

Causes of WW₂ Revision

1918 - 1939

CAUSES OF WORLD WAR 2

WALL ST CRASH
GREAT DEPRESSION
GLOBAL DEPRESSION



1918



JUNE 1919



1923



1929+

GERMANY SURRENDERS IN WWI
STAB IN THE BACK MYTH IS BORN

THE TREATY
OF VERSAILLES

CRISIS OF 1923
IMPACT OF VERSAILLES



1935+

ABYSSINIA CRISIS ..
RIP LEAGUE OF NATIONS



1933

HITLER BEGINS REARMING
THE MILITARY IN SECRET



1933

RISE OF
HITLER IN
GERMANY



1935

HITLER SHOWS OFF MILITARY
REBUILD IN PUBLIC



1935

SAAR PLEBISCITE - 90% LEGALLY VOTED TO
RETURN AREA RICH IN COAL BACK TO GERMANY



GERMAN TROOPS ENTER
THE RHINELAND

1936



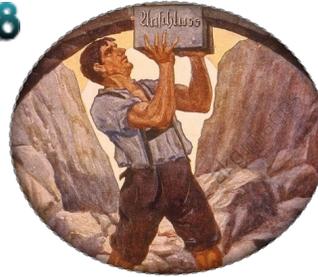
ROME - BERLIN
AXIS





ANSCHLUSS BETWEEN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA

MAR 1938



SPANISH CIVIL WAR DRESS REHEARSAL?

1937+



APPEASEMENT THE MUNICH CRISIS

1938



MP WINSTON CHURCHILL ATTACKS APPEASEMENT AS A ... COWARDLY BETRAYAL OF BENES + BRITAINS CZECH ALLIES

HITLER AND STALIN SIGN THE NAZI SOVIET NON AGGRESSION PACT



AUG 39

BRITAIN STEPS UP ITS OWN REARMAMENT

GERMANY INVADES POLAND BRITAIN DECLARES WAR ON GERMANY



NAZIS INVADE THE CZECH SUDETENLAND

OCT 1939



STALINS LETTERS TO BRITAIN AND FRANCE GO UNANSWERED

SEPT 1939

WW2 HAS BEGUN



Main Causes of WW2

V	Versailles	●
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

Could Appeasement Be Justified?

<p>Yes</p> <p>P1 Britain Alone</p> <p>P2 Britain Needed Time</p> <p>P3 Defeat Communism</p>	<p>No</p> <p>P1 Hitler got bolder Allowed him to rearm. Allowed him break Versailles. Encouraged him to demand more.</p> <p>P2 Betrayed Czech's British allies. Sacrificed them at Munich. Churchill said it was against British values.</p> <p>P3 Angered Stalin Britain further isolated Stalin. Ignored his letters.</p>
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'The causes all link, like a web ...'

Why Appeasement?

Alone (Britain isolated)

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

Britain needed more time.

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 bigger danger the Hitler.
A strong Germany created a BUFFER.
This would help hold back Soviet aggression

Treaty of Versailles

German ruined and humiliated by the treaty.
- Bitter Germans.
- Fuel for Hitler's actions.
- Propaganda for Hitler.

Global Depression

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

Manchuria Invasion

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 Chancellor

League failed / humiliated.
Hitler watched.
'The real death of the League was in 1935' - AJP Taylor
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.

Abyssinia Invasion

League failed / humiliated.
Hitler watched.
'The real death of the League was in 1935' - AJP Taylor

Saar Plebiscite

Mandated in 1919. for ... 15 years.
90% Germans voted for legal return. Rich in coal + strengthened economy.

Military Rally + Conscription

Hitler OPENLY showed off his growing army - break the terms of the TOV.
Also re-introduces conscription into army - another break of TOV.

Rhineland Reoccupation

What was this?
Hitler once again broke the TOV and marched troops in.
Why now / not stopped?
- League weak
- French elections (government in turmoil)
- Appeasement = Britain not prepared to go to war over this. *'walking into own backyard'*. Lord Lothian

Why a risk for Hitler?
- Germany still very weak
- Hitler's position in Germany was still fragile and failure was a risk.

Rome Berlin Axis

Alliance between Hitler and Mussolini.
League's sanctions against Mussolini pushed Mussolini towards an alliance with Hitler.

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 + troops.
2: Condor Legion.
3: Bombing Guernica.
4: Military advice + tactics.

Why Hitler got involved?
R = Resources for war.
A = Alliance with Franco.
F = Fight communism.
T = Test weapons.

Did Hitler achieve his aims in the Spanish Civil War?
R: Resources = NO
Generally Spain did not allow Hitler to take advantage.

A: Alliance = NO
Franco and Hitler did not get along. Spain stayed neutral.
F: Fight communism = YES
Franco won /communists lost the civil war. German involvement was crucial.
T: Test weapons = YES
Very effective. E.g New carpet bombing @ Guernica.

Anschluss with Austria

Why Anschluss?
German speaking people. Vow to break Versailles. Hitler didn't fear being stopped from doing it.
What happened?
Forced the resignation of Chancellor Schuschnigg. Rigged referendum.
Effect?
Hitler wins + now stronger.

Policy of Appeasement

What was this?
Hitler's plan to take over the Czech Sudetenland.
He got pro- Nazi groups to cause trouble there.
Chamberlain flew to Munich + allowed Hitler to march his troops into Czech Sudetenland betraying the Czech leader Benes.
Hitler promised Chamberlain he didn't want anything else after taking the Czech Sudetenland.

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

Nazis Invade Sudetenland

Hitler broke his promise. War now looks certain.

Nazi - Soviet 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'

Nazis invade Poland

Why Invade?
1. Lebensraum.
2. The path to attack USSR.
3. Hitler confident after TESTING weapons / tactics in the Spanish Civil War.
4. Appeasement encouraged Hitler and allowed to strengthen army + build alliances.

Poland = Was gamble too far!

Britain Declares War - WW2

1919	1929-1933	1931 - 32	1932	1933	1935	1936	1937	1938	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

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

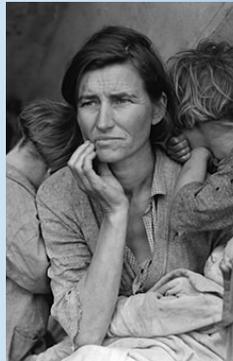
Economy got worse

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



1933

Hitler becomes Chancellor

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.**

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 Fails



By 1936

RIP League

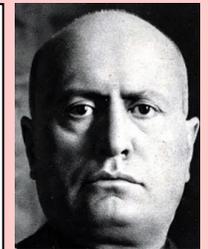
The League had been created to stop exactly the things that had happened.

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.

Mussolini's Role in All of This!

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.



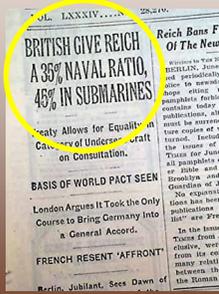
Bad Boy!

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)

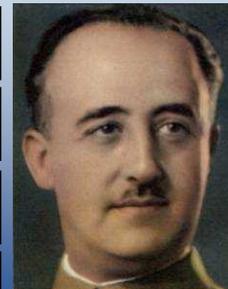
Wanted to secure Spain as an ally - **FAILED.**

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 succesful + 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 Chamberlin - British PM.

Why Brit Appeasement ?

Alone

Britain lacked strong allies - League dead.

Britain needed more time.

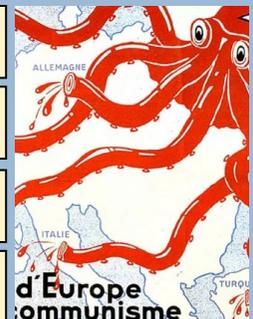
Generals warned that army not ready.

Character of Chamberlain

Wanted peace at all costs - trusted Hitler.

Defeat Communism

A stronger Germany could hold back the USSR.



Hitler's Foreign Policy Aims and Events

M

Make
Germany
Great Again

Left the League	1933
Rhineland	1936
Anschluss	1938



Allies
+
Anschluss

Rome-Berlin Axis	1936
Attempt to ally with Franco	1937?
Anschluss	1938

Reoccupy
and
Rearm

Rearm + Conscription	1933-35
Anglo-German Naval	1935
Rhineland	1936

Versailles
is
Smashed

Rearm + Conscription	1933-35
Sudetenland	1938
Anschluss	1938

End
of
Communism

Into Spanish Civil War	1937
Nazi-Soviet Pact	1939
Invasion of Poland	1939

Lebensraum
or
Living Space

Anschluss	1938
Sudetenland	1938
Invasion of Czech / Poland	1939

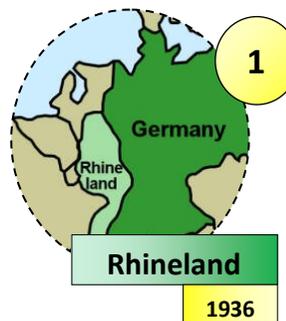


R

V

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1

Rhineland

1936

The Rhineland was a key industrial region of Germany, producing coal, steel and iron. It also formed a natural barrier to France. In the event of a war, the River Rhine, if properly defended, would be a difficult obstacle for an invading force to cross. One of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles was that the Germans would not be able to keep military forces there. Hitler hated this as it made Germany vulnerable to invasion. In 1935, Hitler revealed that he had built up an air force and signed the Anglo-German Naval Agreement that allowed him to enlarge his naval forces. In 1936, Hitler boldly marched 22,000 German troops into the Rhineland, in a direct contravention of the Treaty of Versailles. Hitler offered France and Britain a 25 year non-aggression pact and claimed 'Germany had no territorial demands to make in Europe'.

[BBC History \(Edited \)](#)

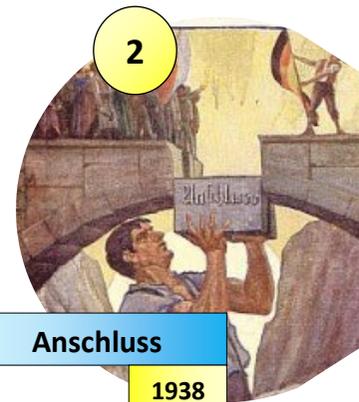
Anschluss - the unification with Austria.

Why .. Hitler considered Austrian / Germans the same. Hitler also wanted to strengthen his hand with this union. Austria bordered the Sudetenland.

What ... Hitler encouraged pro Nazis groups to created trouble in Austria. This weakened the position of Chancellor Schuschnigg. After trying to call for a referendum Schuschnigg was forced to step down. Seyss-Inquart (pro Nazi) took over.

Effect ... The Nazis marched into Austria unopposed. Hitler arranged a rigged vote. Hitler added 7 million people and 100 000 to his army. Plus steel and iron resources. Eyes now on Czechoslovakia.

[Edited from BBCHistory.](#)



2

Anschluss

1938

Munich Crisis - the annexation of the **Sudetenland**

Why = 3 million German speaking people there (taken from Austria)

Why = industrial area and also main area for Czech defenses.

Why = Czech was a League member and allied with France.

What = Konrad Henlein said Germans faced mistreatment there..

What = Hitler threatened to take over—Chamberlain flew to Munich.

What = Initial deal with Czech leader Benes to make an agreement. but .. A second 'secret deal' without Benes gave Hitler all of the area.

What = Chamberlain claims 'Peace in our time'.

Effect = Germans march into the Sudetenland.

Effect = Hitler grows more powerful and bolder.

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

[Edited from BBC History.](#)



3

Munich / Sudetenland

1938

The Nazi-Soviet Non -Aggression Pact - NOT an alliance, but a truce.

Why signed .. both Hitler and Stalin wanted more time to build their armies before fighting one another. They agreed to divide Poland up between them. Stalin was pushed into a truce with Hitler as the western powers had not welcomed an alliance with Stalin. They instead had appeased Hitler allowing him to become stronger and a threat to the USSR. Stalin hoped to sit out and watch Hitler and the west fight it out before getting involved. Hitler knew he would ultimately attack the USSR in his fight against '*communist barbarism*'.

Effect ... Hitler felt that he could now attack Poland without fear of Soviet attack and that the west would interfere, now that they would have to fight him without Stalin. This was a short term cause of WW2.

1939

NSNAP



4

Invasion of Poland

The gamble too far ... without fear of Soviet attack, Hitler attacked Poland. However, he wrongly guessed that he would get away with this and Britain declared war on Germany. This was the trigger for WW2



5

Causes of WW2 Revision - Part 1 of 2

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