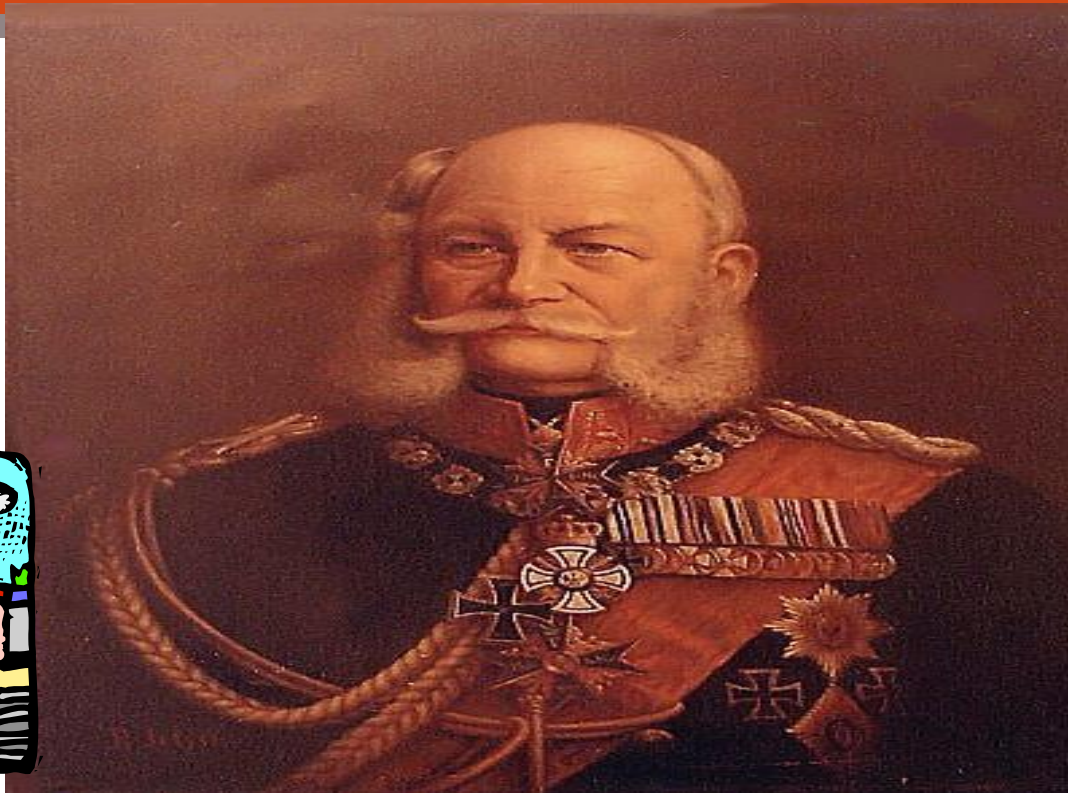


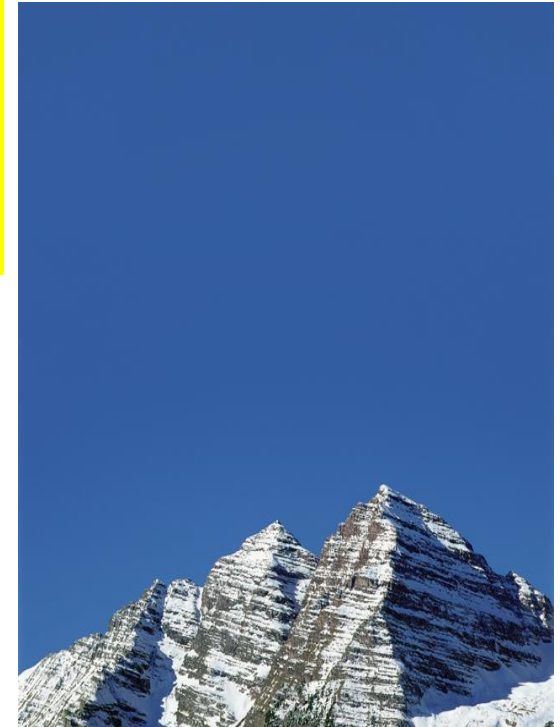
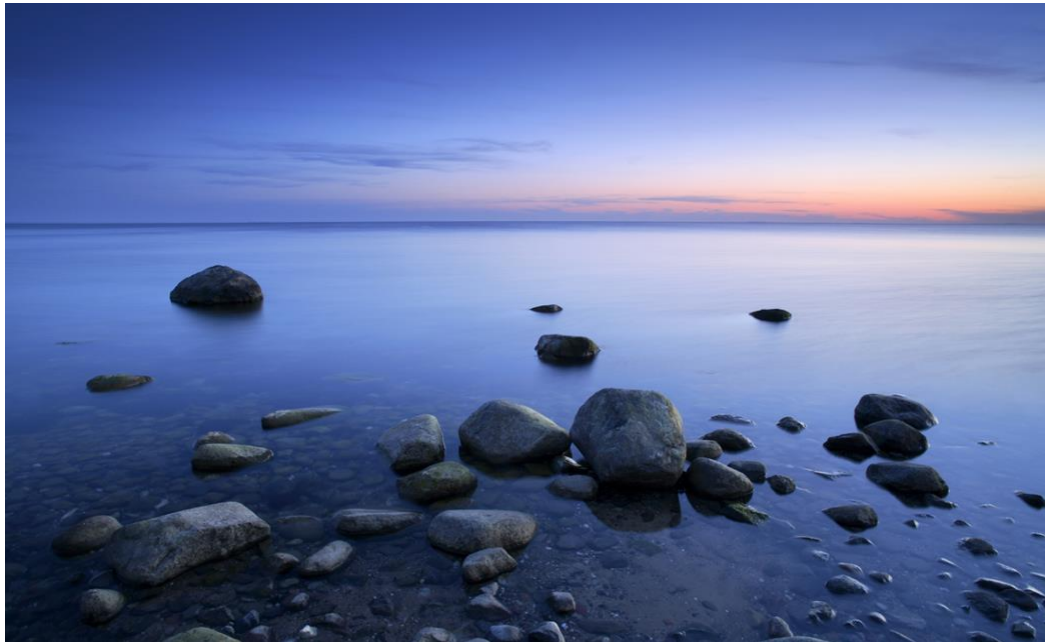
The problems in the Second Reich



Issues with Geography



- Germany had **no natural boundaries**, no major mountain ranges.
- This led to Germany being **more suspicious of foreign threats**. Some say this led to an **aggressive foreign policy**.



Was the Economy successful?

- **Massive industrial development**, 8% per annum between 1890-1914. Industries such as chemical, steel, coal and iron.
- In 1914 Britain imported around 80% of its chemical dyes from Germany.
- By 1914 **Germany had become the economic powerhouse of Europe.**
- **Good banking system.**
- **Good communication and transport system.**
- **Agriculture became more efficient** with threshing machines, and better fertilizer from the chemical industries.
- Economic success did impact on social conditions.



What were the Social problems?

- **Rapid urbanisation led to overcrowding** in towns, poor sanitary conditions and a lack of clean water.
- **Homelessness** was a problem- in 1900 the Berlin homeless shelter accommodated 200,000. It was mainly the unskilled, who were unemployed.
- A big **rise in lower middle class** 'white collar' jobs. 3.3 million by 1907.
- Changes were made, **better hygiene and medicine improved rates of child mortality**, tramways resulted in people being able to live outside of the city and still travel in to work.
- **Improved wages**, led to a rise in the standard of living



What reforms were passed?

- **Old age and invalidity Law in 1899** increased old age pensions and extended compulsory insurance to various groups.
- **Tariff law in 1902** put a higher duty in imported food produce, this led to higher food prices.
- **Sickness insurance law in 1903** gave 26 weeks to workers off sick instead of 13 weeks.
- **Restriction on hours of factory work** was passed in 1908- no children under 13 to be employed, and children 13-18 could only do a 6 hour day, and 14-16 only a 10 hour day.



Political- What was the role of the Kaiser ?

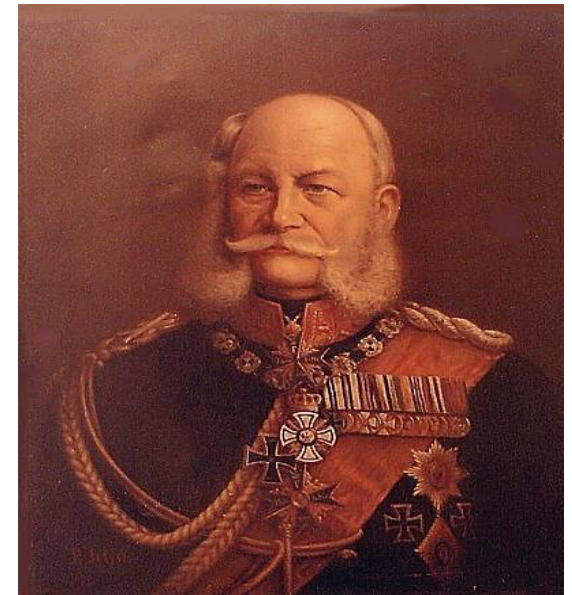
- The **Kaiser** was the King of Prussia. He held **full power over foreign and diplomatic policy**.
- In times of war he was **commander in chief of the army**.
- He **appointed and dismissed the chancellor**, and could **dissolve the Reichstag**.
- He oversaw the **implementation of laws** made by the parliament.
- Some argued this was **to much power**, and that the **Reichstag** should have more power.

Kaiser Wilhelm

I-1871-1888

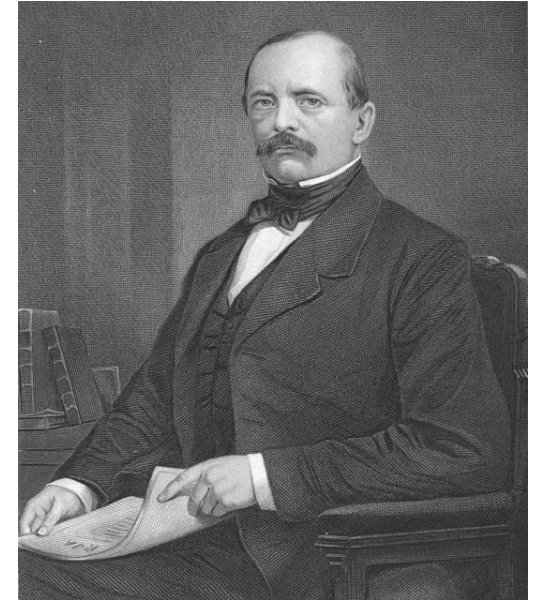
Kaiser Wilhelm

II-1888-1918



What was the role of the Chancellor and the Reichstag?

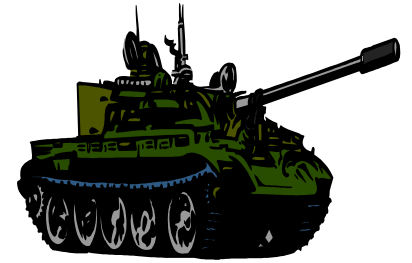
- **CHANCELLOR**- was responsible to the Kaiser and could ignore resolutions passed by the Reichstag.
- **REICHSTAG**- could not remove the chancellor or the government.
- **REICHSRAT**- (assembly of ambassadors from the 26 state governments) could veto any legislation passed by the Reichstag.
- The **different states still had power locally** to make some of their own laws in domestic affairs such as education.
- Overall, **limited power for the Reichstag, and the Chancellor had to keep the Kaiser happy** to stay in power.



BISMARCK

Who governed the army?

- The **army was not accountable to the Reichstag** only the Kaiser. The army swore an oath of loyalty to the Kaiser and not the state.
- Social background many who were **conservative Junkers**, some officers were professional soldiers.
- Few **officers in the army** had an respect for **democracy**.
- There was a **military cabinet**, and **politicians had no real impact on the army**.
- Overall, this led the **army to feel very powerful**, and that the **government had no right to tell them what to do**.



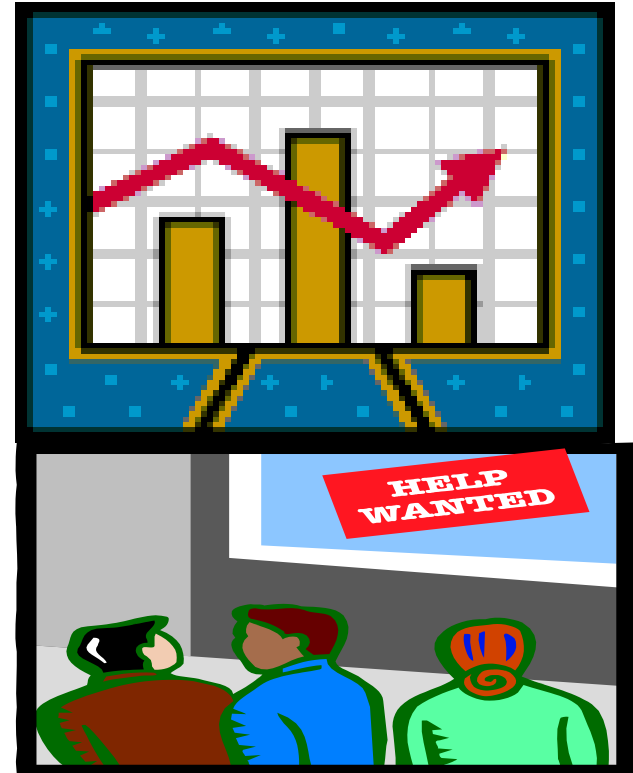
Nationalism and foreign policy

- By the 1890's some Germans were influenced by **'Darwinism,'** the survival of the fittest. A strong state could prosper a weak one could die.
- This was linked to the **growth in anti-Semitism,** some felt **threatened by the increase of Jewish immigrants** fleeing from Tsarist rule.
- **German nationalism began to increase** and it sometimes took an **aggressive form** with demands for **Germany to expand.** Some saw it as a way to win over W.C support.
- Wilhelm II carried out a policy of **'Weltpolitik'- (playing a leading role in world policy.)** Although there was a limited chance of expansion between the 1890's to 1914.



Overall problems

- Economic modernisation- this encouraged people to want more political reform and to spread democracy, particularly from the W.C.
- **Rising unemployment** from 1912-1914, uneven economic growth led to some unemployment.
- **Limited opportunity for foreign expansion.**
- **Growth of the Socialist party**- the elites feared this. Bismark banned it in 1878. In 1890, the Reichstag with the Kaiser refused to confirm the legalisation.
- **Emergence of pressure groups**- Nationalist/Economic



3 Main issues

- 1) Demand for a **aggressive foreign policy**
- 2) Demand for **constitutional reform**- from the liberals who wanted a strengthening of power for the Reichstag.
- 3) Demand for **social reform**- Socialists.

