

	DUNMAN HIGH SCHOOL HUMANITIES & ARTS PROGRAMME
	YEAR 4 HISTORY

Name(s): [redacted] Class: Date: 30/01/2023

HITLER'S EXPANSIONIST POLICY

Refer to Textbook pg 114-124

HITLER'S ACTIONS	HOW DID THIS CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE OUTBREAK OF WWII
Withdrawal from the League of Nations and the Geneva Disarmament Conference (Oct 1933)	Allowed Germany to embark on rearmament. Rearmament would not be possible if Germany had remained in the League of Nations as France had objected.
Conscription and Rearmament (Oct 1933 onwards)	Allowed Germany to build up its defences against the stronger allies. Under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, the German army and navy were severely limited and they were barred from having an air force. However, by March 1935, Germany possessed a 2500 plane Luftwaffe and a 300000 strong army. Germany also instituted compulsory conscription and planned for an army of 550000.
Remilitarisation of the Rhineland (Mar 1936)	Allowed Germany to regain its military power in the Rhineland and effectively put in place defences from all sides. These defences would ensure that Germany would be armed during attacks. Germany could also launch attacks from Rhineland. The move also broke the Treaty of Versailles, which made him an instant hero as many Germans did not like the Treaty of Versailles.
German involvement in the Spanish Civil War (Apr 1937)	Hitler sent soldiers, equipment and warplanes to support the Spanish Nationalist forces, which were against the incumbent Spanish government. At that time, the Spanish government were supported by communists and left wingers. Hitler, being an avid anti-communist, took the opportunity to point out the dangers of communism to Britain and France. Britain and France themselves were anti-communist, and Hitler's stance resonated with them. Therefore, Britain and France did not intervene with Hitler's attacks on Spain, such as German planes making devastating raids on Spanish cities.

<p>German unification with Austria (Mar 1938)</p>	<p>Hitler, who was born in Austria, had always felt that Germany and Austria belonged together. He had put this idea in his book, Mein Kampf.</p> <p>On 13 March 1938, Austria was annexed by Germany. Previously, Hitler encouraged the Austrian Nazis to push for Anschluss which was a political union with Austria. Although this was not allowed under the treaty of Versailles, the treaty could no longer stop Hitler from doing what he wanted. As there were many Nazis pushing for Anschluss in Austria, Hitler told Kurt Schuschnigg, chancellor of Austria that only Anschluss would stop the rioting and unrest caused by the Nazis. Schuschnigg called a plebiscite, and 99.75 percent of the Austrians voted for Anschluss. However, even after this annexation of Austria, Britain and France took no action. This resulted in Austria's resources being at Germany's disposal.</p>
<p>Securing the Sudetenland (September 1938)</p>	<p>On 30 September 1938, the Munich agreement was concluded by Britain, Germany, France and Italy. The four powers agreed to the German annexation of the Czechoslovak borderland areas named the Sudetenland, where more than three million people, mainly ethnic Germans, lived. The Czechs and the Soviet Union, who has alliance with Czechoslovakia, were not consulted.</p> <p>As the leader of Czechoslovakia, Edvard Benes did not resist the agreement, German troops marched into the Sudetenland without a fight. Many agree that the occupation of the Sudetenland paved the way for Hitler's later occupation of the entirety of Czechoslovakia.</p>
<p>Invasion of Czechoslovakia (Mar 1939)</p>	<p>On 16 March 1939, Hitler invaded the rest of Czechoslovakia. This made Britain and France angry, and they warned Hitler that they would wage war if Germany invaded Poland.</p>
<p>Signing of Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact (Aug 1939)</p>	<p>Hitler signed the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact with the Soviet Union. The pact stated that both countries would not attack each other and would resolve conflict in a friendly manner. The pact shocked many as Hitler was anti communist and Stalin did not trust the Germans, so the pact came as a surprise. Hitler signed the pact in order to avoid fighting a war on two fronts which had already proved disastrous for Germany in the first world war, and he did not want the Soviet Union to interfere with his invasion of Poland. Meanwhile, Stalin was angry that the allies did not consult him before signing the Munich agreement.</p>
<p>Invasion of Poland (Sept 1939)</p>	<p>Hitler invaded Poland on 1 September 1939. Many think that this was because Hitler did not take Britain and France seriously as they did</p>

	<p>not really take action against Hitler's previous actions. However, this time, Britain and France held true to their promise and declared war on Germany 2 days later. Therefore, it is agreed that Nazi invasion of Poland was the last straw which led to the outbreak of World War II.</p>
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