



What was the impact of WW1 on Germany 1914-1918?



What was the reaction to the outbreak of War?

- Huge **demonstrations against war**, were held on the 28th and 29th of July in Berlin, and in other places. (1000,000)
- Once the war started, the **government** said it was a **defensive war against Slav aggression**.



Did political parties support the war?

- The **political division of the pre war was over**, and even the Socialists voted for war credits.
- The **Reichstag passed an ENABLING ACT known as the BURGFIEDEN.**
- The Reichstag now **delegated all of its law making power to the BUNDESRAT**, which was to rule the home front by emergency laws.
- The **Reichstag could review the laws** but not once in 800 laws did they change them.
- The **War Ministry ensured the supply of raw materials** for the war.



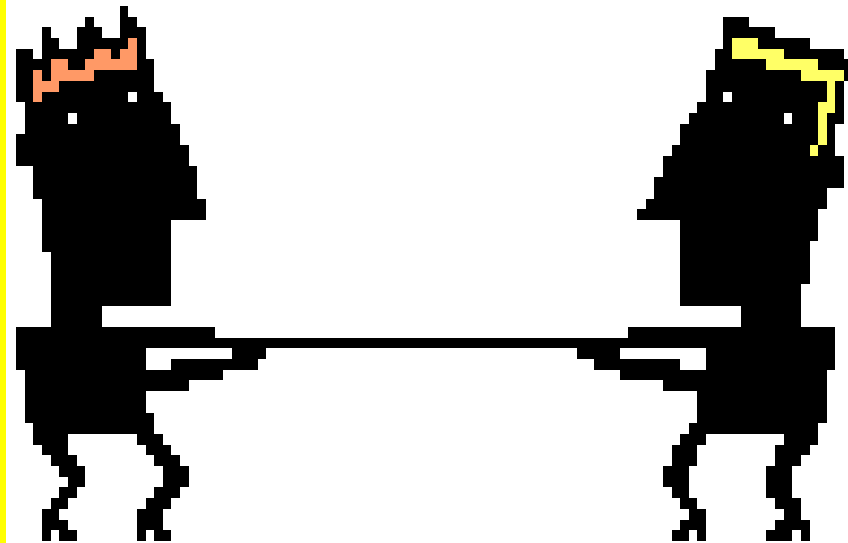
What happened in the War in 1914?

- 4th August 1914 unleashed the **Schlieffen Plan**.
- The **Schlieffen plan did not work well** as the advance towards France was slow and there was problem with supplies.
- Two successful battles, at Tannenberg and Masurian lakes by General Ludendorff and General Hindenburg.
- Just outside of Paris in September, the Germans were stopped and **trenches had to be built**. The result was stalemate, hundreds of miles of trenches and 650,000 German casualties.



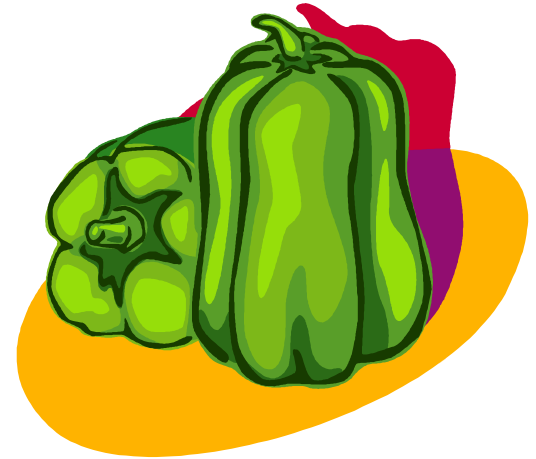
What happened in the War in 1915?

- New commander of Chief was Erich Von Falkenhayn. He had to create a new plan.
- **Decision was they could not fight on two fronts,** so the decision was made to attack in the East (Russia).
- Some success, but the Russians kept fighting.



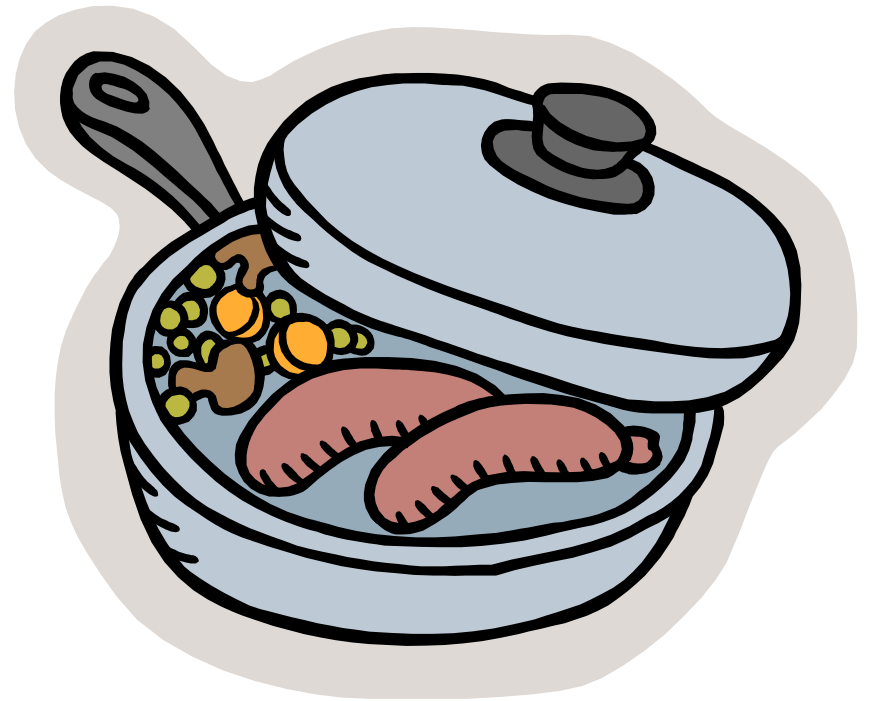
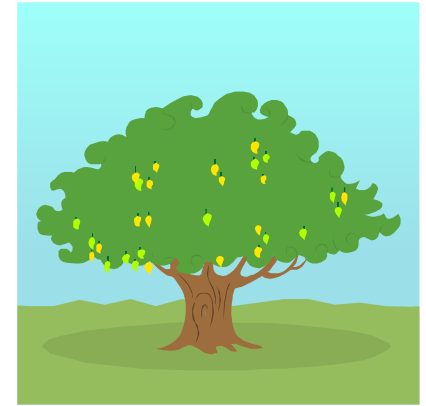
Were there shortages of food between 1915-1916?

- Shortage of raw materials and consumer basics.
- Feb 1915 the German government announced a blockade of Britain, and so Britain responded by seizing all goods that were to be presumed were destined for Germany.
- Big impact- before the war Germany was not self sufficient in food, 25% of food was imported.
- Germany took on the role of distributing food to the cities, but the military took priority so there was a low supply to the cities.
- There was an Imperial grain corporation set up in 1915, and over 40 different imperial corporations. Even a War food office in 1916. There was a bureaucratic jungle.
- In 1915 the office ordered the killing of 9 million pigs as they were consumers of grain, resulting in less pork and fertilizer. Both had a bad effect on food production.



Shortages in food.....

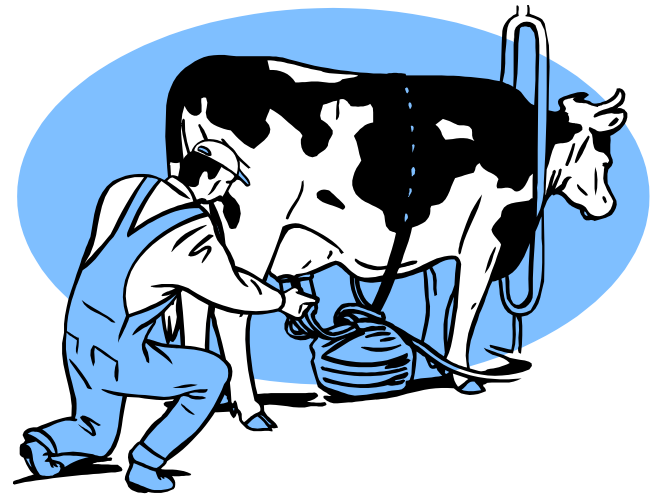
- In January 1915 the German government introduced rationing. Alternatives were found such as coffee made from tree bark, sausages with no meat.
- Massive shortages of animal fats, also caused problems.
- In the countryside they suffered less, and many in towns bought food on the black market.





What was Shortage of Labour a problem?

- **Shortage of labour in the countryside**, a third of the labour was gone from the countryside.
- By the end of **1914 half of the agricultural workforce had been called up**, this had a big impact on grain production.
- **Women were not conscripted** into the army. By the end of war though, a third of all the industrial workforce were women.
- The **war industries paid well**. Before the war most women were in low paid domestic jobs, the war **gave women a chance to change jobs for the better**.



Was there any Opposition between 1914-1916?

- Most **Socialists supported the war, a few did not but they accepted party discipline.**
- At the end of 1915, 20 deputies voted against the war, but they were lone voices.
- A handful of radicals such as **Rosa Luxemburg argued the only way to peace was through revolution, but they spent most of the war in prison.** Pacifists tried to organise groups against the war, with little impact.
- The police, press and public opinion all supported the war.



What happened in the war in 1916?

- New plan that the war could only be won through attrition and endurance.
- Battle of Verdun-700,000 men on all sides died.
- The Somme July 1916.
- German army became very stretched, by the end of 1916 1.5 million casualties.



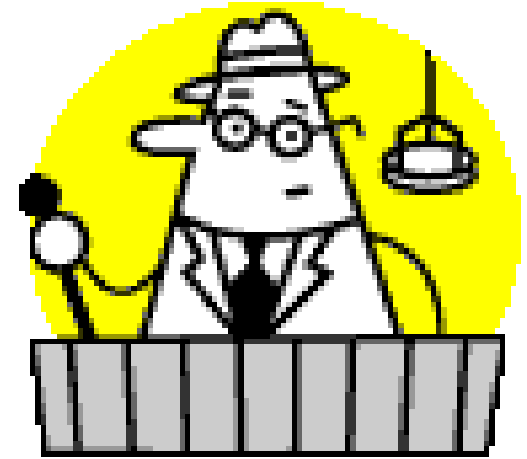


Hindenburg and Ludendorff- now in charge of the war strategy

- Hindenburg was appointed as Head of the armed forces. Ludendorff was his chief of staff. In reality a military dictatorship. (Kaiser still needed to be consulted.)
- Rejected any idea of a negotiated peace.
- Use all resources for the war and Knock Russia out of the war.
- Hindenburg programme-Marked the beginning of total war.

How did Hindenburgs changes affect people?

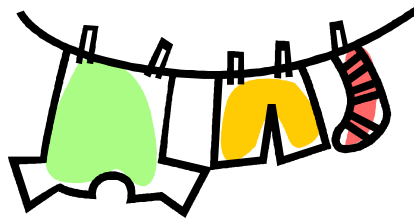
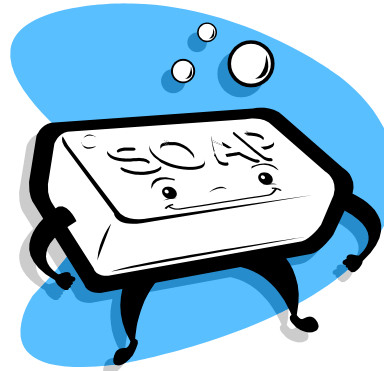
- New Auxiliary Labour law December 1916- compulsory for all German males 17-60 to work for the war effort. FORCED LABOUR
- Union officials would sit on boards that designate workers to factories
- All non essential industries to be shut down.
- Results- It did not resolve the bureaucratic chaos.
- Auxiliary law failed to mobilise large numbers of men as they did not exist.
- Increased demand on munitions led to a greater strain on the supply of raw materials.





Were there Shortages between 1916-1918?

- Shortages of fuel and raw materials were made worse by the cold winter of 1916-1917.
- Coal production in 1917 was only 90% of the production of 1913. Freezing of railways and rivers in the winter caused transport problems.
- Shortages in soap/clothing/dimmed street lights and fewer trams.
- Weather had a bad impact on the potato harvest, and the wheat harvest was smaller due to the labour shortages. Many relied on the potato, and it was a key source of food for the livestock.



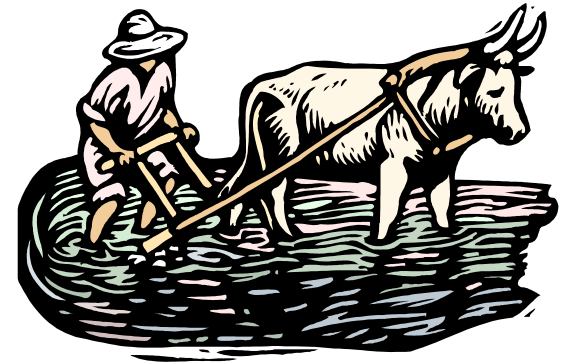
Who suffered most in Germany?

- **Urban working class** had **no access to cheap foods**.
- Many turned to **turnips 1916-1917** became known as the turnip year.
- Local authorities set up soup kitchens. 6,000,000 soup rations, were handed out in Hamburg in April.
- High levels of **malnutrition**
- Queuing was a daily occurrence.
- Peasants hoarded grain.



What were the Social consequences of the war?

- **Peasantry were alienated by government regulations.** State prices for food was low.
- Resentment for the Junkers, who maintained their tax privileges until 1916, **city war profiteers** who made a fortune because of the war.
- **Urban working class- resented government controls, the lack of food, and the black market. Blamed the middle classes and some cases Jewish people for the black market.**
- **Middle classes- savings were worth less and less, and no servants.** The lower middle class also hit by the lack of food.



What happened in the War in 1917?



- January 1917- decided on **submarine warfare**.
- Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg feared it would lead to America getting involved in WW1.
- Did not work as Britain developed the **CONVOY SYSTEM**.
- April 1917 America declared war on Germany, because of Germany's campaign of unrestricted warfare.
- March 1917 Allies not able to break German lines- Battles of Arras and Ypres. New German tactic of movement for troops rather than static.

Was opposition growing at home?

- 1914-1918= 13.2 million German men mobilised for war, 6.2 million casualties, over 2 million dead. Many were touched by the heavy losses.
- May and June 1916- **Strikes in Berlin- want freedom/Bread/Peace.**
- Hindenburg programme/hunger of 1917/long hours fuelled resentment.
- Inspired by Russian revolution, and demoralised by America entering the war.



How strong were the Socialist party?



- Some **SPD members were thrown out the SPD** in March 1917 as would not vote for war credits, and set up their own party (Independent Socialists)(USPD).
- By 1918 the party had 100,000 members. The party wanted- an end to the war and social reform/ end to the auxiliary service law/no more war loans.
- The **majority of the SPD supported the war but tentatively.**



Who was the Kaiser?

- Before 1871 the area we know today as Germany was made up of several states- the most powerful of which was Prussia. The leader of Prussia was therefore the leader of Germany and in 1888 Wilhelm II became Kaiser or King of Germany at the age of 29 after his father died suddenly.
- Kaiser Wilhelm loved grandeur and displaying his wealth, he ran Germany as a dictator. He could appoint the Chancellor, dissolve the Reichstag (government) and declare war. He was fiercely ambitious. In 1890 Wilhelm dismissed his Chancellor Bismarck and after that only chose chancellors who would obey him. Wilhelm played a large part in taking Germany to war in 1914, he was ruthless and despite the slaughter of many of Germanys young men refused to accept Germanys defeat in the war.

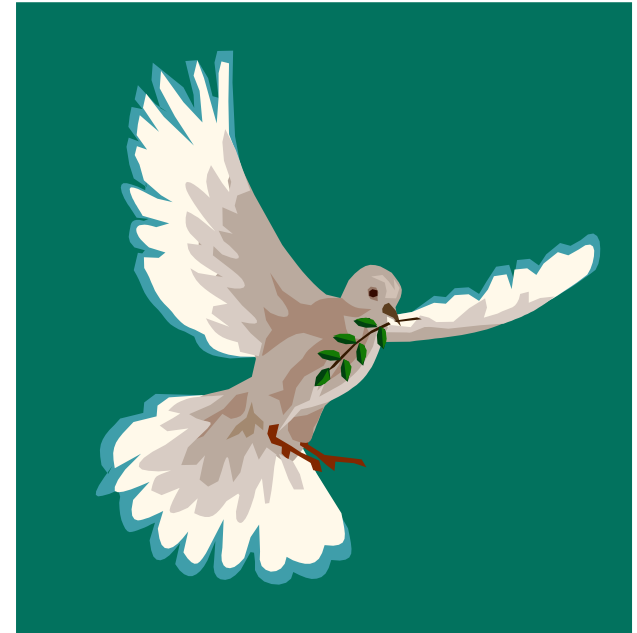


What was the Kaisers response?

- **Kaiser** was persuaded by Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg to **promise reform**.
- He said in his Easter offer that he would **reform the voting system, and reform the government after the war**. It did not convince many.
- July 1917- in a debate on war credits the Centre party and SPD tried to link more money to a search for peace.
- **Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg resigned** as he had lost support.

Who wanted peace?

- 19th July 1917 a **vote in the Reichstag in favour of peace without annexation of land.**
- August 1917 Pope Benedict XV issued a plea for peace.
- September 1917 'German fatherland party' a pressure group was created that wanted the expansion of Germany. Supported by Ludendorff. There were 1 million members.
- The peace league for Freedom and fatherland, was created to ask for peace.



What happened in the War in 1918?

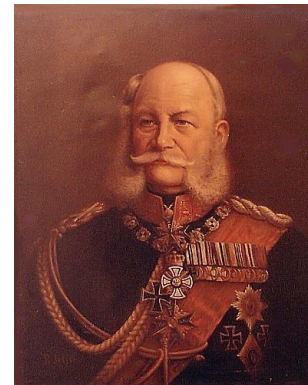
- **Huge strikes in Berlin** and other areas. **Munitions factories stopped work.** Want an end to the war/food and democratic rights.
- March 1918 Treaty of Brest-Litovsk- get $\frac{3}{4}$ of Russia coal, virtually all of oil and cotton and $\frac{1}{3}$ of its population.
- German launched an **offensive on the Western front.** A mistake as the allies had more men and weapons. It failed, and the German army was pushed back
- 29th September 1918 **General Ludendorff demanded the government entered peace talks with the allies.**





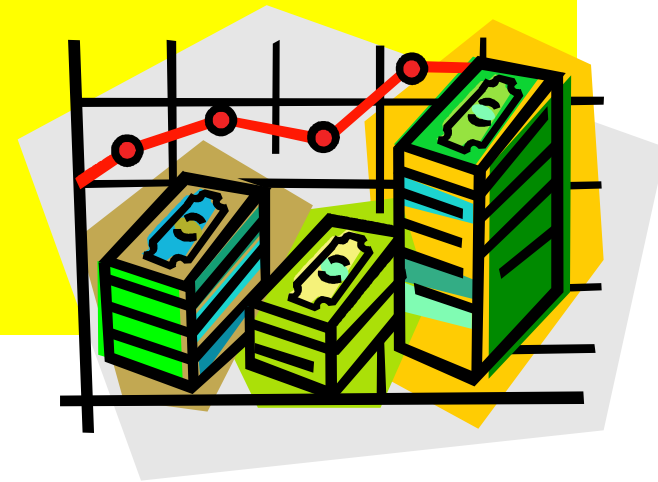
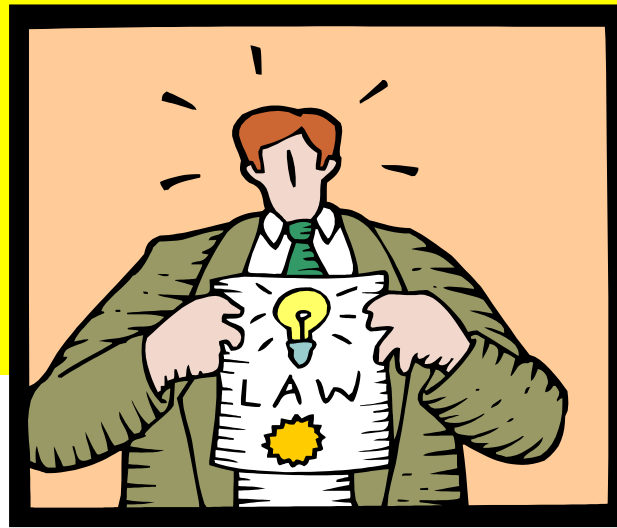
What happened at the end of the war?

- 4th October Prince Max of Baden was made Chancellor.
- **Kaiser made constitutional changes- parliament could consider foreign and military affairs.**
- Vote to the Prussian parliament was to be democratic.
- Cabinet government was to be reorganised.
- Lunderdorff resigned on the 27th of October.
- **Mutiny by sailors** at prospect of defeat.
- **Allies demanded the Kaiser abdicate, and on the 10th October he did this.**
- Leading members of SPD withdrew support from Prince Max's government and this led to a new chancellor Ebert. The new government consisted solely of SPD and USPD.
- **11th November armistice signed.**



War had an.....

- War had an Economic, Social, and Political effect on Germany.



To do: now that you have read the ppt
make notes on these negative impacts from
WW1.

Political effects

Physical effects



Germany in September 1918

Psychological effects

Anarchy

Solutions to Germany's problems?

The End of September 1918- By this time it was clear to General Ludendorff and the German High Command that Germany was on the brink of defeat. Although the allied armies had not yet entered German territory, German forces were in retreat. Elsewhere in Europe Germany's allies tried to negotiate peace terms. Ludendorff believed that the only way to save Germany from a humiliating defeat was to ask the allies for an armistice (a peace settlement). US President Wilson's Fourteen Points offered a basis for this but Germany's system of autocratic (rule by dictatorship) government stood in the way. He believed making Germany more democratic would be a better way of achieving peace with the allies.

Key terms glossary

- It is important to keep an up to date glossary of key terms. Begin this today.

Challenge work: Biographies for key Individuals from Weimar's Early days

Create biographies of key personalities:

- Prince Maximilian of Baden
- Kaiser Wilhelm II
- Friedrich Ebert

At least half a page of A4 for each