The new Weimar Republic, which emerged in 1919, as the First World War drew to a close, was a radically new concept of government in Germany. It would be a \textit{republic}, well \textit{democratic}. With such radical change it needed a \textit{Constitution} - a set of rules setting out how a country should be governed - its rules and limitations. The Constitution was drawn up by a committee headed by \textit{Hugo Preuss}.

Germany was declared a \textit{Democratic Federal Republic} - welfare provision / rights for workers, with the President as head of state and also responsible for the army. Universal Male and Female Suffrage (right to vote) at 20.

The first President of Germany was \textit{Ebert}.

\textbf{BACKGROUND}

\textbf{KEY FEATURES}

\textbf{WEAKNESSES OF THE CONSTITUTION}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Article 48 emergency powers granted much political power in the hands of one person.
  \item This could (and will be) misused.
  \item It could undermine democracy and lead to a \textit{legal dictatorship}.
\end{itemize}

\textbf{ARTICLE 48 emergency powers granted much political power in the hands of one person.}

\textbf{PRELUDE TO NAZISM}

While it was not a constitutional issue as such, it should be remembered that Weimar democracy was undermined at its birth.

The Nazis also used this regional division to build up support. There was soon crises in various states such as Bavaria. They often ignored the Berlin Government as well.

\textbf{THE ARMY - was unreliable and only \textit{loyal} in support.}

\textbf{LACK OF SUPPORT FROM THE WEIMAR ESTABLISHMENT}

Conservative forces throughout Germany, many of them essential pillars of society, failed to give Weimar the support it needed.

\textbf{THE CHANCELLOR}

Appointed by the president (usually from the largest party elected) & needed the support of the majority in the Reichstag to rule effectively.

\textbf{THE CONSTITUTION}

This gave the President the potential to \textit{make laws in an emergency} without the Reichstag. Article 48 was used on numerous occasions. 

\textbf{THE CHANCELLOR}

\textit{Bruning} and \textit{Groning}.

\textbf{Elections every 7 years.}

The President could appoint the \textbf{CHANCELLOR} (usually based on electoral strength).

The main representative assembly and law-making body.

Delegates elected over four years using the PR (Proportional Representation) voting system.

This was made up of representatives from the States (Lander).

They could initiate or delay laws but they could be overruled by the Reichstag.

\textbf{WALL OF RIGHTS}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Also guaranteed certain social rights - welfare provision / rights for workers.
\end{itemize}

\textbf{REICHSTAT}

This was made up of representatives from the Lander (States).

They could initiate or delay laws but they could be overruled by the Reichstag.

\textbf{REICHSRAT}

The Länder, or States, were not completely independent but retained sovereignty.

\textbf{DEMOCRATIC}

\textit{Universal Male and Female Suffrage (right to vote) at 20.}

\textbf{FEDERAL}

\textit{Universal Male and Female Suffrage (right to vote) at 20.}

\textbf{REPUBLIC}

\textit{Universal Male and Female Suffrage (right to vote) at 20.}

\textbf{DEMO CRATIC}

\textit{Universal Male and Female Suffrage (right to vote) at 20.}

\textbf{REPUBLIC}

\textit{Universal Male and Female Suffrage (right to vote) at 20.}

\textbf{ARTICLE 48 emergency powers granted much political power in the hands of one person.}

This could (and will be) misused.

It could undermine democracy and lead to a \textit{legal dictatorship}.

\textbf{NOTE:} You should always remember that Hitler was not the first to undermine democracy. Article 48 was used on numerous occasions.

1923 was a bad year for the Weimar government. The President was faced with the Kapp Putsch.

Hitlers putch is an example of this. The Nazis also used this regional division to build up support. There was soon crises in various states such as Bavaria. They often ignored the Berlin Government as well.

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