of the Nazi regime, there was some co-operation between the Nazis and the Churches. Hitler signed a Concordat with the Catholic Church in 1933. This meant that Hitler agreed to leave the Catholic Church alone and allowed it to keep control of its schools. In return, the Church agreed to stay out of politics.

Hitler attempted to unify all of the Protestant Churches in one official Reich Church. The Reich Church was headed by the Protestant Bishop Ludwig Müller. However, many Germans still felt that their true loyalties lay with their original Churches in their local areas rather than with this state-approved Church.

In the 1930s at least most were totally ignorant about the intentions of Nazi policies towards the Jews and other minority groups. Many churchgoers either supported the Nazis or did little to oppose them. However, there were some very important exceptions. The Catholic Bishop Galen criticised the Nazis throughout the 1930s. In 1941 he led a popular protest against the Nazi policies of killing mentally ill and physically disabled people, forcing the Nazis temporarily to stop this policy. He had such strong support among his followers that the Nazis decided it was too risky to try to silence him because they did not want trouble while Germany was at war.

Protestant ministers also resisted the Nazis. Pastor Martin Niemöller was one of the most high-profile critics of the regime in the 1930s. Along with Dietrich Bonhoeffer, he formed an alternative Protestant Church to the official Reich Church. Niemöller spent the years 1938–45 in a concentration camp for resisting the Nazis. Dietrich Bonhoeffer preached against the Nazis until the Gestapo stopped him in 1937. He then became involved with members of the army's intelligence services who were secretly opposed to Hitler. He helped Jews to escape from Germany. Gradually he increased his activity and in 1942 he contacted the Allied commanders and asked what peace terms they would offer Germany if Hitler were overthrown. He was arrested in October 1942 and hanged shortly before the end of the war in April 1945.

### SOURCE 21

British historian and journalist Charles Wheeler, writing in 1996.

*Most post-war accounts have concentrated on the few German clerics who did behave bravely ... But these were few. Most German church leaders were shamefully silent. As late as January 1945, the Catholic bishop of Würzburg was urging his flock to fight on for the Fatherland, saying that 'salvation lies in sacrifice'.*

### SOURCE 22

An extract from 'The Role of the Churches: Compliance and Confrontation', an article written by Victoria J. Barnett in 1998. The author is a researcher who specialises in the role of the Churches in Nazi Germany.

*Reflecting on the failure of the Churches to challenge the Nazis should prompt us to ponder all the others – individuals, governments and institutions – that passively acquiesced to [slightly accepted] the Third Reich's tyranny. Even the wisest and most perceptive of them, it seems, failed to develop adequate moral and political responses to Nazi genocide [mass killing], failed to recognise that something new was demanded of them by the barbarism of Hitler's regime. Moreover, it has become abundantly clear that their failure to respond to the horrid events in Europe in the thirties and forties was not due to ignorance; they knew what was happening. Ultimately, the Churches' lapses during the Nazi era were lapses of vision and determination. Protestant and Catholic religious leaders, loyal to creeds professing that love can withstand and conquer evil, were unable or unwilling to defy one of the great evils in human history. And so the Holocaust will continue to haunt the Christian Churches for a very, very long time to come.*

## FOCUS TASK

### How did the Churches respond to the Nazis?

Sources 21 and 22 offer very harsh judgements about the role of the Churches in Nazi Germany.

- 1 Make a list of the most serious accusations which the authors make against the Churches.
- 2 Now find evidence and examples which support or contradict those accusations.
- 3 Now make a list of examples which either explain or justify the actions of the Churches. Remember there may be a big difference between something which explains and something which justifies the actions of the Churches.
- 4 There were other groups in Germany (with a few exceptional individuals) which either co-operated with the Nazis or failed to resist them, such as:
  - political parties
  - judges and lawyers
  - army commanders
  - industrialists.

Do you think it is fair that Sources 21 and 22 criticise the Churches more harshly than these other groups? Explain your answer in a paragraph.

## Aryan ideas, racial policy and persecution

The Nazis believed in the superiority of the Aryan race. Through their 12 years in power they persecuted members of other races, and many minority groups such as Gypsies, homosexuals and mentally handicapped people. They persecuted any group that they thought challenged Nazi ideas: homosexuals were a threat to Nazi ideas on traditional family life; the mentally handicapped were a threat to Nazi ideas about Germans being a perfect master race; Gypsies were thought to be an inferior people.

The persecution of such minorities varied. In families where there were hereditary illnesses, sterilisation was enforced. Over 300,000 men and women were compulsorily sterilised between 1934 and 1945. A so-called 'euthanasia programme' was begun in 1939. At least 5,000 severely

mentally handicapped babies and children were killed between 1939 and 1945 either by injection or by starvation. Between 1939 and 1941, 72,000 mentally ill patients were gassed before a public outcry in Germany itself brought this to an end. The extermination of the Gypsies, on the other hand, did not cause an outcry. Five out of every six Gypsies living in Germany in 1939 were killed by the Nazis. Similarly, there was little or no complaint about the treatment of so-called 'asocials' – homosexuals, alcoholics, the homeless, prostitutes, habitual criminals and beggars – who were rounded up off the streets and sent to concentration camps.

You are going to investigate this most disturbing aspect of Nazi Germany by tracing the story of Nazi treatment of the Jewish population in which anti-Semitism culminated in the dreadful slaughter of the 'FINAL SOLUTION'.

### SOURCE 23

This text appeared on a poster published in 1920, directed at 'All German mothers'. It explains how many German Jews were killed fighting for their country in the First World War. It was produced by a Jewish soldiers' organisation, the Reich's Alliance of Jewish Frontline Soldiers.

*To German mothers!*

*72000 Jewish soldiers died for the Fatherland on the field of honour.*

*Christian and Jewish heroes fought together and rest together in foreign lands.*

*120000 Jews fell in battle!*

*Blind rage for the Party will not stop before the graves of the dead.*

*Women of Germany, do not allow Jewish mothers to be mocked in their anguish.*

### SOURCE 24

SA and SS men enforcing the boycott of Jewish shops, April 1933.



### SOURCE 25

From A. Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*, published in 1990.

*To read the pages [of Hitler's Mein Kampf] is to enter a world of the insane, a world peopled by hideous and distorted shadows. The Jew is no longer a human being, he has become a mythical figure, a grimacing leering devil invested with infernal powers, the incarnation of evil.*

## Hitler and the Jews

Anti-Semitism means hatred of Jews. Throughout Europe, Jews had experienced discrimination for hundreds of years. They were often treated unjustly in courts or forced to live in GHETTOS. One reason for this persecution was religious, in that Jews were blamed for the death of Jesus Christ. Another reason was that they tended to be well educated and therefore held well-paid professional jobs or ran successful stores and businesses.

Hitler hated Jews insanely. In his years of poverty in Vienna, he became obsessed by the fact that Jews ran many of the most successful businesses, particularly the large department stores. This offended his idea of the superiority of Aryans. Hitler also blamed Jewish businessmen and bankers for Germany's defeat in the First World War. He thought they had forced the surrender of the German army.

As soon as Hitler took power in 1933 he began to mobilise the full powers of the state against the Jews. They were immediately banned from the civil service and a variety of public services such as broadcasting and teaching. At the same time, SA and later SS troopers organised boycotts of Jewish shops and businesses, which were marked with a Star of David.

### THINK

- 1 What does Source 23 suggest about attitudes to Jews in 1920?
- 2 Why did Hitler hate the Jews?



In 1936 the pressure on Jews and other minorities relaxed a little. Some Jews saw this as a positive sign, and believed that the regime had gone as far as it was going to go to persecute them. The reality was that the persecution lapsed primarily because Germany was trying to present itself to the world in a positive light while the Olympics were being held in Berlin. During this respite many Jews took the opportunity to emigrate from Germany to any country which would take them.

### Kristallnacht

In November 1938 a young Jew killed a German diplomat in Paris. The Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels turned this event into an opportunity for himself. He had recently fallen out of favour with Hitler and was desperate to regain his favoured status. Goebbels urged a wide-scale and brutal response to the event in Paris. Plain-clothes SS troopers were issued with pickaxes and hammers and the addresses of Jewish businesses. They ran riot, smashing up Jewish shops and workplaces. Ninety-one Jews were murdered. Hundreds of synagogues were burned. Twenty thousand Jews were taken to concentration camps and thousands more left the country. This event became known as *Kristallnacht* or 'The Night of Broken Glass'. Many Germans watched the events of *Kristallnacht* with alarm and concern. The Nazi-controlled press presented *Kristallnacht* as the spontaneous reaction of ordinary Germans against the Jews. Most Germans did not believe this. However, hardly anyone protested. The few who did were brutally murdered.

#### SOURCE 26

Anonymous letter from a German civil servant to the British consul, 1938.

*I feel the urge to present to you a true report of the recent riots, plundering and destruction of Jewish property. Despite what the official Nazi account says, the German people have nothing whatever to do with these riots and burnings. The police supplied SS men with axes, house-breaking tools and ladders. A list of the addresses of all Jewish shops and flats was provided and the mob worked under the leadership of the SS men. The police had strict orders to remain neutral.*

### FOCUS TASK

**How did Nazi policies towards minorities develop from the 1930s onwards?**

Draw your own copy of the graph below. The aim is to show how Nazi policies towards minorities developed during the 1930s and beyond. Use the information and sources in this section, but refer to other sections of this chapter as well, especially the details on page 79.

Increasing harshness of treatment

1933 1934 1935 1936 1937 1938 1939 1940 1941 1942

### THINK

- 1 Read Sources 26, 28 and 29. How useful is each source to a historian looking at the German reaction to *Kristallnacht*?
- 2 Taken together, do they provide a clear picture of how Germans felt about *Kristallnacht*?

#### SOURCE 27

A cartoon from the Nazi newspaper *Der Stürmer*, 1935. Jews owned many shops and businesses. These were a constant target for Nazi attacks. This cartoon depicts stereotypically Jewish shopkeepers selling rats as meat. The caption reads 'Not quite kosher'.



#### SOURCE 28

Henrik Metelmann, member of the Hitler Youth, in 1938.

*[The day after Kristallnacht] the teachers told us: don't worry about what you see, even if you see some nasty things which you may not understand. Hitler wants a better Germany, a clean Germany. Don't worry, everything will work out fine in the end.*

#### SOURCE 29

Alfons Heck, member of the Hitler Youth in 1938, interviewed for a television programme in 1989.

*Until Kristallnacht, many Germans believed Hitler was not engaged in mass murder. [The treatment of the Jews] seemed to be a minor form of harassment of a disliked minority. But after Kristallnacht no German could any longer be under any illusion. I believe it was the day that we lost our innocence. But it would be fair to point out that I myself never met even the most fanatic Nazi who wanted the extermination [mass murder] of the Jews. Certainly we wanted the Jews out of Germany, but we did not want them to be killed.*

## The Final Solution

The persecution of the Jews developed in intensity after the outbreak of war in 1939. After defeating Poland in 1939, the Nazis set about 'Germanising' western Poland. This meant transporting Poles from their homes and replacing them with German settlers. Almost one in five Poles died in the fighting and as a result of racial policies of 1939–45. Polish Jews were rounded up and transported to the major cities. Here they were herded into sealed areas, called ghettos. The able-bodied Jews were used for slave labour but the young, the old and the sick were simply left to die from hunger and disease.

The decision to go ahead with the systematic killing of all Jews was apparently taken in January 1942 at the Wannsee Conference on the outskirts of Berlin by senior Nazis. Himmler, the head of the SS and Gestapo, was put in charge of the programme of mass murder, which began on an industrial scale in camps such as those at Auschwitz and Treblinka in Poland.

### Was the 'Final Solution' planned from the start?

Historians have debated intensely as to whether or not the 'Final Solution' was the result of a long-term plan of Hitler. Some historians (intentionalists) believe the whole dreadful process was planned. Other historians (structuralists) argue that there was no clear plan and that the policy of mass murder evolved during the war years. Part of the problem is the lack of evidence. Hitler made speeches in which he talked of the annihilation of the Jews, but he never signed any documents or made any recorded orders directly relating to the extermination of the Jews. The Nazis kept the killing programme as secret as they could, so there are relatively few documents.

Although historians disagree about whether there was a plan, they do generally agree that Hitler was ultimately responsible. However, they also point to others who bear some of the responsibility as well. The GENOCIDE would not have been possible without the following:

- The civil service bureaucracy – it collected and stored information about Jews.
- Police forces in Germany and the occupied lands – many victims of the Nazis, such as Anne Frank, were actually taken by the police rather than the Gestapo or SS.
- The SS – Adolf Eichmann devised a system of transporting Jews to collection points and then on to the death camps. He was also in charge of looting the possessions of the Jews. The SS Death's Head battalions and *Einsatzgruppen* also carried out many of the killings.
- The *Wehrmacht* (German armed forces) – the army leaders were fully aware of events.
- Industry – companies such as Volkswagen and Mercedes had their own slave labour camps. The chemicals giant IG Farben competed with other companies for the contract to make the Cyclon B gas which was used in the gas chambers.
- The German people – there was widespread support for anti-Semitism, even if these feelings did not include support for mass murder. Many Germans took part in some aspect of the HOLOCAUST, but closed their eyes to the full reality of what was happening (see Source 30).

### SOURCE 30

American historian Gordon Craig, 1978.

*The extermination of the Jews is the most dreadful chapter in German history, doubly so because the men who did it closed their senses to the reality of what they were doing by taking pride in the technical efficiency of their actions and, at moments when their conscience threatened to break in, telling themselves that they were doing their duty ... others took refuge in the enormity of the operation, which lent it a convenient depersonalisation. When they ordered a hundred Jews to get on a train in Paris or Amsterdam, they considered their job accomplished and carefully closed their minds to the thought that eventually those passengers would arrive in front of the ovens of Treblinka.*

## ● Nazi control

The Nazis under Hitler took control of the media and the Churches, restricted culture and dealt ruthlessly with any opposition. Thus, in theory, control over people's lives was total.

### Goebbels and propaganda in Nazi Germany

Hitler appointed Dr Joseph Goebbels as Minister for Enlightenment and Propaganda. Goebbels passionately believed in Hitler as the saviour of Germany. His mission was to make sure that others believed this too. Throughout the twelve years of Nazi rule Goebbels constantly kept his finger on the pulse of public opinion and decided what the German public should and should not hear. He aimed to use every resource available to him to make people loyal to Hitler and the Nazis.

### The Nuremberg rallies

Goebbels organised huge rallies, marches, torch-lit processions and meetings. Probably the best example was the Nuremberg rally which took place in the summer each year. There were bands, marches, flying displays and Hitler's brilliant speeches. The rallies brought some colour and excitement into people's lives. They gave them a sense of belonging to a great movement. The rallies also showed the German people the power of the state and convinced them that 'every other German' fully supported the Nazis. Goebbels also recognised that one of the Nazis' main attractions was that they created order out of chaos and so the whole rally was organised to emphasise this order.

## PROFILE

### Joseph Goebbels

- From a humble background but very intelligent; university educated.
- Small in stature and with a twisted right leg.
- Joined Nazi Party in 1922; became one of Hitler's greatest supporters.
- Created a Nazi newspaper in 1927, and soon became head of Nazi propaganda.
- Became Minister for Public Enlightenment in 1933.
- Promoted the Nazi message through films, radio, posters and the 1936 Olympic Games.
- Encouraged burning of books that could be hostile to **NAZISM**. Bitterly anti-Jewish.
- Skilful public speaker.
- Committed suicide one day after Hitler in 1945.

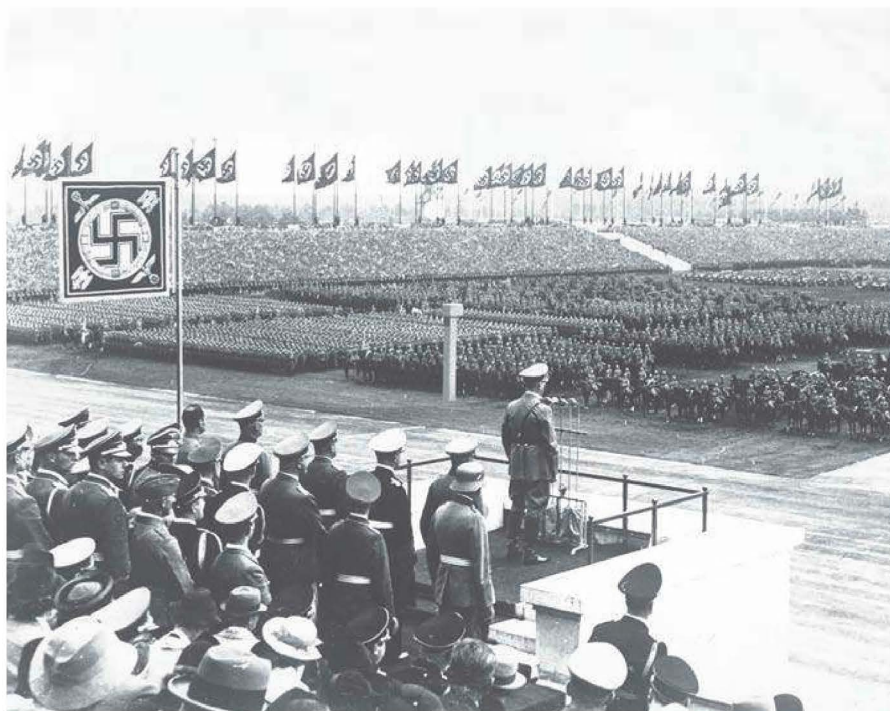
## THINK

Look at Source 31. How does the rally:

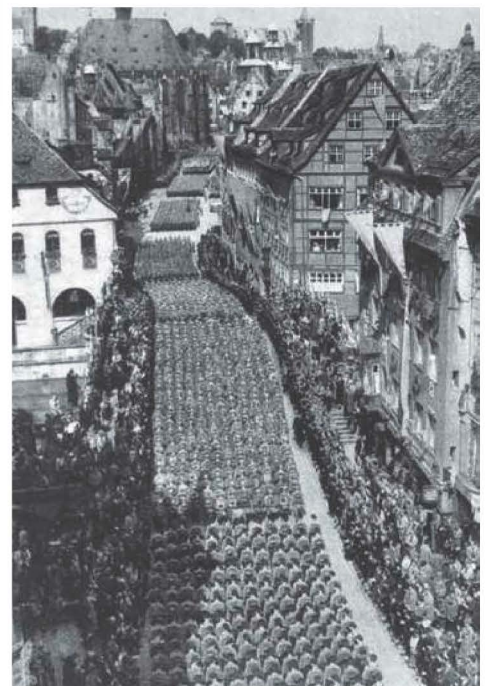
- make it clear who the leader is
- give people a sense of belonging
- provide colour and excitement
- show the power of the state
- show the Nazis' ability to create order out of chaos?

### SOURCE 31

The annual rally at Nuremberg. The whole town was taken over and the rally dominated radio broadcasts and newsreels.



A Hitler speaks to the assembled Germans.



B A parade through the streets.



### SOURCE 32

Poster advertising cheap Nazi-produced radios. The text reads 'All Germany hears the Führer on the People's Radio'. The radios had only a short range and were unable to pick up foreign stations.



### SOURCE 33

A Nazi propaganda poster from the 1930s encouraging people to turn to Nazi-led community groups for help and advice.



### Censorship and Nazi control of the media

Less spectacular than the rallies but possibly more important was Goebbels' control of the media. In contrast with the free expression of Weimar Germany, the Nazis controlled the media strictly. No books could be published without Goebbels' permission (not surprisingly the best-seller in Nazi Germany was *Mein Kampf*). In 1933 he organised a high-profile 'book-burning'. Nazi students came together publicly to burn any books that included ideas unacceptable to the Nazis.

Artists suffered the same kinds of restriction as writers. Only Nazi-approved painters could show their works. These were usually paintings or sculptures of heroic-looking Aryans, military figures or images of the ideal Aryan family.

Goebbels also controlled the newspapers closely. They were not allowed to print anti-Nazi ideas. Within months of the Nazi takeover, Jewish editors and journalists found themselves out of work and anti-Nazi newspapers were closed down. The German newspapers became very dull reading and Germans bought fewer newspapers as a result – circulation fell by about 10 per cent.

The cinema was also closely controlled. All films – factual or fictional, thrillers or comedies – had to carry a pro-Nazi message. Foreign films coming into Germany were censored by Goebbels. The newsreels which preceded feature films were full of the greatness of Hitler and the massive achievements of Nazi Germany. There is evidence that Germans avoided these productions by arriving late!

Goebbels plastered Germany with posters proclaiming the successes of Hitler and the Nazis and attacking their opponents. He banned jazz music (which had been popular in Germany) because it was 'black' music and black people were considered an inferior race.

Goebbels loved new technology and quickly saw the potential of radio broadcasting for spreading the Nazi message. He made cheap radios available so all Germans could buy one and he controlled all the radio stations. Listening to broadcasts from the BBC was punishable by death. Just in case people did not have a radio Goebbels placed loudspeakers in the streets and public bars. Hitler's speeches and those of other Nazi leaders were repeated on the radio over and over again until the ideas expressed in them – German expansion into eastern Europe, the inferiority of the Jews – came to be believed by the German people.

Throughout this period Goebbels was supported in his work by the SS and the Gestapo. When he wanted to close down an anti-Nazi newspaper, silence an anti-Nazi writer, or catch someone listening to a foreign radio station, they were there to do that work for him.

### THINK

- 1 Look at Source 32 and explain why Goebbels wanted every German household to have a radio set.
- 2 Write your own ten-word definition of propaganda.
- 3 What does Source 33 tell you about the methods used in Nazi propaganda?

## The police state

There was supposed to be no room for opposition of any kind in Nazi Germany. The aim was to create a totalitarian state. In a totalitarian state there can be no rival parties, no political debate. Ordinary CITIZENS must divert their whole energy into serving the state and to carrying out its leaders' orders.

The Nazis had a powerful range of organisations and weapons that they used to control Germany and terrorise Germans into submission.

### PROFILE

#### Heinrich Himmler

- Had been a chicken farmer in Germany.
- Became head of the SS in 1929 when it was only a small organisation.
- By 1934 the SS had 52,000 members.
- Himmler was totally loyal to Hitler.
- He had the primary role of eliminating opposition to the Nazis, and carrying out Nazi racial policies.
- The Death's Head Units had the specific job of killing Jews and other undesirables.
- In May 1945 he was captured but committed suicide before his trial.

### THE SS

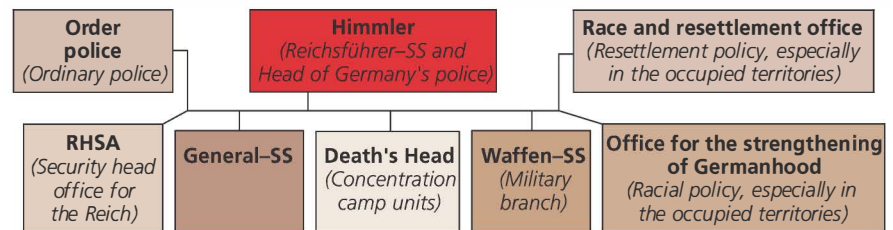
#### SOURCE 34

SS guards after taking over the Berlin broadcasting station in 1933.



#### FIGURE 35

The elements of the SS during wartime.



The SS was formed in 1925 from fanatics loyal to Hitler. After virtually destroying the SA in 1934, the SS grew into a huge organisation with many different responsibilities. It was led by Heinrich Himmler. SS men were of course Aryans, very highly trained and totally loyal to Hitler. Under Himmler, the SS had primary responsibility for destroying opposition to Nazism and carrying out the racial policies of the Nazis.

Two important sub-divisions of the SS were the Death's Head units and the Waffen-SS. The Death's Head units were responsible for the concentration camps and the slaughter of the Jews. The Waffen-SS were special SS armoured regiments which fought alongside the regular army.

The information on pages 97–98 gives the impression that Nazi Germany was run like a well-oiled machine: there to do the will of the Führer! Modern research suggests otherwise. It was, in fact, somewhat chaotic and disorganised. Hitler was not hard-working. He disliked paperwork and decision-making. He thought that most things sorted themselves out in time without his intervention. Officials competed with each other to get his approval for particular policies. The result was often a jumble of different government departments competing with each other and getting in each other's way.

### THE GESTAPO

#### SOURCE 36

The Gestapo, the German secret state police, in action.



The Gestapo (secret state police) was the force that was perhaps most feared by the ordinary German citizen. Under the command of Reinhard Heydrich, Gestapo agents had sweeping powers. They could arrest citizens on suspicion and send them to concentration camps without trial or even explanation.

Modern research has shown that Germans thought the Gestapo were much more powerful than they actually were. As a result, many ordinary Germans informed on each other because they thought the Gestapo would find out anyway.



## THE POLICE AND THE COURTS

### SOURCE 37

German judges swearing their loyalty at the criminal courts in Berlin.

The police and courts also helped to prop up the Nazi dictatorship. Top jobs in local police forces were given to high-ranking Nazis reporting to Himmler. As a result, the police added political 'snooping' to their normal law and order role. They were, of course, under strict instructions to ignore crimes committed by Nazi agents. Similarly, the Nazis controlled magistrates, judges and the courts, which meant that opponents of Nazism rarely received a fair trial.



### ACTIVITY

Summarise the information on pages 97–98 in a table with the following headings:

- Organisation
- Duties
- How it helped Hitler to make his position secure.

### FOCUS TASK

#### Terror or propaganda – which was more important?

- 1 Work in pairs. Using the sources and information on pages 95–96, one of you should make notes on the techniques used by Goebbels to persuade people to support the Nazis. The other person should make notes using the sources and information on pages 97–98 on the work carried out by Himmler to ensure people supported the Nazis.
- 2 In your pairs discuss which of the following you most agree with:
  - a) Goebbels' work was more important to Nazi success than that of Himmler (head of the SS).
  - b) Himmler's work was more important to Nazi success than Goebbels'.
  - c) The techniques of repression and propaganda go hand in hand – neither would work without the other.

## CONCENTRATION CAMPS

### SOURCE 38

Political prisoners at the Oranienburg concentration camp near Berlin.



Concentration camps were the Nazis' ultimate SANCTION against their own people. They were set up almost as soon as Hitler took power. The first concentration camps in 1933 were simply makeshift prisons in disused factories and warehouses. Soon these were purpose-built. These camps were usually in isolated rural areas, and run by SS Death's Head units. Prisoners were forced to do hard labour. Food was very limited and prisoners suffered harsh discipline, beatings and random executions. By the late 1930s, deaths in the camps became increasingly common and very few people emerged alive from them. Jews, socialists, Communists, trade unionists, churchmen and anyone else brave enough to criticise the Nazis ended up there.



## Opposition and resistance in the Third Reich in the 1930s

The Nazis faced relatively little open opposition during their twelve years in power. In private, Germans complained about the regime and its actions. Some might refuse to give the Nazi salute. They might pass on anti-Nazi jokes and rude stories about senior Nazis. However, serious criticism was always in private, never in public. Historians have debated why this was so. The main answer they have come up with may seem obvious to you if you've read pages 97–98. It was terror! All the Nazis' main opponents had been killed, exiled or put in prison. The rest had been scared into submission. However, it won't surprise you to learn that historians think the answer is not quite as simple as that. Here is a summary of the important factors.

### Nazi successes: 'It's all for the good of Germany'

Many Germans admired and trusted Hitler. They were prepared to tolerate rule by terror and to trade their rights in political freedom and free speech in return for work, foreign policy success and what they thought was strong government.

- Economic recovery was deeply appreciated.
- Many felt that the Nazis were bringing some much needed discipline back to Germany by restoring traditional values and clamping down on rowdy Communists.
- Between 1933 and 1938 Hitler's success in foreign affairs made Germans feel that their country was a great power again after the humiliations of the First World War and the Treaty of Versailles. For many Germans, the dubious methods of the Nazis may have been regrettable but necessary for the greater good of the country.

### Economic fears: 'I don't want to lose my job'

German workers feared losing their jobs if they did express opposition (see Source 39). Germany had been hit so hard by the Depression that many were terrified by the prospect of being out of work again. It was a similar situation for the bosses. Businesses that did not contribute to Nazi Party funds risked losing Nazi business and going bankrupt, and so in self-defence they conformed as well. If you asked no questions and kept your head down, life in Nazi Germany could be comfortable. 'Keeping your head down' became a national obsession. The SS and its special security service, the SD, went to great lengths to find out what people were saying about the regime, often by listening in on conversations in cafés and bars. Your job could depend on silence.

#### SOURCE 39

A report by a socialist activist in Germany, February 1936.

*The average worker is primarily interested in work and not in democracy. People who previously enthusiastically supported democracy showed no interest at all in politics. One must be clear about the fact that in the first instance men are fathers of families and have jobs, and that for them politics takes second place and even then only when they expect to get something out of it.*

### Propaganda: 'Have you heard the good news?'

Underlying the whole regime was the propaganda machine. This ensured that many Germans found out very little about the bad things that were happening, or if they did they only heard them with a positive, pro-Nazi slant. You have studied the Nazi use of propaganda in detail on pages 95–96. Propaganda was particularly important in maintaining the image of Hitler. The evidence suggests that personal support for Hitler remained high throughout the 1930s.

## FOCUS TASK

### Why was there so little opposition in Nazi Germany?

- 1 Draw a spider diagram with the above question in the centre. Using pages 97–98 make notes around the centre under the following four headings:
  - Terror
  - Nazi successes
  - Economic fears
  - Propaganda.
- 2 Now use your notes to write two paragraphs to explain why there was so little opposition in Nazi Germany. Support your answer with evidence you have studied.

## Opposition and resistance during the war

You might think that opinions would turn against the Nazis fairly soon during the Second World War. However, the Nazi propaganda machine helped to cover up defeats and most Germans only heard about successes. Hitler was still personally respected by most Germans right up to 1944 – when Germany was clearly losing the war.

### The White Rose Group

Some groups did begin to act against Hitler as the war developed into a worldwide war in 1941. For example, a group of students at Munich University known as the White Rose Group gave out leaflets, put up posters and scrawled graffiti on walls in 1942 and early 1943. The six most prominent members were arrested, tortured and then beheaded. These students are now remembered as heroes in Germany for standing up to Nazi tyranny.

### The Stauffenberg bomb plot, July 1944

Much more serious were the plots to end Hitler's rule. They had started in the late 1930s, including one to blow up Hitler in his plane that failed because the bomb did not go off. After various plans and plots that achieved nothing, in 1944 a group of army officers joined together to plan in meticulous detail. They could see that Germany was heading towards defeat and that Hitler was no longer capable of providing clear leadership. Claus von Stauffenberg was also disgusted at the brutality of the SS. The plan was to detonate a bomb under a table at a meeting that Hitler was attending. Army officers would then seize power in Berlin. However, someone moved the briefcase containing the bomb slightly further away from Hitler, and crucially to the other side of a heavy table leg. When the bomb went off, Hitler was only slightly injured, though four people were killed. All the plotters were rounded up and executed.

It was another ten months before the war in Europe ended. The Allies closed in on Berlin. Russian troops got to the city first. Hitler committed suicide on 30 April 1945, and Goebbels did the same the following day. Germany surrendered to the Allies without conditions.

#### KEY WORDS

Make sure you know what these words mean and are able to define them confidently:

- Autocracy
- Communist (Bolshevik)
- Concentration camps
- Democracy
- *Diktat*
- Final Solution
- *Freikorps*
- Gestapo
- Holocaust
- Imperial
- Hyperinflation
- Kaiser
- Nazism
- Parliamentary government
- Propaganda
- Proportional representation
- Putsch
- Rearmament
- Reichstag
- Reparations
- Republic
- Spartacists
- SA
- SS

#### TOPIC SUMMARY

##### The experiences of Germans under the Nazis

- Hitler had become Führer – leader – by summer 1934 and had established a dictatorship.
- Hitler created millions of jobs through public works schemes and expanding the size of the army.
- Many Germans were happy with the economic progress Germany appeared to be making.
- During the Second World War the German economy survived well at first, but there was much suffering by 1944.
- Hitler's policies had huge effects on women who assumed specific roles in society, especially as mothers.
- Many young people gained pride in their country and worshipped Hitler through the Hitler Youth.
- The Churches mostly supported Hitler. Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a notable exception to this.
- Non-German races were increasingly persecuted, from the Nuremberg Laws (1935) to *Kristallnacht* (1938) and the policy of the Final Solution adopted in 1942.
- Hitler maintained control through propaganda and censorship via the SS, the secret police and the courts.
- Opposition groups such as the White Rose Group began to campaign against Hitler during the war. One well-organised plot to assassinate Hitler failed in 1944.

# ASSESSMENT FOCUS

## KEY

### Focus words

### Command words

### Interpretation/knowledge reminder words

Your exam will include six questions on this topic. The question types will be the same every year, but the questions could be on any content from the specification, so you need to know it all!

We have provided one example of each kind of question. For questions based on interpretations we have used interpretations that you have already come across in this chapter. We have analysed each of the questions to highlight what you are being asked to do and written a sample answer with comments on how it could be improved.

Read Interpretations A and B and then answer questions 1–3. Interpretation A is Interpretation A on page 89. Interpretation B is Interpretation B on page 89.

**Q1** **How** does Interpretation B **differ** from Interpretation A about the Hitler Youth camps?

**Explain** your answer using **Interpretations A and B**.

(4 marks)

### Sample answer

Interpretation A says that life in the camp included sports and games, but with discipline. Interpretation B focuses on the marching and military training.

- This answer provides a basic comparison between Interpretations A and B but it needs to provide more detailed evidence.
- For example, you need to be able to explain the differences in the content of the sources.
- *What extra evidence could you add to highlight the differences more completely?*

**Q2** **Why** might the authors of Interpretations A and B have a **different interpretation** about Hitler Youth camps?

**Explain** your answer using **Interpretations A and B** and your **contextual knowledge**.

(4 marks)

### Sample answer

The two authors might have visited different camps. We don't know how much they saw or which parts of Germany they visited.

- This answer provides a good basis for development but it would benefit from more analysis of the provenance. For example, you could suggest that the author of Interpretation B had actually talked to boys to gain evidence. So make sure you think about how the writer has obtained the information.
- Also, many British people in the 1930s were applauding Hitler's achievements in Germany. Make sure you think about how the writers' personal attitudes affect their interpretations.
- *Write two sentences for each source on the provenance of each. You should focus on the purpose and attitudes of the two authors.*

**Q3** Which interpretation do you find **more convincing** about the Hitler Youth camps?

**Explain** your answer using **Interpretations A and B** and your **contextual knowledge**.

(8 marks)

### Sample answer

We know that Hitler was using the Hitler Youth as a way of preparing German boys for future military conflict. Therefore, although the boys almost always seemed to be having a good time with games, sport and camps, the main purpose was to discipline them for army life and to give them basic training in weaponry. Therefore, I find Interpretation B more convincing. Interpretation A too easily accepts the public perception of Hitler Youth camps that the Nazis wanted to project.

- This answer provides a basic analysis of the two interpretations through the use of some factual knowledge. You need to extend it further to argue in more depth.
- However, it is important that the knowledge is used as part of the analysis of the content of the source, rather than being 'free-standing' as 'what I know about the topic'.
- *Think about the tone and language of each source. What words and phrases could you use to describe them?*

**Q4** **Describe** **two** political problems faced by the government of the Weimar Republic when it first met **in early 1920**.

(4 marks)

### Sample answer

The Weimar Republic had a constitution that included proportional representation. The existence of many political parties meant that it was impossible for any one party to get a majority vote.

There were many groups, some of them armed, who were opposed to the new democratic system of government. They wanted a return to what they remembered as the Kaiser's strong rule before the war.

- This brief answer introduces two problems, but they are only stated, and so need to be fully described.
- *List TWO details that you could add to EACH of the two short paragraphs in order to make the description more precise.*



**Q5 In what ways** were the lives of children affected by Nazi policies in the 1930s?

**Explain** your answer.

(8 marks)

- This answer explains several aspects of how German children were affected by Nazi policies. It is wide-ranging and shows clear understanding. It could expand a little more on the developing nature of Nazi control during these years. Life for German youth in 1933 was very different from what it had become by 1939, with the background of foreign policy successes and actions against the Jews.

- *Write a list of points on Nazi policy in the later 1930s which could be added to this answer.*

### Sample answer

At school in the 1930s the curriculum was changed to stress Nazi values and policies and through History children learnt how Germany would right the wrongs of the Treaty of Versailles and take its rightful place in the world as a leading Aryan nation.

Children were taught about Nazi racial theories, and, through the study of eugenics, how the German race could be improved further by selective breeding. They were taught to despise Jewish children who eventually were banned from attending school.

Out of school most German boys belonged to Hitler Youth and girls to the League of German Maidens. Here they learnt unquestioning obedience and were encouraged to be physically fit. Boys were taught how to use weapons; girls were taught how to cook and bring up children. Youth were also encouraged to spy on their parents and report any anti-Nazi talk.

**Q6 Which** of the following was the **more important reason** why Hitler became Chancellor in January 1933?

- The consequences of the Wall Street Crash
- The weak Weimar government

**Explain** your answer with reference to **both reasons**.

(12 marks)

### Sample answer

Hitler became Chancellor of Germany in January 1933. He controlled the largest party in the Reichstag with 37 per cent of the seats. Other Chancellors had failed to get Germany out of the depression into which it had sunk following the Wall Street Crash.

The Wall Street Crash affected German industry and trade very badly. The USA had loaned money following the Dawes Plan of 1924 (modified with the Young Plan of 1929).

Germany had prospered in the late 1920s under Stresemann, but this prosperity was dangerously over-reliant on US dollars. Now with the withdrawal of US money and the collapse in world trade, many German businesses went bankrupt and laid off workers. By late 1932 there were 6 million unemployed, which for many led to destitution and homelessness.

In the midst of this, the Nazis' promises of overturning the Treaty of Versailles and making Germany great again were transmitted through sophisticated propaganda. These simple messages were very popular.

In the late 1920s, the Nazis had very few seats in the Reichstag – only 12 in the election of 1928 – far fewer than their rivals. But because of the effects of the Crash, the Nazis became the largest party in July 1932 with 230 seats.

However, Hitler and the Nazis were assisted by the weak Weimar government. The longest-serving Chancellor in the early 1930s was Brüning. His attempts to solve Germany's economic problems failed. A succession of Chancellors followed – Papen and Schliecher – while the government drifted. Neither of these two men could achieve much because they did not command enough support in the Reichstag. This led to Hindenburg in January 1933 being forced to call on Adolf Hitler, with Papen as his Vice-Chancellor.

The Wall Street Crash was the more important reason why Hitler came to power. The Weimar constitution's weaknesses were well known in the 1920s, but they did not stop the revival of the German economy and the achievement of stable government under Stresemann. The Crash enabled the Nazis to change from a weak national organisation to a popular party, widely supported by the middle classes. The weaknesses of the Weimar government were a contributory factor, which actually had more significance in the weeks and months after Hitler became Chancellor when he was able to destroy the Weimar constitution and create a Nazi dictatorship.

- This answer evaluates both bullet points in turn. It reaches a sustained judgement based on precise arguments. The relationships between the two bullet points are explored and there is clarity on how the Nazi Party was able to manipulate public opinion in the context of the two named factors in the question.

- *Working backwards, read through the essay again and write out the plan that it must have been based on. You can then look at the plan and see why it was the starting point for this comprehensive answer.*

Now write your own answers to the questions on pages 101–102 using the teacher's feedback to help you.

This is a preview.  
For the entire book, contact [jacob.wu@email.com](mailto:jacob.wu@email.com)