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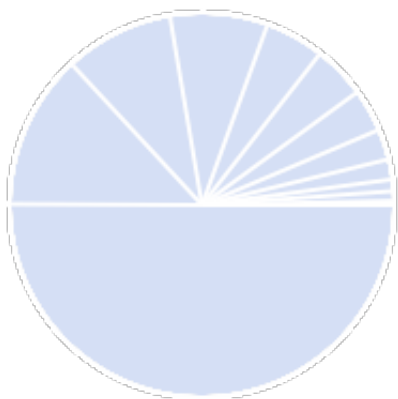
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Stab-in-the-back legend



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The Stab-in-the-Back Legend (German:

🔊 *Dolchstoßlegende* (help·info))

was a popular, right-wing political legend of post-First World War Germany, which remained current until the eve of the Second World War. In attributing Imperial German loss of the war to the public's failure in answering their "patriotic calling", and to war effort-sabotage of the socialists, the Bolsheviks, and the Jews, and not to the Reichsheer's inability to engage battle, it exonerated the military of their defeat. Culturally, the legendary dagger-stabbing of the German Army parallels the hero's fate in the epic poem *Nibelungenlied* (*Song of the Nibelungs*), wherein Siegfried is stabbed in the back by Hagen von Tronje.

Historically, the *Dolchstoßlegende* proved important to the political ascension of Adolf Hitler; as the Nazi Party grew, it maintained an original, true-believer base, embittered Great War veterans who

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Qibya massacre

believed the patriotic legend and its mythic interpretation of Germany's recent military history. The *Dolchstoßlegende* ideologically encapsulates the justifications of Nazi Germany's persecution and murder of Jews, communists, socialists and intellectuals, bringing into line every dissident.

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