

## *How far did Stresemann's foreign policy strengthen the Weimar regime?*

### CHAPTER OVERVIEW

'The Stresemann Era' is the name sometimes given to the history of the Weimar Republic between 1923 and 1929. It reflects the importance of Germany's Foreign Minister, Gustav Stresemann, and his diplomacy which was an important factor in the public's attitude to the Weimar regime. A successful foreign policy was needed. This would reduce the public hatred of the Republic's acceptance of the Versailles Treaty. It would also help Germany's economy, since sorting out reparations would be essential if the new Rentenmark was to maintain its value.

In this chapter we examine Stresemann's aims and strategy, how successful he was and whether his policy strengthened the Weimar Republic. In addition, you will decide whether he was a 'good European', an idealistic politician, committed to European co-operation or whether he was a 'good German', a determined nationalist, committed to establishing Germany's domination in Europe.

- A** What foreign policy did Stresemann pursue? (pp. 80–3)
- B** Was Stresemann a 'good European' or a 'good German'? (p. 84)
- C** How successful was Stresemann's foreign policy? (pp. 85–6)
- D** Review: How far did Stresemann's foreign policy strengthen the Weimar regime? (pp. 87–8)



### ■ 4A Gustav Stresemann, 1878–1929

Born the son of a Berlin publican, Stresemann studied economics at university, before going into business. Attracted to both liberalism and German nationalism, he became the youngest member of the Reichstag when elected in 1907 as a National Liberal. He became party leader in 1917. During the war, he took a very assertive line and was nicknamed 'Ludendorff's young man'. He supported unrestricted submarine warfare, opposed the 1917 peace resolution, and supported the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

In 1919 the National Liberal Party split into the German National People's Party, which Stresemann rejected as too conservative, and the German Democratic Party, which rejected Stresemann as he was too nationalist. Stresemann therefore formed the moderate conservative German People's Party (DVP), which favoured constitutional monarchy. Over the next few years Stresemann moved the DVP into a more constructive attitude to the new republic, seeing it as the best available alternative to left- or right-wing dictatorship.

Stresemann's abilities as speaker and administrator and the assassination of other leaders such as Erzberger and Rathenau meant that he emerged as the most effective Weimar politician. In August 1923 he was appointed Chancellor to deal with the economic crisis. He tackled the challenge with firm and realistic policies and although he lost the Reichstag's confidence as Chancellor in November 1923 he remained as Foreign Minister from 1923 until his death in October 1929.

In 1926 Gustav Stresemann was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his diplomatic work.

#### EXAMINATION POINTS

- 1 Which aspects of Stresemann's early experience might prove valuable as Foreign Minister?
- 2 Can you draw conclusions from his early career about his likely policies as Foreign Minister?

## FOCUS ROUTE

On your copy of your chart from page 60, make notes on Stresemann's achievements in foreign policy. Note:

- his aims (linking domestic and foreign policy)
- strategies he used
- his successes and failures
- key developments in reparations
- responses in Germany to his actions
- different interpretations of his motives/achievements.

## ACTIVITY

- 1 Explain why Stresemann wanted to have agreements with both the West and the USSR.
- 2 Locarno reaffirmed the western borders established at Versailles. What, then, was the significance of the Pact?
- 3 Why was the USA so prepared to help Germany financially?

## TALKING POINT

What evidence is there here that Stresemann was either a good European or a German nationalist? Why might his actions make it difficult to decide on his real objective?

## A What foreign policy did Stresemann pursue?

### Aims and strategy

Stresemann's broad aim was to restore Germany's power and prosperity but he accepted that Germany was in no position to challenge the Allies militarily and revise the Treaty of Versailles by force. He rejected the argument of those such as General Seeckt who saw the future for Germany primarily in terms of building up the country's military might. Instead he pursued a pragmatic policy of co-operation with the West, and a mixture of conciliation and mild pressure on the other powers. Pressure came from using Germany's economic potential (as a purchaser of other countries' food, as a supplier of coal to France, as a market for Britain and as an opportunity for investment for the USA) as a lever that he hoped would produce revision of the treaty and restore Germany's great power status. Stresemann realised that other countries could not afford to let the German economy collapse completely and so made great use of the close interdependence of economic and foreign policy.

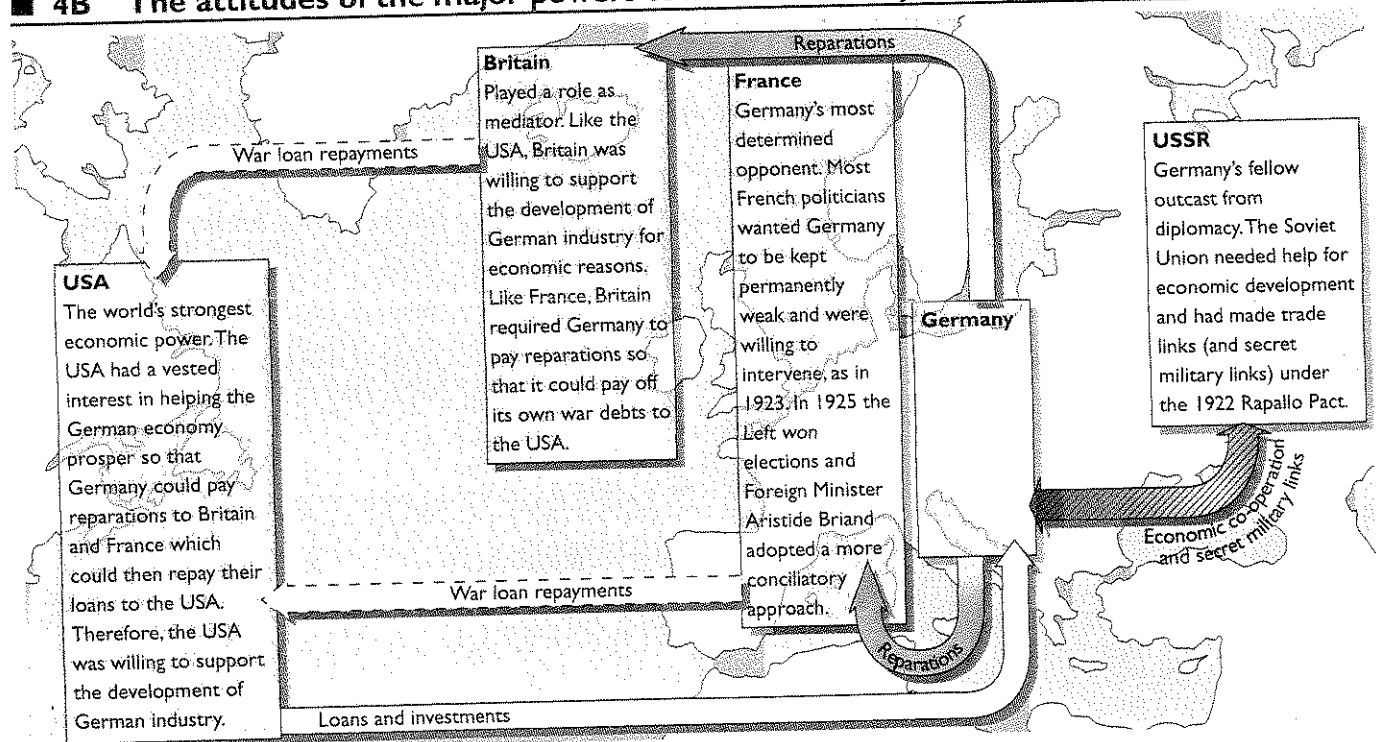
Stresemann's realistic strategy is known as *Erfüllungspolitik* (fulfilment), which meant complying with or fulfilling the terms of Versailles to improve relations with Britain and France and thus encourage them to revise the treaty. This policy entailed:

- negotiation because Germany lacked military power
- gaining the confidence of the Western powers and ending Germany's diplomatic isolation
- using Germany's economic rather than military potential as a means to get Versailles revised
- close co-operation with the USA to gain economic aid
- satisfying the French demand for security
- building links with the USSR and so putting slight pressure on the West to improve relations through fear of further German moves towards the USSR.

As a result of this strategy, Stresemann hoped that:

- the reparations problem would be solved
- the 1923 Ruhr and Rhineland occupations would end
- military control of Germany would end
- Germany's eastern borders would be revised.

## 4B The attitudes of the major powers towards Germany



**Reparations**

- Stresemann negotiated the reorganisation of reparations through the Dawes Plan in 1924 and the Young Plan in 1929 (see page 82 for details).

**Locarno Pact, 1925**

- Stresemann signed at Locarno, Switzerland, in October 1925 a series of treaties (known collectively as the Locarno Pact) with Britain, France, Belgium and Italy.
- Stresemann accepted Germany's western (not eastern) borders; all countries renounced the use of invasion and force, except in self-defence.
- The Pact reassured France about its borders and Germany about further French invasion (such as had happened in 1923).
- Germany also signed arbitration treaties with Poland and Czechoslovakia, renouncing the use of force, but this did not involve Germany accepting its eastern borders.

**League of Nations, 1926**

- In September 1926 Germany joined the League of Nations, the international organisation set up by the Treaty of Versailles. Germany was given great power status on the League Council with veto power.
- Germany was allowed not to participate in collective action against aggression if it was unrealistic, given the military limitations that had been imposed on the country by the Treaty of Versailles.
- Germany used its position to raise matters of German interest.

**Treaty of Berlin, 1926**

- In April 1926 Stresemann signed this treaty with the USSR. The treaty had both public and secret clauses.
- Like the 1922 Rapallo Pact, the treaty helped to develop good relations between Germany and the USSR, with further economic and military exchanges.
- Stresemann used the treaty to put mild pressure on the West to improve its relations with Germany through fear of Germany moving closer to the USSR.

**Allied occupation**

- By calling off passive resistance, Stresemann persuaded the French to withdraw from the Ruhr during 1924–5.
- Following the Locarno Pact, the Allies had left Zone 1 around Cologne by December 1925.
- As part of the Young Plan negotiations of 1929, the Allies agreed to end their occupation early. This success of Stresemann's policy actually happened after his death in October 1929: a month later, Zone 2 was evacuated and the final zone was evacuated in June 1930.

**Disarmament**

- Stresemann pressed for the issue of general disarmament (as mentioned in the Versailles Treaty) to be addressed. In 1926 a preliminary disarmament meeting was held at Geneva but no progress took place.
- In 1928 Germany, along with over 70 other countries, signed the Kellogg–Briand Pact renouncing the use of force, but it had no practical effect.
- In 1926 Stresemann gained a minor success when the Inter-Allied Military Control Commission (monitoring Germany's compliance with the military terms of Versailles) was withdrawn.
- Germany secretly rearmed beyond the restrictions imposed at the Treaty of Versailles.

## The reparations issue 1919–32

Any discussion of reparations and American loans is usually conducted in a swirl of figures and dates with students often being none the wiser on three crucial issues:

- How much did the Allies demand?
- How much did Germany actually pay?
- What form did reparations take?

### How much did the Allies demand?

You may come across a bewildering variety of figures on the amount of reparations. This may be because they are in different currencies, but the calculations themselves were also very complex and differed over time.

#### Versailles 1919

- At Versailles the principle of compensation was established but no actual sum was fixed.

#### 1921

- The sum to be paid was initially fixed at 226,000 million gold marks, payable over 42 years.
- In April 1921, the total was reduced to 132,000 million marks, or £6,600 million. This was arranged as 50,000 million marks (plus 6 per cent interest) to be paid over 50 years, followed by a second-phase payment of 82,000 million marks, or 82 milliard. (One milliard equals 1,000 million.)
- The annual payments were estimated to be about 7 per cent of Germany's national income.

#### 1924 and 1929

- Reparations were reorganised by the Dawes and Young plans (see Chart 4D).

#### 1931–2

- In 1931 payments were suspended for one year as part of a general MORATORIUM on debts. The next year, at the Lausanne Conference, agreement was reached on a final payment of 3,000 million marks, to be paid in a one-off payment in 1935. This was never paid.

#### FOCUS ROUTE

Use the reparations data for the foreign policy section of your copy of the table on page 60.

### ■ 4D The Dawes Plan (1924) and the Young Plan (1929)

ASPECT	DAWES PLAN, 1924	YOUNG PLAN, 1929
<b>Overall amount of reparations</b>	The sum of 132,000 million marks fixed in 1921 was confirmed	The total sum to be paid was reduced to 37,000 million marks
<b>Schedule</b>	Over five years annual payments would rise from 1,000 million marks to 2,500 million, then at varying levels according to economic performance	Annual payments, lower than under the Dawes Plan, to be made over 58 years
<b>Conditions</b>	Allies maintained control of the railways, the Reichsbank and customs duties. Sanctions for non-payment must be agreed by all Allies, not France alone, as in 1923	Allied supervision discontinued
<b>Other points</b>	Seen as a temporary arrangement. Germany given 800 million mark loan to help stabilise the currency	Intended as final settlement. Germany participated in these reparations negotiations for the first time
<b>Impact</b>	Helped economic recovery; led to reparations being paid as scheduled	Allied troops were withdrawn in June 1930. Major internal opposition; referendum campaign

### How much did Germany actually pay?

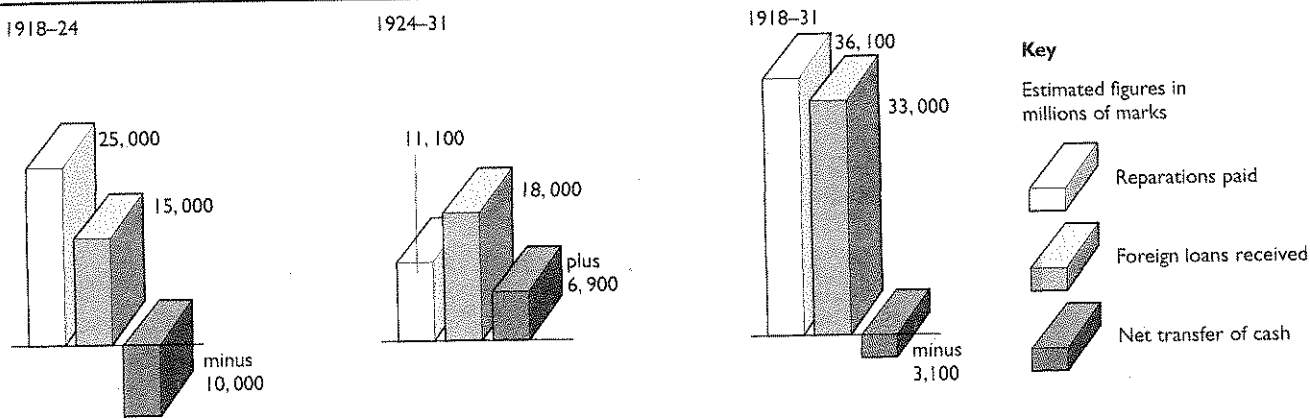
Overall, it has been estimated that Germany paid one-eighth of the original sum. Following the Dawes Plan Germany actually received more in loans than it paid in reparations. This appears generous, but remember that whereas reparations were permanent losses to Germany, American loans to Germany

had to be repaid. Between 1924 and 1930, Germany received 135 long-term loans totalling \$1,430 million (\$1,293 million from the USA), plus short-term loans totalling \$1,560 million. All payments were suspended in 1932.

■ **4E Germany's reparations payments, 1925-32**

Date	Plan	Requirement (bn marks)	Actual payment (bn marks)	Payment as % of National Income
1925	Dawes	1.00	1.06	1.8
1926	Dawes	1.22	1.19	2.0
1927	Dawes	1.50	1.58	2.3
1928	Dawes	2.50	2.00	2.8
1929	Dawes	1.94	2.34	3.2
1930	Young	1.70	1.71	2.6
1931	Young	1.69	0.99	1.8
1932	Young	1.73	0.16	0.4

■ **4F The balance of reparation payments and loans 1918-31**



**What form did reparations take?**

Reparations took the form of payments in kind, for example coal and manufactured products, and money in the form of gold, but not paper money. The German government bought the materials from German manufacturers and gave them to nine foreign governments, primarily France (about 50 per cent of the total), Britain (20 per cent), Italy (10 per cent) and Belgium (8 per cent). As payments were not in paper money, inflation did not reduce the real burden.

The Allied governments received the products and money and kept some for their own use (including paying compensation to those harmed during the war, for example via war pensions), but also paid back some of their loans to the USA.

American loans came direct from the government and from private investors. They were lent to both the German federal government and state governments to finance various spending programmes, such as municipal housing. Loans also went to private firms to help their expansion. American firms invested directly, with 79 firms, such as General Electric (GE) and General Motors, establishing factories. In return for this outlay, Americans received interest payments on their loans, or dividends from their investments.

**ACTIVITY**

- 1 What were the chief differences between the Dawes and Young plans? Which one treated Germany more leniently?
- 2 Explain why Stresemann was more concerned about short-term levels of reparation payments than about the final total amount.
- 3 Study the financial flows in and out of Germany (Chart 4F). How much of a real burden were reparations?

Would you agree that reparations were more harmful psychologically than economically?

## B Was Stresemann a 'good European' or a 'good German'?

Stresemann's approach has been interpreted differently by historians. Some argue that he had moved away from his assertive nationalist past to become a 'good European'. Thus, although he remained a true German patriot, he accepted that Germany's interests were best protected by becoming part of the European order and co-operating with foreign countries. Others argue that he did not abandon his earlier extreme nationalist position and was essentially a 'good German', putting Germany's interests above all else and determined to exploit the international situation to re-establish German HEGEMONY in Europe. In this light, some historians even argue that there were similarities between Stresemann's and Hitler's foreign policy.

Such different interpretations partly arise from the complex nature of Stresemann's policy of trying to appear moderate to foreign statesmen, whilst trying to maintain domestic support by using nationalist rhetoric (stirring language). Interpretations have also changed with the publication of new research into government archives and Stresemann's complete diaries rather than edited versions of them. These sources have revealed the importance of relations with the USSR, and the extent to which he was prepared to manipulate circumstances to advance Germany's cause.

**SOURCE 4.1** Excerpt from a letter from Stresemann to the Crown Prince Wilhelm Hohenzollern, the former Kaiser's son, 7 September 1925

*In my opinion there are three great tasks that confront German policy in the immediate future:*

- 1 *The solution of the reparations problem in a way that is tolerable for Germany.*
- 2 *The protection of those ten to twelve million Germans who now live under foreign control in foreign lands.*
- 3 *The readjustment of our eastern frontiers; the recovery of Danzig, the Polish Corridor, and a correction of the frontier in Upper Silesia . . .*

*The question of the option between east and west is not affected by our entry into the League of Nations. Such options only become viable when we have military force behind us. Unfortunately that we do not have . . .*

*The most important task for German politics is to free German soil from foreign domination. We have to free the stranglehold on our throat.*

*Therefore, German policy must be one of machination [scheming] and the avoidance of any fundamental decision . . . I ask your Royal Highness to allow me to restrict myself to this short résumé, and further request that you fully appreciate the frank tone of this letter since I am naturally obliged to practise the utmost restraint in my public utterances. Should your Royal Highness give me the pleasure of an hour of your time to discuss these questions . . . then I will gladly make myself available.*

**SOURCE 4.2** Stresemann's address to the League of Nations, 10 September 1926

*It is . . . the task of the present generation to look to the present and to the future . . . The co-operation of the peoples in the League of Nations must and will lead to just solutions for the moral questions which arise in the conscience of the peoples. The most durable foundation of peace is a policy inspired by mutual understanding and mutual respect between nation and nation.*

*Even before her entry into the League, Germany endeavoured to promote this friendly co-operation. The action which she took and which led to the Pact of Locarno is a proof of this . . . The German Government is resolved to persevere unswervingly in this line of policy and is glad to see that these ideas, which at first met with lively opposition in Germany, are now becoming more and more deeply rooted in the conscience of the German people. Thus the German Government may well speak for the great majority of the German race when it declares that it will wholeheartedly devote itself to the duties devolving upon the League of Nations . . .*

*In many respects the League is the heir and executor of the treaties of 1919. Out of these Treaties there have arisen in the past, I may say frankly, many differences between the League and Germany. I hope that our co-operation within the League will make it easier in future to discuss these questions. In this respect mutual confidence will, from a political point of view, be found a greater creative force than anything else . . . Germany desires to co-operate on the basis of mutual confidence with all nations represented in the League . . .*

### ACTIVITY

- 1 How can
  - a) Locarno and
  - b) Germany's joining the League of Nations
 be seen as evidence of Stresemann as a 'good European' and as a 'good German'?
- 2
  - a) Read Source 4.1. What are Stresemann's aims and how does he propose to achieve them?
  - b) To what extent does Source 4.2 confirm this view?
  - c) Compare the tone of Sources 4.1 and 4.2. How might these differences be explained?
  - d) What light do these two sources shed on the 'good European' versus 'good German' debate about Stresemann?
  - e) With reference to the origin and content of these sources, discuss which you consider provides the more reliable evidence about German foreign policy.



## How successful was Stresemann's foreign policy?

83

HOW FAR DID STRESEMANN'S FOREIGN POLICY STRENGTHEN THE WEIMAR REGIME?

### International success?

In many ways Stresemann was very successful. The Dawes Plan made a vital contribution to German economic recovery. The Young Plan then reduced both current payments and the total burden, and the rescheduling of payments over a longer time span reduced the likelihood of payment being fully implemented. Perhaps Stresemann's greatest achievement was the Locarno Pact. On the face of it, this looked like capitulation, giving France a greater sense of security for its Versailles borders. However, Stresemann realised that France must feel secure if it was to allow Germany to recover fully. Germany lost nothing by signing Locarno, as it had no sound national claim to Alsace-Lorraine. On the other hand, Stresemann also won advances on the evacuation of the Rhineland. Furthermore, by voluntarily accepting its western borders, Germany was able to concentrate on revision in the east.

Entry into the League of Nations was required in order for the Locarno Pact to come into operation. Because of Stresemann's insistence on only entering as a permanent member of the Council, Germany's status as a great power was formally acknowledged. Furthermore, Stresemann subtly used Germany's position to weaken the provision for collective security, and he raised the issue of German minorities living in other states. In practice, Germany made no real sacrifice, but gained prestige and the goodwill vital for securing revision. The Treaty of Berlin did arouse some suspicion in the West (as had Rapallo), but it was not sufficient to stop *DETENTE* and as a form of mild pressure probably assisted in gaining concessions from the West. Thus Stresemann transformed Germany from being a distrusted outcast to being actively involved in European diplomacy. His contribution to the new atmosphere of co-operation (the 'Spirit of Locarno') earned him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1926.

However, the concrete gains from his diplomacy were not great. He did gain French withdrawal from the Ruhr by 1925 and, in 1929, an agreement on the final withdrawal of Allied troops from the west bank of the Rhine. This came five years before the original schedule of 1935, but full withdrawal only happened after his death. There was no formal agreement changing the demilitarisation terms of Versailles, although Germany secretly broke them.

Some historians argue that Stresemann's basic approach was fundamentally flawed, as Germany lacked the power to insist on revision but could not gain international support for the territorial changes required. Peukert has argued that Stresemann should have accepted Germany's eastern borders and concentrated on building up economic and political influence in the new states in eastern and south-eastern Europe. Furthermore, Peukert argues that by 1929 it was clear that Stresemann's policy of combining *REVISIONISM* with *RAPPROCHEMENT* had failed. The only way forward for him was to abandon either his method or his aim.

Other historians point to the concessions gained and argue that this process would have intensified. Whether the Stresemann approach, if continued, would have led to major Versailles revision cannot be known, as his death was followed by the adoption of a more assertive foreign policy, and the Wall Street Crash in October 1929 changed the whole atmosphere.

### Domestic success?

Although historians are divided over how successful Stresemann's policy was in making gains, most accept that he failed to strengthen significantly the Weimar regime. He hoped that the successful diplomacy that had strengthened the economy and had led to revision of the Versailles Treaty would win greater domestic support for the regime. There is considerable evidence, however, that his policy failed to rally Germans to the regime, because the concessions he gained were not sufficiently dramatic, as you can see in Chart 4G on page 86.

■ 4G Stresemann's strategy and its weaknesses

The aim: German greatness

STRATEGY

- a) Conciliatory diplomacy
- b) Rearranging reparations
- c) Economic recovery
- d) Stronger Germany
- e) Changes to Versailles
- f) Increased support for Weimar regime

PROBLEMS

- a) His conciliatory approach was seen as a sell-out by nationalists
- b) Nationalists opposed any payment of reparations
- c) The economy was too dependent on American loans
- d) Germany was not strong enough to exert real pressure
- e) Very few real concessions were achieved
- f) Support for the regime remained fragile

OVERALL WEAKNESSES

The success of Stresemann's strategy would depend upon: i) the co-operation of the Allies  
ii) winning over extreme German nationalists



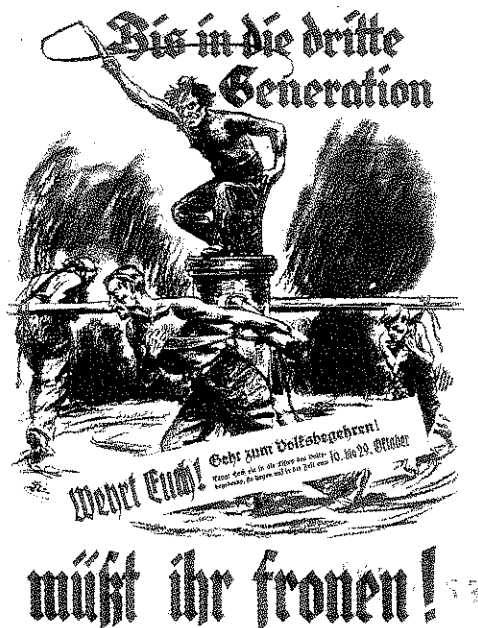
Anti-Locarno demonstration

Many Germans, especially on the Right, saw Stresemann's policy of fulfilment of the terms of the Versailles Treaty as capitulation. They believed that Locarno only benefited the French and also that Germany should have nothing to do with the League of Nations which they regarded as simply the enforcer of Versailles. To them, Stresemann's concessions achieved little because Germany remained occupied and disarmed. Even the Young Plan was opposed because it confirmed that Germany still had to pay reparations. Nationalist groups mounted a major campaign to force the government to reject the Young Plan, using the constitution (which, ironically, most of them despised) to arrange a referendum on its acceptance. Although only 5.8 million (14 per cent) voted to reject the Young Plan, the campaign helped make Hitler a nationally known politician. His fierce condemnation of the Plan contributed to the surge in the Nazi vote in the 1930 elections, when both high unemployment and the economic slump were blamed on reparations and the Young Plan.

Although, as the vote for the anti-Young Plan referendum showed, outright critics were a small, if vocal, minority, Stresemann's policy did not win the support of the silent majority of Germans. They did not feel that the Weimar regime had successfully restored Germany's pride or escaped from its association with the hated Versailles Treaty. Stresemann's achievements were too subtle to be greeted enthusiastically by the majority.

SOURCE 4.3

A placard urging voters to reject the Young Plan. The caption is: 'You must slave into the third generation!'



SOURCE 4.4

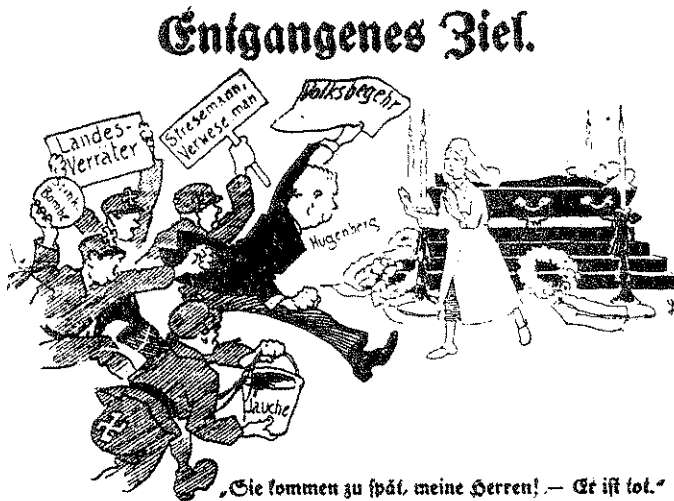
A poster advertising a meeting to protest about the Young Plan. The text reads: 'People's meeting against the Young Plan... We do not want to pay 80 gold marks every second for 60 years!'





## D Review: How far did Stresemann's foreign policy strengthen the Weimar regime?

**SOURCE 4.5** A 1929 cartoon from the SPD newspaper *Vorwärts*. The Nazis and nationalists following Hugenberg are carrying a stink bomb, bucket of manure and placards saying 'Traitor' and 'Stresemann, rot in hell'. The nurse is saying 'You're too late, gentlemen! He's already dead.' The caption of the cartoon is 'Their quarry has escaped them.' What can you learn from this cartoon about German attitudes to Stresemann's policies?



**SOURCE 4.6** Stresemann to an English journalist a few months before his death

*I gave and gave some more till finally my countrymen turned against me. If I had received a single concession after Locarno, I would have been able to win over my people. I still could, but you Englishmen gave nothing, and the only concessions you did make always came too late... The future now lies in the hands of the young generation - the youth of Germany whom we could have won over to peace and the new Europe. If both have been lost - that is my tragedy and a great error on your part.*

**SOURCE 4.7** An obituary of Stresemann published in the German newspaper *Vorwärts* on 6 October 1929

*Stresemann's achievement was in line with the ideas of the international socialist movement. He saw that you can only serve your people by understanding other peoples. To serve collapsed Germany he set out on the path of understanding. He refused to try to get back land which had gone forever. He offered our former enemies friendship. Being a practical man he saw that any other path would have left Germany without any hope of recovery. He covered the long distance from being a nationalist politician of conquest to being a champion of world peace. He fought with great personal courage for the ideals in which he believed... It is no wonder that right-wingers watched with horror as he went from his original camp to the opposite one. They could not accept him because doing so involved accepting that the Republic created by the workers had brought Germany from devastation to recovery.*

**SOURCE 4.8** S. Marks, *Illusion of Peace*, 1976, pp. 64 and 65

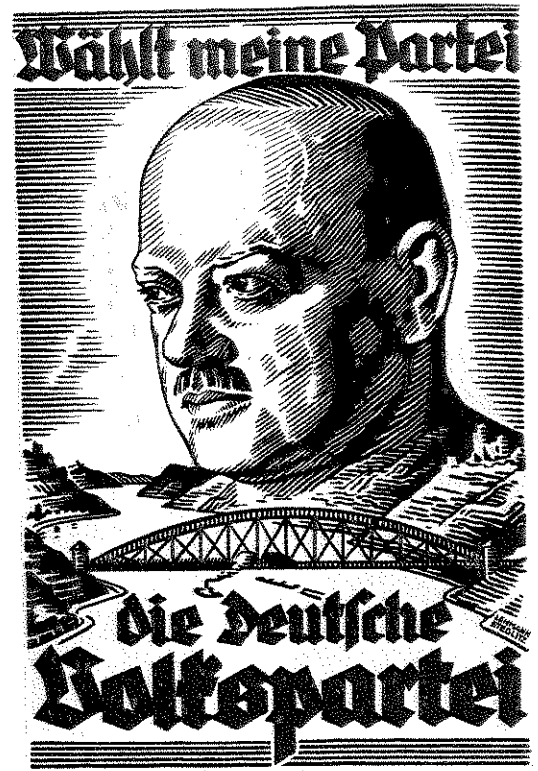
*It is often said that a diplomat must lie for his country and Stresemann was a superlative liar, dispensing total untruths to the ENTENTE, the German people, and his diary with even-handed aplomb [coolness, composure]. He had substantial political difficulties, as the German left distrusted his conservative past and the German right thought he was conceding too much to the Entente; Stresemann made the most of these to gain foreign concessions. Entente leaders, anxious to keep in office this 'good European' (who was in fact a great German nationalist), generally gave way. Stresemann invariably had a list of concessions to Germany necessary to achieve the pacification of Europe. As he achieved one concession from the top of the list, two or three more were always added at the bottom. Stresemann gained most of his list, and no man in the Weimar Republic did more to destroy the Versailles Treaty...*

*[He] worked himself to death at the age of fifty-one. In his last days he had recognised the rising tide of strident [noisy], BELLIGERENT German nationalism and had known that the days of his indirect and patient policy were numbered... In his six years as architect of German foreign policy, he had liberated the Ruhr and the Rhineland, ended military inspection, twice reduced reparations, and transformed Germany from the pariah [outcast] to the pre-eminent member of the European family of nations. He had further demonstrated the futility of imposing upon a great power a treaty it will not accept.*

### ACTIVITY

- 1 What do the tone and content of Source 4.6 suggest about Stresemann's own assessment of his foreign policy?
- 2 Does this source prove that Stresemann himself considered his foreign policy had failed?
- 3 What light do Sources 4.5-7 shed on whether contemporaries saw Stresemann as a 'good German' or a 'good European'?
- 4 In Source 4.8 Marks makes a very positive assessment of Stresemann's foreign policy. How far do you agree with her assessment?
- 5 Write an obituary of Stresemann, either for a DVP-leaning newspaper or for *The Times*, or write a right-wing nationalist critique of Stresemann.

**SOURCE 4.9** This DVP poster for the 1930 election shows Stresemann the bridge-builder



#### ACTIVITY

How might a historian interpret the DVP's use of the poster in Source 4.9 in the 1930 election and the election result (see page 63) as evidence of the success of Stresemann's work?

#### KEY POINTS FROM CHAPTER 4: How far did Stresemann's foreign policy strengthen the Weimar regime?

- 1 Stresemann as Foreign Minister from 1923 to 1929 was determined to improve Germany's international position.
- 2 He believed the key to success would be a strong economy.
- 3 He pursued a policy of fulfilment in order to show that the burden of reparations was unworkable.
- 4 He helped negotiate the Dawes and Young plans which aided the German economy.
- 5 Germany accepted its western borders at Locarno, and joined the League of Nations.
- 6 Stresemann also maintained good relations with the USSR and extended the Rapallo Pact with the Berlin Treaty in 1926.
- 7 He gained agreement for the Allies to withdraw from the Rhineland by 1930.
- 8 Stresemann's conciliatory policy upset German nationalists without winning major concessions from the Allies.
- 9 Stresemann has been seen as both a 'good European', working for European harmony, and as a 'good German', working to secure Germany's dominance.
- 10 Stresemann died before he had been able to win sufficient changes to the Treaty of Versailles to strengthen the Weimar Republic.