

TO UNDERSTAND DIETRICH'S PLACE IN THE WAR AGAINST HITLER AND HIS NAZI PARTY, WAGED TWENTY YEARS LATER, THE STORY OF GERMANY FOLLOWING WORLD WAR I MUST BE TOLD FIRST.

World War I, the Great War, was a revolution of modern warfare. Both the generals and the soldiers were unprepared for its new barbarity. The invention of the machine gun, poison gas, and trench warfare had swiftly vaporized an entire generation of young men across Europe. When Germany marched onto the battlefield in

August 1914, most imagined the exercise would last less than a year, with victory a foregone conclusion. They were fighting the cowardly British, the French weaklings—how could the outcome be anything but total domination? But, almost immediately, the true goals of the war became cloudy.

THE COSTS IN BLOOD AND RESOURCES BEGAN TO GROW WITH EACH PASSING YEAR. BITTERNESS RAGED WITHIN GERMANY. BY 1918, NO ONE QUITE KNEW WHY GERMANY WAS STILL FIGHTING. THE ONLY REAL PASSION GERMANS FELT WAS A DUTY TO AVENGE THE DEATHS OF THEIR FALLEN COUNTRYMEN.

STABILITY

WAR

HORROR

DEFEAT

SANCTIONS

END OF MONARCHY

LOSS OF HOPE

INFLATION

BEFORE THE GREAT WAR, GERMANY WAS A COUNTRY FULL OF LIFE AND PROSPERITY, BUT ALL THAT HAD DRASTICALLY CHANGED BY 1918, WHEN GERMANY FINALLY SURRENDERED AFTER FOUR YEARS OF CONSTANT WAR. THE DEFEAT SHOCKED THE NATION. THEIR NATIONAL FAILURE ECHOED THROUGHOUT ALL OF EUROPE. IT WAS THE END OF THE GERMAN MONARCHY. THE KAISER, WILHELM II, GAVE UP THE THRONE AND FLED TO THE NETHERLANDS, LEAVING THE COUNTRY WITHOUT A CLEAR STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT. A YEAR AFTER THE SURRENDER, IN 1919, GERMANY WAS FORCED TO SIGN THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES, ACCEPTING TOTAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE GREAT WAR!

THE TREATY FINALLY CONCLUDED WORLD WAR I, BUT IN ITS VENGEFUL FRAMING, IT UNWITTINGLY LAID THE SEEDS FOR THE NEXT WORLD WAR. THE TREATY HAD IMMEDIATE EFFECTS ON THE FUTURE OF GERMANY. THE ONCE-POWERFUL NATION WAS FORBIDDEN TO HAVE A LARGE ARMY, IT LOST LAND, AND IT HAD TO MAKE ENORMOUS PAYMENTS TO THE ALLIES. THESE ECONOMIC SANCTIONS, A FORM OF FINANCIAL PUNISHMENT, CRUSHED THE REBUILDING EFFORT OF THE WOUNDED NATION. IN JUST A FEW SHORT YEARS AFTER THE TREATY WAS SIGNED, INFLATION STRUCK GERMANY'S CURRENCY, CALLED THE DEUTSCHMARK OR JUST MARK.

THIS MEANT THAT WITH EACH PASSING DAY, THE DEUTSCHMARK BOUGHT LESS AND LESS. THE RUNAWAY INFLATION MEANT THAT ANYONE WHO HAD SAVED MONEY IN THE BANK BECAME POORER AND POORER. ONLY THE NOBILITY AND ELITE LANDOWNERS WERE SAFE FROM THIS COLLAPSE.

IT CRIPPLED THE NATION.

1921  
75 MARKS = \$1 U.S.  
1922  
400 MARKS = \$1  
JAN 1923  
7,000 MARKS = \$1

FEB 1923  
18,000 MARKS = \$1  
JULY 1923  
160,000 MARKS = \$1  
AUG 1923  
1,000,000 MARKS = \$1

NOV 1923  
4,000,000,000  
MARKS = \$1



MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN GERMANY WERE OUT OF WORK. THEY WERE POOR, HUNGRY, AND ASHAMED OF BEING A DEFEATED PEOPLE.

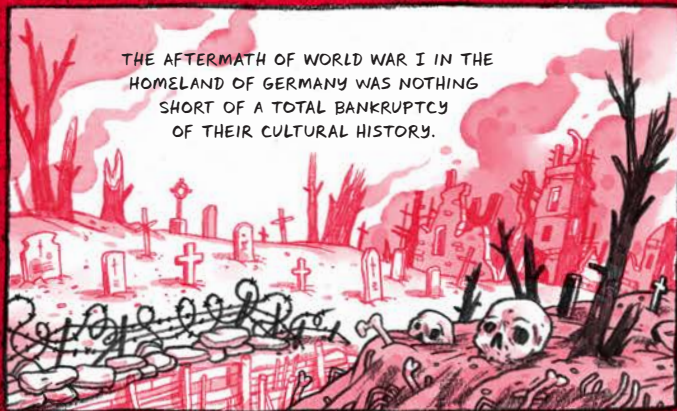
EVEN THEIR EMPEROR, THE KAISER, HAD BEEN DEPOSED.



AFTER THE MONARCHY ENDED IN 1918, THE GERMAN PEOPLE NO LONGER HAD ANY FORM OF GOVERNMENT THEY TRUSTED OR BELIEVED IN.



THE AFTERMATH OF WORLD WAR I IN THE HOMELAND OF GERMANY WAS NOTHING SHORT OF A TOTAL BANKRUPTCY OF THEIR CULTURAL HISTORY.



THEY WANTED TO FIND SOME KIND OF HOPE FOR THE FUTURE. WHO WOULD SAVE THEM?



THIS VACUUM OF CONFIDENCE IN THEMSELVES AND THEIR GOVERNMENT MADE ROOM FOR SOME VERY EXTREME IDEAS. THERE WAS A YOUNG MAN, HIMSELF A VETERAN OF THE GREAT WAR, WHO WAS READY TO GRAB THE REINS OF POWER WHILE THE GREAT GERMAN HORSE WAS WITHOUT A RIDER.

HIS NAME WAS  
**ADOLF HITLER.**



## DURING THE 1920S,

THE COUNTRY SLID FURTHER AND FURTHER ADRIFT. AS THE GERMAN LEADERSHIP TRIED TO FORM A GOVERNMENT THAT WOULD BRING STABILITY TO THE COUNTRY, ADOLF HITLER TRIED TO SEIZE THE GOVERNMENT FOR HIMSELF THROUGH FEAR AND INTIMIDATION. HITLER WAS THE NEW LEADER OF A BREAKAWAY GROUP OF ACTIVISTS CALLED THE NATIONAL SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY (LATER SHORTENED INTO THE WORD "NAZI"). THESE MEN WERE VERY ANGRY WITH THE CURRENT GERMAN GOVERNMENT, COMPOSED OF THE SAME DIPLOMATS WHO HAD AGREED TO SIGN THE HUMILIATING TREATY OF VERSAILLES.



THE NAZIS STIRRED UP POPULAR SUPPORT FOR AN UPRISING AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT LEADERS. HITLER GAVE FIERY SPEECHES OF HATRED AGAINST THE GERMAN AUTHORITIES WHO HAD "STABBED GERMANY IN THE BACK." DURING THIS TIME A SPECIAL GROUP OF PERSONAL ENFORCERS CALLED "THE SA" OR "STORM TROOPERS" FORMED AROUND HITLER TO PROTECT HIS NAZI MOVEMENT AND RALLIES.



THESE MEN WOULD BECOME VERY IMPORTANT GUARDIANS OF HITLER'S GROWING POWER IN THE COMING YEARS.

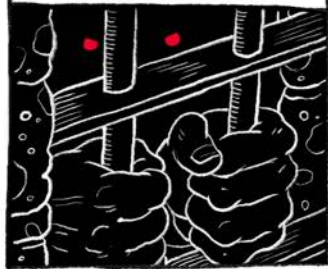




# November 1923

Hitler and his proxy army of storm troopers attempted to grab control of the government through brute force—a coup or, in German, a “Putsch.”

THE ATTEMPTED HIJACKING WAS ILL CONCEIVED AND QUICKLY THWARTED. HITLER, AS THE LEADER, WAS SWIFTLY ARRESTED FOR INSURRECTION. BUT HE SOMEHOW TURNED THIS DEFEAT INTO A TRIUMPH. HIS 1924 TRIAL BECAME A SENSATION, GALVANIZING POPULAR SUPPORT FOR HIS CAUSE.



WHILE INCARCERATED, HE WROTE A BOOK ABOUT HIS LIFE AND RADICAL IDEAS CALLED “MEIN KAMPF” (“MY STRUGGLE”), WHICH WAS PUBLISHED IN 1925.

THOUGH SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR TREASON, HITLER ONLY SERVED SIX MONTHS! HIS BOOK WAS HARDLY A BESTSELLER WHEN PUBLISHED, BUT IT LAID THE GROUNDWORK FOR WHAT WOULD BE HITLER’S LIFE PURSUIT:



## A TOTAL GERMAN CONQUEST OF EUROPE AND THE ERADICATION OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE!

He wrote, “I had at last come to the conclusion that the Jew was no German.”\* Ever since his days in the trenches during the Great War, Hitler had been vocal about his distrust of the Jewish people. But he went beyond mere hatred. Hitler made a personal vow to destroy every Jew in the country. He believed that Germany would never rise again until the “poisoners are exterminated.”\* Playing on the nation’s Christianity, Hitler didn’t frame this struggle as political ... but spiritual! “The personification of the Devil as the symbol of all evil assumes the living shape of the Jew.”\*

THESE WERE HORRID IDEAS.



IN 1924, DURING HITLER’S TRIAL, DIETRICH WAS ONLY EIGHTEEN. GERMANY NOW HAD VERY LITTLE RESEMBLANCE TO THE NATION OF HIS YOUTH. DIETRICH’S ADULTHOOD BEGAN IN A COUNTRY STARVED OF HOPE AND, DEEP DOWN, DESPERATE FOR REVENGE.