World Leaders: Adolf Hitler

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Synopsis: Adolf Hitler was born in Austria in 1889. He led Germany from 1933 to 1945. Germany's military actions started World War II. Hitler also ordered the killing of millions of Jews. This is now known as the Holocaust. Hitler and his wife, Eva Braun, killed themselves in 1945.

Early Years

Adolf Hitler was born on April 20, 1889, in Austria. When Hitler was 3 years old, his family moved to Germany.

During World War I, Hitler served in the German army. After the war, Hitler joined a political group.

The group was the Nazis. Hitler designed the Nazi flag. The flag was red with a swastika in a white circle. In 1921, Hitler became leader of the Nazis.
Rise To Power

In 1932, Hitler ran for president and lost. Paul von Hindenburg won the vote. Still, Germany’s government was weak. Hindenburg made Hitler chancellor to make Hitler’s supporters happy. Hitler was now the second most powerful leader in Germany.

As chancellor, Hitler gave himself complete power. He took away people’s rights. Hitler gave the people working for him the right to make laws.

The Nazis were the only political group allowed in Germany. Hitler’s enemies were rounded up and killed.

In 1934, the German government ended the job of the president. Hitler was declared leader, and he began to prepare for war.

Nazis believed that some Germans were better than everyone else. Nazi laws punished people for being Jewish. Laws outlawed marriage between non-Jewish and Jewish people. The laws also punished people for having disabilities.

Nazis caused the deaths of 11 million to 14 million people. This included about 6 million Jews. Many died in concentration camps. Nazis also killed other groups of people, like gypsies.

World War II

On September 1, 1939, Hitler invaded Poland. Britain and France had promised to protect Poland. They declared war on Germany.

In 1940, Hitler invaded Norway, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Belgium. Germany bombed Britain. Germany joined forces with Japan and Italy.

In 1941, Hitler invaded the Soviet Union.

In December 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. The U.S. entered the war against Germany, Japan and Italy. Hitler was now at war against the United States.

In 1942, the German army lost some important battles. In 1944, the U.S. and Britain landed in France and defeated the Germans there. They began to free Western Europe.

Death And Legacy

By 1945, Germany was losing the war. On April 29, Hitler married Eva Braun. The couple killed themselves the next day. Hitler and Braun were afraid of being captured. On May 7, 1945, Germany surrendered.

Hitler left Eastern and Central Europe weak and poor. His actions caused about 40 million people to die. Many more suffered because of Hitler.