

THE CAUSES OF

WORLD WAR 2



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The Treaty of Versailles



The Treaty of Versailles was severe. It damaged Germany economically, made her weak and hurt German pride.

Hitler would use German bitterness and anger as fuel for his speeches and to justify for his foreign policy.

The Global Depression



The Wall Street Crash marked the start of a Global Depression.

This helped dictators rise to power and other countries were too weak to stand up to them.

Hitler Appointed Chancellor



Fueled by his anger at Versailles + propelled to power by the depression, Hitler's foreign policy would eventually push Europe to war. He started with rebuilding the small, weak German army in 1933.

The League of Nations - Collapses



The League was created on the idea of **Collective Security** - countries standing as one against aggression. In 1935, the League failed to stop to Mussolini's attack on Abyssinia. The League was not taken seriously after this event failure.

The Rhineland - reoccupied



The Rhineland was German territory that bordered France. Under Versailles, Germany was forbidden from putting troops there. Hitler took a gamble and marched his army into this area in 1936.

The Nazi - Soviet Pact



The NSNAP was a surprising agreement between Hitler + Stalin. It opened the way for Hitler to invade Poland without fear of Soviet attack.

The Nazi invasion of Poland was the trigger for WW2.

Munich Agreement - Sudetenland



By 1938, Germany had grown stronger + demanded more. Europe feared war over the Sudetenland. After talks in Munich, the Sudetenland was given to Hitler. In return, he promised this was his last territorial demand - he lied.

Anschluss - Austria annexed



Austria + Germany had been banned from joining together. Hitler (Austrian) disagreed.

He ignored Versailles and arranged a rigged vote with 99% 'voted' to join with Germany.



Timeline - Causes of WW2

1919 - 1939

June 1919	Treaty of Versailles - signed in P _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1924	Hitler in prison - writes his book, Mein Kampf	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oct 1929+	W ___ Street Crash to Global Depression	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sep 1931	Manchuria Invasion - The League Fails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jan 1933	H _____ sworn in as Chancellor of Germany	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1933+	Hitler begins to rebuild his military in secret	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jan 1935	The Saar plebiscite - returned to Germany	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oct 1935	Abyssinia Invasion - The League is 'd ___'	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mar 1936	Hitler puts troops back into the R _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nov 1936	Rome - Berlin Axis - Hitler + Mussolini Alliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1937	The Spanish Civil War - German involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mar 1938	Germany forces - Anschluss with A _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1938	Stalin pushes for an alliance with Chamberlain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sep 1938	M _____ Agreement - Sudetenland to Germany	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mar 1939	Promises broken - Nazis invade Czechoslovakia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aug 1939	The Nazi-S _____ Pact - Hitler + Stalin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sep 1939	Germany invades P _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sep 1939	Britain declares war on Germany	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sep 1939	The Second World War has begun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jun 1941	Operation Barbarossa - Germany attacks USSR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Lightly shade the event bar to sort the causes into the following ...



Colour code the RED circles to classify events into major causes



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Shade the event column to sort the causes into the following ...

<input type="checkbox"/>	Long Term Cause	<input type="checkbox"/>	Short Term Cause	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tipping Point	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trigger
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Colour code the RED circles to classify events into major causes

<input type="checkbox"/>	Versailles	<input type="checkbox"/>	Global Depression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hitler's Foreign Policy
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Failure of the League	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appeasement	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Nazi-Soviet Pact

Main Causes of WW2

V	Versailles Impact	○
H	Hitler's Foreign Policy	○
D	Global Depression	○
L	League's Failure	○
S	Spanish Civil War	○
A	Appeasement	○
N	Nazi - Soviet Pact	○

Why Did International Relations Collapse by 1939?

The Causes of World War 2

Hitler's Foreign Policy Aims



Why Appeasement?

A lone - Britain isolated

League has failed.
USA was isolationists.
Therefore Britain was not strong enough to stand up to Hitler especially after 1936.

Britain needed time to rearm

Britain's military was weak.
British generals warned they could not fight.
Germany had begun re-arming.
Chamberlain = Appeasement + Rearmament

Character of Chamberlain.

He believed in and wanted peace. He said ..
"War wins nothing, cures nothing, ends nothing."

Defeat Communism.

Britain = anti-communist.
Stalin seen as a bigger danger than Hitler.
A strong Germany created a BUFFER.
This would help hold back Soviet aggression.

(YES) Appeasement Justified (NO)

P1 - Britain Was Alone

League is 'dead' by 1936.
(collective security gone)
USA = isolationist.
Australia / Empire = Not willing to help Britain.
Britain not strong enough to stand up to Hitler especially after 1936.

P2 - Britain Needed Time

Military was weak.
Generals said NOT ready
Germany stronger by 1938
So - Appease + Rearm!

P3 - Defeat Communism

Britain = anti-communist.
Stalin seen as bigger danger than Hitler. Therefore, a stronger Germany created a BUFFER that could help hold back Soviet aggression.

P1 Hitler got bolder

Allowed him to rearm.
Allowed him break Versailles.
Encouraged him to demand more.

P2 Betrayed Czech Allies

British allies.
Sacrificed them at Munich.
Churchill said it was against British values.

P3 Angered Stalin

British appeasement angered Stalin who felt isolated.
Britain - slow reply to his letters.
This pushed Stalin to signing the Nazi-Soviet Pact in 1939.



Japan Manchuria

12 month Lytton Report only condemned Japan

Japan left League and the League is humiliated

Collective security fails

Disarmament Conferences

League members refused to disarm - especially France who feared Germany.

Britain even signed a naval agreement allowing Germany to build more warships but at 1/3 the rate of Britain - Britain is allowing Germany to break the Treaty of Versailles.

Britain again selfish

Hitler Takes Power

Hitler took Germany out of the League. Vowed to rip up the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

Give 3 ways Hitler broke the Treaty of Versailles between 1933 and 1935 ...

1. Rearming in public rally in 1935. Showed off TANKS and PLANES.
2. 1/2 million in the Germany army by 1935.
3. Introduced conscription.
4. Anglo-German Naval Agreement.

Saar Plebiscite

This strengthened the German economy with LEGAL return of coal fields

Military Rally

Hitler OPENLY showed off his army that breaks the terms of the TOV

Rhineland Reoccupation

What was this?
Hitler once again broke the TOV and marched troops in.

Why now / not stopped?
- League weak
- French election (government in a state of confusion)
- Appeasement in Britain not prepared for war over this.
- 'We went into our own backyards' - Lord Halifax

Why did Britain not get involved?
R = Rearm for war.
A = Alliance with Franco.
F = Fight Communism.
T = Test weapons.

Did Hitler have his aims in the Spanish Civil War?

Appeasement Munich Crisis

What was this?
Sudetenland - what to do? Hitler got pro - Nazi groups to cause trouble there. Chamberlain invited to Munich to solve the crisis. Agreed to give it to Hitler + troops move in - thus betraying the Czech leader and British ally - Benes. Hitler promised Chamberlain he didn't want anything else after the Sudetenland.

"A quarrel in a far-away land between peoples of whom we know nothing" - Chamberlain

Nazis invade Poland

Why invade?

1. 'Lebensraum'.
2. On the way to USSR.
3. NSNAP led Hitler to WRONGLY gamble that Britain wouldn't fight him without the USSR.
4. Appeasement encouraged him.
5. Hitler confident after TESTING weapons / tactics in the Spanish Civil War.
6. Appeasement allowed Hitler to strengthen army + build alliances.

Treaty of Versailles

German ruined and humiliated by the treaty.

- Bitter Germans
- Fuel for Hitler's actions
- Propaganda for Hitler

Global Depression

Remember the **domino effect** that leads to the Rise of Dictators and League collapses by 1935. This leaves Europe weak and distracted with the concept of collective security now gone.

Hitler Takes Power

The League failed and is humiliated

Hitler watched this with keen interest

"The real death of the League was in 1935" - AJP Taylor

Abyssinia Invasion

The League failed and is humiliated

Hitler watched this with keen interest

"The real death of the League was in 1935" - AJP Taylor

Spanish Civil War

What was this?
Communists took over in Spain. Nationalist leader General Franco asked for Hitler's support.

Describe German Involvement

- 1: Transported Franco.
- 2: Condor Legion.
- 3: Bombing Guernica.
- 4: Military advice + tactics.

Nazi - Soviet Non Agg Pact

What did they agree?
Not to fight each other
Divide Poland

Why did Hitler sign?

- 1: To avoid a war on 2 sides
- 2: Scare Britain
- 3: Got western Poland
- 4: Time to prepare for war

Why did Stalin sign?

- 1: Angry at Appeasement
- 2: Angry with Britain's late response to letter.
- 3: Got eastern Poland.
- 4: Time to prepare for war

"The Nazi Soviet pact was the single most important short cause of the Second World War" - Historian - N Kelly

Nazi Invade Czechoslovakia March 1939

Hitler broke his promise. War now looks certain. Appeasement now over.

Poland = A gamble too far!

Britain Declares War - WW2

1919	1929-1933	1931 - 32	1932	1933 - 1935	1935	1936	1937	1938 - 39	1939
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Longer Term Causes

'Any account of the origins of the Second World War must give Hitler a leading part' - Modern Historian.

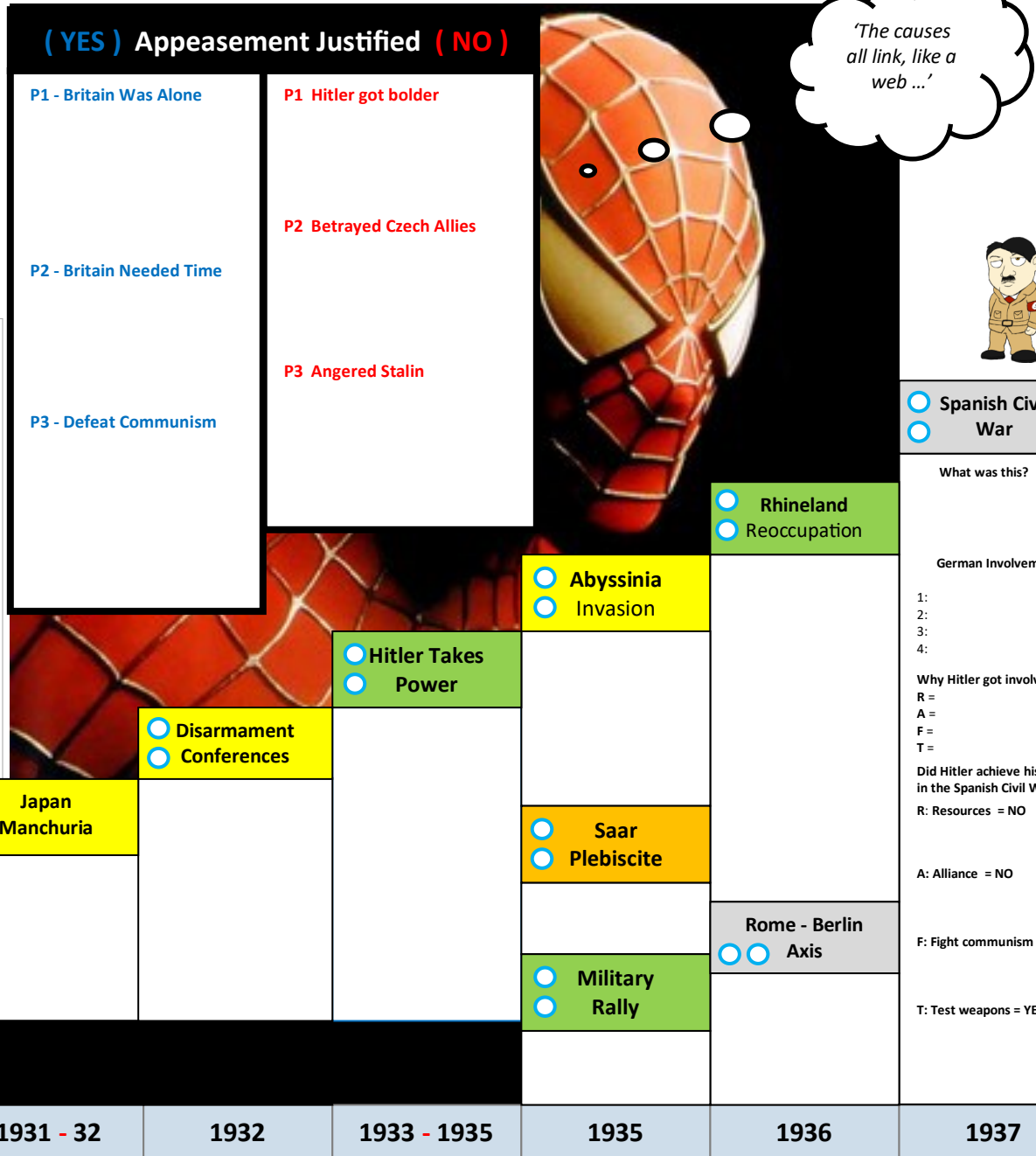
Shorter Term Causes

Main Causes of WW2

V	Versailles Impact	<input type="radio"/>
H	Hitler's Foreign Policy	<input type="radio"/>
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L	League's Failure	<input type="radio"/>
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A	Appeasement	<input type="radio"/>
N	Nazi - Soviet Pact	<input type="radio"/>

Why Did International Relations Collapse by 1939?

The Causes of World War 2



'The causes all link, like a web ...'



Hitler's Foreign Policy Aims



Why Appeasement?

- A** lone - Britain isolated
- B** ritain needed time to rearm
- C** haracter of Chamberlain.
- D** efeat Communism.

- Nazi - Soviet
- Non Agg Pact

Anschluss with Austria

What did they agree?
Not to fight each other
Divide Poland

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1: To avoid a war on 2 sides
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'The Nazi Soviet pact was the single most important short cause of the Second World War'
Historian - **N Kelly**

Spanish Civil War

What was this?

German Involvement

1:
2:
3:
4:

Why Hitler got involved?
R =
A =
F =
T =

Did Hitler achieve his aims in the Spanish Civil War?
R: Resources = NO

A: Alliance = NO

F: Fight communism = YES

T: Test weapons = YES

Why Anschluss?

What happened?

Effect?


Appeasement Munich Crisis

What was this?

Nazis invade Poland

Why invade?

1919	1929 - 1933	1931 - 32	1932	1933 - 1935	1935	1936	1937	1938 - 39	1939
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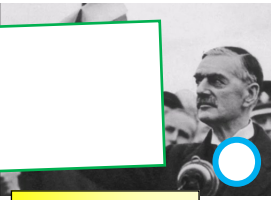
Germany Invades Czechoslovakia

"Ohhhh ..."

March 1939

The Munich + Sudeten Criss

Peace for our time - a short summary of the crisis



September 1938

Anschluss

In 1938, Hitler pressured Austrian Chancellor, Kurt von Schuschnigg into Anschluss. But he refused - and resigned. His replacement Seyss-Inquart - leader of Austrian Nazi Party, helped organise a rigged referendum.

Result in favour of Anschluss = _____ %

March 1938

Describe German Involvement in the Spanish Civil War

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____

1937

The Nazi - Soviet Non Aggression Pact




(Message)

August 1939

CAUSES OF WORLD WAR 2

Illustrate 2 BEST examples of Appeasement -



Why Did Germany Enter The Spanish Civil War?


R _____
A _____
F _____
T _____

1937

How / Why Did The NSNAP Lead to The Outbreak of World War 2


September 1939

Hitler After Rhineland



1936

Rome - Berlin Axis



1936

Rhineland Reoccupation - T or F

The Rhineland given to France in 1919 =
The Rhineland was demilitarised =
Many in Britain thought that the Treaty of Versailles was too harsh by 1936 =
Hitler was very powerful in 1936 =
Hitler was scared of the League now =

1936

Abyssinia Invasion

Note everything you remember

"The real d _____ of the League was in 19 __ __" AJP Taylor


1935 - 36



BBC

7 Mins

Hitler Appointed Chancellor



Jan 1933

Disarmament + League Exit

The L _____ did try to get an agreement about levels of military armament but Germany + France could not agree. Hitler withdrew Germany from the global organisation he h _____.

1933

Re-Arming in Secret

Army 1933 = 100 000	1935 = 300 000
Aircraft 1933 = 0	1935 = 100 000
Conscription 1933 = no	1935 = yes
Navy 1933 = 6 pre dreadnought ships.	

He then holds a PUBLIC military rally in 1935.

JUNE 1935

Anglo - German Naval Agreement

in 1935 Britain + Germany signed the Anglo German naval agreement this allowed Germany to build ships at 1/3 the rate of Britain + broke the Treaty of Versailles

Circles 'issues' # = _____

Stresa Pact - who signed it / why?

1935

End of WW1



Once the war ended the 'fake news' was quickly spread. That .. cowardly politicians had stabbed Germany in the back and Germany could have fought on. The Weimar Government was never popular. This would be a good source of propaganda for Hitler later on.

1918 = Fake News!

Hitler's Foreign Policy Aims

Make Germany Great Again

Anschluss - reunite Empire

Rhineland - remilitarise it

Versailles - destroy it

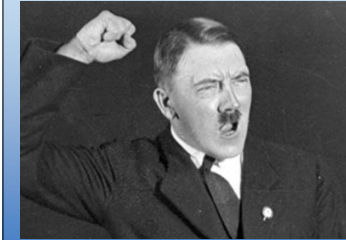
End Communism - USSR

Lebensraum - living space - Poland



AVENGE!

The Treaty of Versailles



June 1919

Germany surrendered hoping / expecting a fair peace based on Wilson's 14 Points. This never happened. The harsh treaty would create economic hardship and a legacy of bitterness in Germany. **Hitler would use this as propaganda jet fuel!**

Crisis in Germany by 1923

France invaded the Ruhr

Economy got worse

Hyperinflation + collapse



By 1923

Global Depression



The Global depression would create a domino effect that ...

- Ended international cooperation.
- Created social suffering + unrest.
- Brought extreme leaders to power.
- Helped end the League of Nation

1929+

A Turning Point

Hitler in Power



After gaining little support in the 1920s - the Nazis grew in power due to the economic **impact of the Global Depression**. Hitler promised change + gave hope + radical solution to problems. **The German people were now ready to listen.**

1933

Hitler becomes Chancellor

Hitler's Early Actions breaking Versailles

Army Rebuild

Wehrmacht from 100,000 to 300,000 by 1935.

Airforce

Luftwaffe from 0 to 2,500 planes by 1935.

Anglo - German Naval Agreement.

Could build ships at 1/3 rate of Britain

Conscription

Reintroduced



1933 - 1935

The League of Nations and Mussolini's Role in All of This!



By 1936

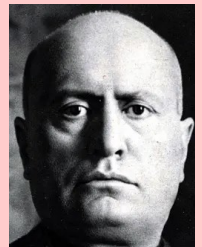
The League had been created to stop exactly the things that had happened.

Again and again it failed to deliver on its aims - to stop wars and enforce the treaties of World War 1 through the principle of Collective Security. By 1936 it was no longer taken seriously.

RIP League

Mussolini of Italy was a key figure in the build up to World War 2. He had been very damaging to the League Council - **Corfu + Abyssinia**. Britain + France were afraid of him allying with Hitler so they let him get away with whatever he wanted. Br + Fr + Italy did sign the **Stresa Front in 1935** - but a year later Mussolini allied with Hitler and signed the **Rome - Berlin Axis**.

This alliance further strengthened Hitler.



Bad Boy!

FULL ACCESS



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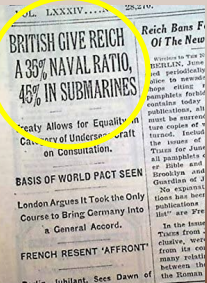
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Anglo - German Naval Agreement

An agreement that allowed Germany to start building a navy as long as it did not exceed a ratio of 1/3 of Britain's navy.

Importance

- Britain allows a break of Versailles.
- Germany grows in strength.
- Against League aim of disarmament.
- Damaged British + French relations.



Britain behaving badly - again!

Rhineland What + Why?



Hitler once again broke the TOV and marched 22,000 troops into the German demilitarised zone.

This was a risk for Hitler because Germany still very weak compared to France.

Hitler's position in Germany was still fragile. But, a successful reoccupation would boost his popularity.

The troops (with orders to retreat if opposed) marched in without any opposition - some were on bicycles!

Remilitarisation - 1936

Rhineland - why not stopped

- League weak + distracted - Abyssinia.
- French holding elections - their government was in turmoil / paralysed.
- Hitler lied - "More troops available".
- Appeasement = Britain not prepared to go to war over this. View that Versailles terms had been too harsh.



'Walking into their own backyard'.

Lord Lothian - British MP.

1936

Rome - Berlin Axis



An alliance between Mussolini of Italy and Hitler following Italy's departure from the League of Nations.

Importance.

- Strengthened Hitler with a new ally.
- Encouraged Hitler to gamble.
- Weakened Brit + France.

1936

Why Germany into Spain CW?

Resources from Spain

Metals - Copper, Iron + Mercury - **FAILED**

Ally with General Franco (right)

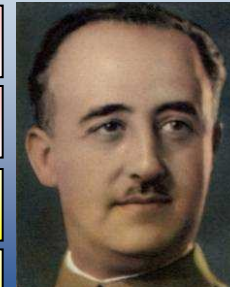
Wanted to secure Spain as an ally - **FAILED**.

Fight against the Communists.

Stop the communist overthrow - **SUCCESS**.

Test New Weapons

Such as carpet bombing + fighters - **SUCCESS**.



1937+

German Role in Spain CW

Airlift of Franco's Army

10,000 from Morocco to Spain

The Condor Legion

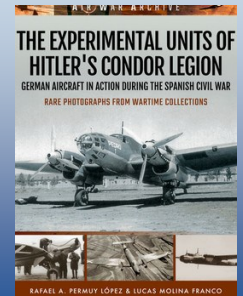
German bombers + fighter helped in the fight.

Tanks and heavy Weaponry

Including new tanks and tank commanders.

Military Advice and Tactics

Helped train Franco's Nationalist soldiers.



1937+

Anschluss with Austria

Why Anschluss?

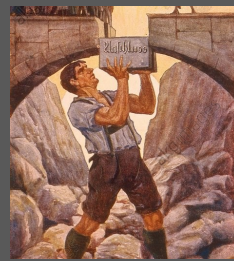
- German speaking people there.
- Vow to break Versailles.
- Hitler didn't fear being stopped.

What happened?

Forced resignation of Chancellor Schuschnigg + rigged referendum.

Effect?

Hitler successful + now even stronger.



March 1938

The Munich / Sudeten Crisis



Hitler's plan to take over the Czech Sudetenland.

He got pro - Nazi groups to cause trouble there. Chamberlain flew to Munich to help solve the crisis. Chamberlain agreed to let Hitler march troops into the area.

Churchill = Sudetenland was betrayal of the Czechs.

Hitler **promised** Chamberlain he didn't want anything else after the Czech Sudetenland.

Sept 1938

"a quarrel in a far away country, between people of whom we know nothing". Neville Chamberlain - British PM.

Why Brit Appeasement ?

Alone

Britain lacked strong allies - League dead.

Britain needed more time.

Generals warned that army not ready.

Character of Chamberlain

Wanted peace at all costs - trusted Hitler.

Defeat Communism

A stronger Germany could hold back the USSR.



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Appeasement Justified?

Britain Alone - the League was all but dead by 1936. France was relatively weak. Mussolini moved towards Hitler.

Time to re-arm - the army was in no state to fight. General warned Chamberlain of this. Appeasement did buy Britain time to re-arm at 4 x rate after 1936.

Defeat Communism - Stalin was clearly a threat to global security. Chamberlain's policy of allowing Germany to act as a counter weight made sense.

Appeasement not Justified?

Hitler stronger, bolder and more confident. He was allowed to remilitarise, invade, join with Austria and ally with Italy unopposed.

Cowardly - it was unethical and 'not British'. Example = sacrifice of the Czech and British ally Benes.

Angered Stalin - and thus was a major reason why Stalin agreed to sign the Nazi - Soviet Non Aggression Pact.



Nazis Invade Czech'kia




Following the Munich Crisis - and the decision to let Hitler take the Sudetenland - Hitler had promised that this was "his last territorial demand".

Hitler saw the British as cowards or "little worms".

This encouraged him to make his next move in Czechoslovakia. He did so - unopposed.

March 1939

Stalin's Role - Letters



Stalin had on several occasions sought to gain support from Britain and France in a mutual alliance. After his letters stating this went unanswered for months - (and then only by diplomats) Hitler responded charmingly, in person to Stalin the very next day.

c1939

Nazi - Soviet Pact

World was shocked with the announcement of the Nazi-Soviet Non Aggression Pact. Also known as the Molotov Ribbentrop Pact.

An agreement that Hitler + Stalin would NOT fight each other.

Why would these obvious enemies do this?



Aug 1939

Frenemies

Why Stalin Sign NS Pact?



Both Stalin and Hitler knew that war was inevitable - both needed time to prepare to fight the other.

The agreement secretly allowed for them to divide Poland = necessary land and resources for both.

Stalin had been angered by the policy of appeasement - and the slow, inadequate response to letters. He understood Chamberlain's plan to let Hitler and Stalin - 'slug it out'. He planned the same for Britain and Germany.

Why Hitler Sign the NS Pact?

Both Stalin and Hitler knew that war was inevitable - both needed time to prepare to fight the other.

The agreement secretly allowed for them to divide Poland = necessary land and resources for both.

Hitler knew Germany would likely lose again if fighting a war on two fronts as had happened in WW1. His plan was to defeat (or tame) the West and then turn all his forces against the USSR.



Poland - Gamble too Far

Up until September 1939 - Hitler had again and again gambled and got away with it. This made him less and less fearful that Britain would stand up to him.

However, he was wrong and the invasion of Poland was the final straw - a gamble too far - and Britain declared war.

World War 2 had begun - note, Hitler later admitted that he should have attacked earlier - as Britain had bought more time to re-arm.



Sept 1939

Main Causes of WW2

Appeasement Policy = aggressive + break Versailles + gamble too far.

Versailles = bitterness and anger in Germany + propaganda for Hitler.

Global Depression = suffering / unrest + rise dictators + damage to League.

Spanish Civil War = Hitler successful test of weapons + tactics = confidence.

Appeasement = Allowed Hitler to get stronger + gamble more.

Nazi Soviet Pact = Hitler did not fear 2 front war then invaded of Poland.



'Any account of the origins of the Second World War must give Hitler a leading part.'



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