

Part B: World War I and World War II Are Connected

Vocabulary Words: officially, the Allies, treaty, Versailles, reparations, enforce, "pure," concentration camps

World War I began in 1914 and the fighting stopped in 1918. The War ended **officially** when **the Allies** (Great Britain, United States, France, Italy and Russia) and Germany signed the **Treaty of Versailles** on June 28, 1919. The Treaty of Versailles was written by the Allies and punished Germany. It took away some of Germany's land and gave it to countries with borders with Germany. It made Germany pay **reparations**. It did not allow Germany to have a strong army. Germany was upset because the Allies wrote the Treaty without advice or agreement from Germany. Germany was angry because it thought it was being treated unfairly.



The Treaty of Versailles failed for several reasons. The Great Depression spread to Europe and no one had any money. The Germans were unable to pay the reparations and the Allies were unable to **enforce** the Treaty.

After World War One, Germany's economy collapsed. This was caused in part because Germany was ordered to pay the reparations to the other countries that they had harmed in World War One. The cost of food and supplies for daily living in Germany doubled every two days. This was called hyperinflation. People would take wheelbarrows filled with money to the store to buy their groceries. It was not long before the paper money was worthless. Children used it like Lego bricks and would cut up the money for their art projects. It was cheaper to burn the money in the fireplace to keep warm rather than buy the firewood.

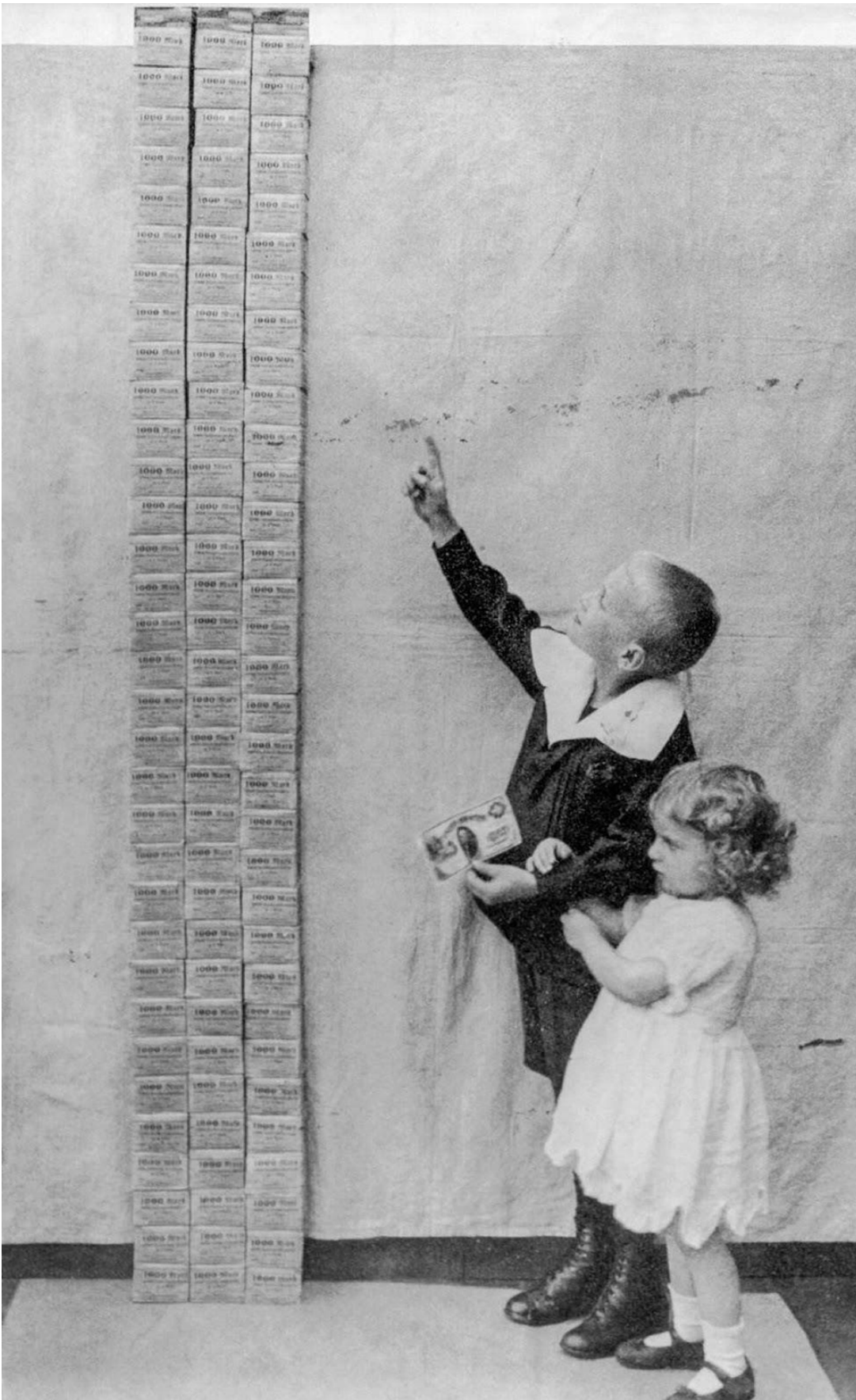


German children playing with stacks of money during the hyperinflation period of the Weimar Republic, 1922.

<http://rarehistoricalphotos.com/hyperinflation-weimar-republic-1922/>



Children used the money for their art projects



Children stand next to a tower of 100,000 marks (the name for the German paper money), equal in value to one US dollar in 1923.

The people were very discouraged. When Adolph Hitler became president of Germany, he inspired the Germans to disobey the Treaty. He started a campaign to make Germany great again. He made speeches praising **"pure"** Germans and criticizing Jewish Germans and other minorities. He built up the army. In the 1930s, Hitler began a government program to move Jewish people and other minorities out of their homes and into **concentration camps**. He also began taking land from his neighbors. His plan was to conquer all of Europe.

World War II started on September 1, 1939, when Hitler and the German armies invaded its neighbor, Poland. Poland was the first country to be invaded and they surrendered after only one month of fighting.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_contribution_to_World_War_II



Germany's Adolf Hitler around 1933.
Picture courtesy of Encyclopedia Britannica.

Vocabulary Words

1. Officially: a formal and public way
In the Story: World War I officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed.
2. The Allies: The Allies is a group of nations that fought Germany in World War I.
In the Story: The main Allies were England, France, Italy, Russia and the United States
3. Treaty: A treaty is a peace document. It describes what will happen to have peace.
4. Versailles: Versailles (say: ver.sigh) is a city in France near Paris. King Louis XIII built the Palace of Versailles in 1610 as a hunting lodge.
In the Story: The treaty to end World War I was signed in the Palace of Versailles in Versailles, France.
5. Reparations: payment in money or materials by a nation defeated in war.
In the Story: The Treaty of Versailles demanded that Germany pay 33 billion dollars for the damage it did to other countries during World War I.
6. Enforce: make Germany follow the rules of the treaty
In the Story: The Allies were unable to enforce the Treaty of Versailles.
7. "Pure": free from characteristics outside the group a person belongs to; this word is in quotation marks because most people do not think it is possible to have purity in a group of people. All groups have characteristics from other groups.
In the Story: Hitler believed Germans were a "pure" group of people.
8. Concentration Camps: a place where large numbers of people are deliberately imprisoned in a small area with very often poor living conditions.
In the Story: The Germans sent Jewish people and other minorities to Concentration Camps in World War II.