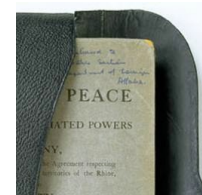


# The Road to World War II



## Failure of Versailles

The Treaty of Versailles was the peace settlement that ended WWI



it failed to provide a “just and secure peace” as promised; instead it:

decreased the size of the German military  
forced Germany to remove troops from the Rhineland

gave the Alsace-Lorraine region back to France

make Germany sign a “war guilt” clause

The Versailles Treaty (above on crutches) took a beating in the U.S. and abroad

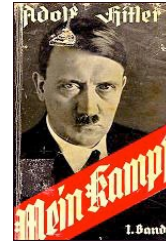
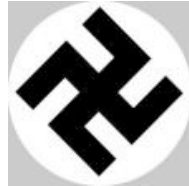
Germany grew more resentful of the treaty

they felt it was too harsh

# Adolf Hitler



Hitler in WWI, far right



- WWI veteran
- joined a struggling political group called the National Socialist German Workers' Party, or **Nazi** Party.
- Hitler's skill in public speaking and ability to organize support allowed him to quickly become a **leader** in the Nazi Party
- In his book, *Mein Kampf* (**My Struggle**), he explained that he wanted to unite all German-speaking people in one grand Empire
- He wanted racial purity – “inferior” races such as Jews, Slavs and all non-whites were to form a work force for the “**master race**” of blond, blue-eyed “Aryans”

## Hitler Gains Power

By 1932, the Nazis were the strongest political party in Germany



In January of 1933, Hitler was appointed as Germany's

**Chancellor**

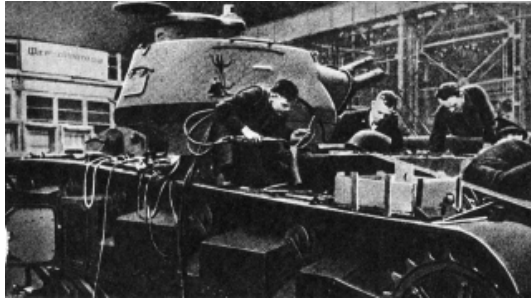
*(Prime Minister)*

Hitler quickly threw out Germany's existing government and replaced it with a **totalitarian** government

Called himself “**Der Führer**”

*(the leader)*

and his rule of Germany the Third Reich  
He promised to return Germany to its former glory.



## Germany Rearms



*Above: Hitler is enthusiastically greeted as he visits a factory. Many Germans were grateful for jobs after the misery of the depression years.*

## Germany Remilitarizes the Rhineland

March 1936



The Rhineland was a region of Germany that was ‘**demilitarized**’ after the Treaty of Versailles. Germany was not allowed to have troops in the region.

# Nazi Germany Expands: Austria



The arrival of German troops was met with great enthusiasm by the Austrians.

The majority of Austria's 6 million people favored unification with Germany

A day later, Germany announced its union with Austria, which it called "Anschluss" (union).

Another element of Hitler's grand design was creating "Lebensraum" or living space

Hitler believed that for Germany to thrive it needed more land

In March, 1938, German troops marched into Austria unopposed.



Again, this went against the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, which banned Germany from uniting with Austria.

# Nazi Germany Expands: the Sudetenland



About 3 million German-speaking people lived in the western border regions of Czechoslovakia called the Sudetenland

In 1938 Hitler began to build up troops on the Czechoslovakian border and then ordered the occupation of the Sudetenland.

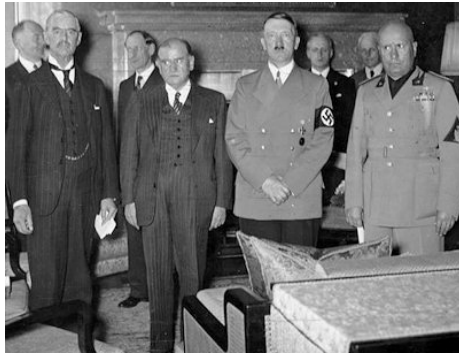
An occupation of the rest of Czechoslovakia seemed imminent.

# The Munich Conference

## September 1938

The leaders of Germany ( Adolf Hitler ), Great Britain ( Neville Chamberlain ), Edouard Daladier of France, and Italy ( Benito Mussolini ), met in Munich, Germany.

Hitler promised the annexation of the Sudetenland would be his “last territorial demand”



Chamberlain and Daladier believed Hitler and signed the Munich

Agreement that turned over the Sudetenland to Germany.

Chamberlain announced, “I have come back from Germany with peace with honor. I believe it is peace in our time.”

Critics called this a dangerous policy of appeasement – or giving up principles to pacify an aggressor.

## Nazi Expansion Continues



Despite the Munich Agreement, on March 15, 1939 German troops invaded and occupied the rest of Czechoslovakia.

In August of 1939 Germany and the USSR signed a non-aggression pact,

which promised that neither country would attack the other in the event of war.

This paved the way for Germany to take Poland without fear of an attack from the USSR.

On September 1st, 1939, Germany invaded Poland and gave part of it to the Soviets (a promise made in the non-aggression pact).

Great Britain and France, allies of Poland, declared war on Germany.



World War II had officially begun.

**Review Questions:**

1. What parts of the Treaty of Versailles did Hitler refuse to follow?

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2. What is appeasement? What conference used appeasement in dealings with Hitler?

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3. Did appeasement work with Hitler? How do you know?

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