'In the years 1900–1914, the impact of Germany’s economic development was wholly positive.' How far do you agree with this view?

**Paragraph 1: - Social**

Industrial production was increasing rapidly. Steel, chemicals and other industries were all becoming powerhouses of Europe. – led to urbanisation. Helped to stimulate a population boom and ultimately changed the structure of German society.

This led to overcrowding, poor sanitary conditions and the lack of clean water which lead to the outbreak of disease. Also led to homelessness – 200,000 men a year were accommodated by the Berlin Homeless shelter association after 1900.

Unemployment rose as the unskilled working class could not get jobs. However:

Built tramways which meant people could access the suburbs and get away from the slum conditions. They could also travel cheaply into town.

Increase in wages which led to better welfare.

The increase in urbanisation and population led to laws being extended and introduced which benefitted the workers such as:

1900 Accident and Invalidity Law
1903 Sickness Insurance Law
1908 Working Hours Law

**Paragraph 2: - Political**

Led to the socialist movement which failed to be dampened after the anti-socialist laws of 1878-1890. The SPD was growing fast with 592,000 members which made it the largest socialist party in Europe.

The 1912 elections saw the SPD become the largest party in the Reichstag with 110 seats. This led to Bulow introducing his Sammlungspolitik which was an alliance of conservative and nationalist interests against the socialist threat.

In 1900 the Reichstag passes a naval law which proposed to build 38 battleships in 20 years which appealed to the majority of Germans (especially nationalist).

In response to this the British launched the Dreadnought in 1906 which in turn led to the Reichstag passing the third naval law for Germany in 1906.

This was the Naval race which increased tension between these two countries.

Bulow's government was being undermined by a growing financial deficit, increased military spending meant that the government needed to raise 380 million marks. Bulow decided to propose property tax or an extension of the current inheritance tax however this led to the conservative parties siding with the Centre party to show their opposition. This alongside the daily telegraph affair in 1908 where Bulow was blamed for failing to censor the interview. In 1909 his budget was formally defeated and he lost the confidence of the Kaiser leading to his chancellorship coming to an end.

**Conclusion**