

Data Set #3

The terms of the Treaty of Versailles

The treaty can be divided into a number of sections; territorial, military, financial and general.

Territorial

The following land was taken away from Germany :

Alsace-Lorraine (given to France)

Eupen and Malmedy (given to Belgium)

Northern Schleswig (given to Denmark)

Hultschin (given to Czechoslovakia)

West Prussia, Posen and Upper Silesia (given to Poland)

The Saar, Danzig and Memel were put under the control of the League of Nations and the people of these regions would be allowed to vote to stay in Germany or not in a future referendum.

The [League of Nations](#) also took control of Germany's overseas colonies.

Germany had to return to [Russia](#) land taken in the [Treaty of Brest-Litovsk](#). Some of this land was made into new states : Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia. An enlarged Poland also received some of this land.

Military

Germany's army was reduced to 100,000 men; the army was not allowed tanks

She was not allowed an airforce She was allowed only 6 capital naval ships and no submarines The west of the Rhineland and 50 kms east of the River Rhine was made into a demilitarised zone (DMZ). No German soldier or weapon was allowed into this zone. The Allies were to keep an army of occupation on the west bank of the Rhine for 15 years.

Financial

The loss of vital industrial territory would be a severe blow to any attempts by Germany to rebuild her economy. Coal from the Saar and Upper Silesia in particular was a vital economic loss. Combined with the financial penalties linked to reparations, it seemed clear to Germany that the Allies wanted nothing else but to bankrupt her.

Germany was also forbidden to unite with Austria to form one superstate, in an attempt to keep her economic potential to a minimum.

Source: <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/>

Data Set #9

After the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the end of the First World War, the majority of the German speaking people in Austria wanted to unite with the new German Republic. However, this was forbidden by the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

Demands for the union (Anschluss) of Austria and Germany increased after Adolf Hitler became German Chancellor. In February, 1938, Hitler invited Kurt von Schuschnigg, the Austrian Chancellor, to meet him at Berchtesgaden. Hitler demanded concessions for the Austrian Nazi Party. Schuschnigg refused and after resigning was replaced by Arthur Seyss-Inquart, the leader of the Austrian Nazi Party. On 13th March, Seyss-Inquart invited the German Army to occupy Austria and proclaimed union with Germany.

Austria was now renamed Ostmark and was placed under the leadership of Arthur Seyss-Inquart. The Austrian born Ernst Kaltenbrunner was named Minister of State and head of the Schutz Staffeln (SS).



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g Occupied Areas

Source: <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/2WWanschluss.htm>

Data Set #8

In October, 1933, Adolf Hitler withdrew Germany from the League of Nations and claimed he had done so because of the failure to reach agreement about disarmament. Hitler argued that under the terms of the Treaty, of Versailles Germany was militarily weak. He said that Germany had been willing to keep to this state of affairs if other countries disarmed. As this had not happened, Germany now had to take measures to protect herself.

In the months that followed, Hitler trebled the size of the German Army and completely ignored the restrictions on weapons that had been imposed by the Treaty of Versailles. By 1935, when it was clear that no action was going to be taken against Germany for breaking the terms of the treaty, Hitler felt strong enough to introduce military conscription.

Adolf Hitler knew that both France and Britain were militarily stronger than Germany,. However, he became convinced that they were unwilling to go to war. He therefore decided to break another aspect of the Treaty of Versailles by sending German troops into the Rhineland.

The German generals were very much against the plan, claiming that the French Army would win a victory in the military conflict that was bound to follow this action. Hitler ignored their advice and on 1st March, 1936, three German battalions marched into the Rhineland.

The French government was horrified to find German troops on their border but was unwilling to take action without the support of the British. The British government argued against going to war over the issue and justified its position by claiming that "Germany was only marching into its own back yard.

Source: <http://www.worldwarhistory.info/WWII/war.html>

Data Set #7

Hitler's Speech April 12, 1922

"AFTER the War production had begun again and it was thought that better times were coming, Frederick the Great after the Seven Years War had, as the result of superhuman efforts, left Prussia without a penny of debt: at the end of the World War Germany was burdened with her own debt of some 7 or 8 milliards of marks and beyond that was faced with the debts of 'the rest of the world' - the so-called 'reparations.' The product of Germany's work thus belonged not to the nation, but to her foreign creditors: 'it was carried endlessly in trains for territories beyond our frontiers.' Every worker had to support another worker, the product of whose labor was commandeered by the foreigner. 'The German people after twenty-five or thirty years, in consequence of the fact that it will never be able to pay all that is demanded of it, will have so gigantic a sum still owing that practically it will be forced to produce more than it does today.' What will the end be? and the answer to that question is 'Pledging of our land, enslavement of our labor-strength. Therefore, in the economic sphere, November 1918 was in truth no achievement, but it was the beginning of our collapse.'

Source: <http://www.hitler.org/speeches/>

Data Set #6

Sudetenland

The Sudetenland was part of Germany until 1806 and of the German Confederation between 1815 and 1866. After the First World War the Sudetenland (some 11,000 square miles) became part of Czechoslovakia.

Until Adolf Hitler came to power most Sudeten Germans were content to remain in Czechoslovakia but in 1935 a Sudeten-German Party, financed from within Nazi Germany, began to complain that the Czech-dominated government discriminated against them. Germans who had lost their jobs in the depression began to argue that they might be better off under Hitler.

Adolf Hitler wanted to march into Czechoslovakia but his generals warned him that with its strong army and good mountain defences Czechoslovakia would be a difficult country to overcome. They also added that if Britain, France or the Soviet Union joined on the side of Czechoslovakia, Germany would probably be badly defeated. One group of senior generals even made plans to overthrow Hitler if he ignored their advice and declared war on Czechoslovakia.

In September 1938, Neville Chamberlain, the British prime minister, met Hitler at his home in Berchtesgaden. Hitler threatened to invade Czechoslovakia unless Britain supported Germany's plans to takeover the Sudetenland. After discussing the issue with the Edouard Daladier (France) and Eduard Benes (Czechoslovakia), Chamberlain informed Hitler that his proposals were unacceptable.

Adolf Hitler was in a difficult situation but he also knew that Britain and France were unwilling to go to war. He also thought it unlikely that these two countries would be keen to join up with the Soviet Union, whose communist system the western democracies hated more than Hitler's fascist dictatorship.

Benito Mussolini suggested to Hitler that one way of solving this issue was to hold a four-power conference of Germany, Britain, France and Italy. This would exclude both Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, and therefore increase the possibility of reaching an agreement and undermine the solidarity that was developing against Germany.

The meeting took place in Munich on 29th September, 1938. Desperate to avoid war, and anxious to avoid an alliance with Joseph Stalin and the Soviet Union, Neville Chamberlain and Edouard Daladier agreed that Germany could have the Sudetenland. In return, Hitler promised not to make any further territorial demands in Europe.

On 29th September, 1938, Adolf Hitler, Neville Chamberlain, Edouard Daladier and Benito Mussolini signed the Munich Agreement which transferred the Sudetenland to Germany.

When Eduard Benes, Czechoslovakia's head of state, protested at this decision, Neville Chamberlain told him that Britain would be unwilling to go to war over the issue of the Sudetenland.

The German Army marched into the Sudetenland on 1st October, 1938. As this area contained nearly all Czechoslovakia's mountain fortifications, she was no longer able to defend herself against further aggression.

Source: <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/GERsudetenland.htm>

Data Set #10

Radio Address by Neville Chamberlain, Prime Minister, September 3,1939.

I am speaking to you from the Cabinet Room at 10, Downing Street.

This morning the British Ambassador in Berlin handed the German Government a final Note stating that unless we heard from them by 11 o'clock that they were prepared at once to withdraw their troops from Poland a state of war would exist between us. I have to tell you now that no such undertaking has been received, and that consequently this country is at war with Germany.

You can imagine what a bitter blow it is to me that all my long struggle to win peace has failed. Yet I cannot believe that there is anything more or anything different that I could have done and that would have been more successful.

Up to the very last it would have been quite possible to have arranged a peaceful and honorable settlement between Germany and Poland. But Hitler would not have it. He had evidently made up his mind to attack Poland whatever happened, and although he now says he put forward reasonable proposals which were rejected by the Poles, that is not a true statement.

The proposals were never shown to the Poles, nor to us, and, though they were announced in a German broadcast on Thursday night, Hitler did not wait to hear comments on them, but ordered his troops to cross the Polish frontier. His action shows convincingly that there is no chance of expecting that this man will ever give up his practice of using force to gain his will. He can only be stopped by force.

We and France are to-day, in fulfillment of our obligations, going to the aid of Poland, who is so bravely resisting this wicked and unprovoked attack upon her people. We have a clear conscience. We have done all that any country could do to establish peace, but a situation in which no word given by Germany's ruler could be trusted and no people or country could feel themselves safe had become intolerable. And now that we have resolved to finish it, I know that you will all play your part with calmness and courage.

As such a moment as this the assurances of support that we have received from the Empire are a source of profound encouragement to us.

...Now may God bless you all and may He defend the right. For it is evil things that we shall be fighting against, brute force, bad faith, injustice, oppression and persecution. And against them I am certain that the right will prevail.

Source: <http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/1939/390901a.html>

Data Set #5

To demonstrate its earnestness on the reparations issue, the Reich government turned to something called the "fulfillment policy." This was not mere subterfuge. German leaders were truly convinced that the country did not have the resources to continue cash payments for any length of time. In his capacity as minister for recovery, Walther Rathenau took the lead in attempting to reach a series of agreements with the French that would have converted some of Germany's cash payments into alternative forms of compensation, such as supplying German laborers for construction work in the devastated areas of France. But the fulfillment policy failed to succeed, and in Germany inflation continued unabated: the mark fell from 4,500 to the dollar in October 1922 to 18,000 in January 1923. The unequal struggle over reparations came to a head in the Ruhr crisis, when the Germans again fell behind in their payments (at issue was a shipment of telephone poles). Distrustful of Germany's intentions, a reparations commission (consisting of representatives from France, Belgium, Italy, and Great Britain) voted three-to-one to declare the Reich in violation of her treaty obligations, and authorized France and Belgium to take punitive action. In January 1923 the two countries moved a contingent of troops, accompanied by a small military force, into previously unoccupied parts of the Ruhr region to oversee the operations of the mines in that area. Ostensibly, their purpose was to ensure that coal earmarked for France and Belgium was actually shipped. The Germans, however, were convinced that the real aim of the French was to sever the Ruhr area from the Reich and consequently destroy Germany's national unity.



A German poster urges passive resistance during the Ruhr crisis, under the motto "No! You won't subdue me!"



Inflation and food shortages during 1923: German shoppers line up in front of a Berlin bakery

Recognizing the Reich's inability to oppose the Allied moves with military force, the German government resorted to a policy of passive resistance. This meant political and economic leaders in the Ruhr, with the full support of the Reich and Prussian governments, called upon the population of the occupied areas to stage what amounted to a general strike. Less coal was mined in the months from January to September than in the first ten days of the year. While passive resistance inconvenienced the occupiers, their difficulties were minor compared to those the Germans caused for themselves. The Cuno government supported the idle population of Germany's industrial heartland with federal cash grants-in-aid. In effect, passive resistance was financed by authorizing the indiscriminate printing of money. The result was to open the floodgates of uncontrolled inflation. Between early January and November 15, 1923, when inflation finally was brought under control, the German mark in relation to the U.S. dollar fell from an already unprecedented 18,000 to the dollar to an astronomical 4.2 trillion. The social and economic consequences of state-sponsored inflation were enormous and disastrous. Tax collections (and government budgets) became meaningless as money lost its value by the hour. Worse, lifetime savings vanished overnight, while economic life was reduced to barter.

Source: <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/orgs/germanclub/inflation2.html>

Data Set # 2

Appeasement

Neville Chamberlain became Prime Minister of Britain on 28th May, 1937. Over the next two years Chamberlain's Conservative government became associated with the foreign policy that later became known as appeasement.

- Chamberlain believed that Germany had been badly treated by the Allies after it was defeated in the First World War. He therefore thought that the German government had genuine grievances and that these needed to be addressed. He also thought that by agreeing to some of the demands being made by Adolf Hitler of Germany and Benito Mussolini of Italy, he could avoid a European war.
- In February, 1938, Adolf Hitler invited Kurt von Schuschnigg, the Austrian Chancellor, to meet him at Berchtesgaden. Hitler demanded concessions for the Austrian Nazi Party. Schuschnigg refused and after resigning was replaced by Arthur Seyss-Inguart, the leader of the Austrian Nazi Party. On 13th March, Seyss-Inguart invited the German Army to occupy Austria and proclaimed union with Germany.
- The union of Germany and Austria (Anschluss) had been specifically forbidden by the Treaty of Versailles. Some members of the House of Commons, including Anthony Eden and Winston Churchill, now called on Neville Chamberlain to take action against Adolf Hitler and his Nazi government.

International tension increased when Adolf Hitler began demanding that the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia should be under the control of the German government. In an attempt to solve the crisis, the heads of the governments of Germany, Britain, France and Italy met in Munich in September, 1938.

On 29th September, 1938, Adolf Hitler, Neville Chamberlain, Eduard Daladier and Benito Mussolini signed the Munich Agreement which transferred to Germany the Sudetenland, a fortified frontier region that contained a large German-speaking population. When Eduard Benes, Czechoslovakia's head of state, who had not been invited to Munich, protested at this decision, Chamberlain told him that Britain would be unwilling to go to war over the issue of the Sudetenland.

The **Munich** Agreement was popular with most people in Britain because it appeared to have prevented a war with Germany. However, some politicians, including Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden, attacked the agreement. These critics pointed out that not only had the British government behaved dishonorably, but it had lost the support of Czech Army, one of the best in Europe.

One staunch critic of appeasement was the journalist Vernon Bartlett. He was approached by Richard Adana¹ to stand as an anti-Chamberlain candidate at a by-election in Bridgewater. Bartlett agreed and in November, 1938, surprisingly won the previously safe Tory seat. Henry (Chips) Channon, a junior member of the government wrote in his diary: "This is the worst blow the Government has had since 1935".

In March, 1939, the German Army seized the rest of Czechoslovakia. In taking this action Adolf Hitler had broken the Munich Agreement. The British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, now realized that Hitler could not be trusted and his appeasement policy now came to an end.

Source: <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/2WWappeasement.htm>

Data Set 1 (Timeline)

1918

Nov 11 - [World War One ends with German defeat.](#)

1919

April 28 - League of Nations founded.

June 28 - [Signing of the Treaty of Versailles.](#)

1921

July 29 - Adolf Hitler becomes leader of National Socialist 'Nazi' Party.

1923

Nov 8/9 - [The Beer Hall Putsch.](#)

1925

July 18 - [Hitler's book "Mein Kampf" published.](#)

1926

Sept 8 - Germany admitted to League of Nations.

1929

Oct 29 - Stock Market on Wall Street crashes.

1930

Sept 14 - Germans elect Nazis making them the 2nd largest political party in Germany.

1932

Nov 8 - Roosevelt elected President of the United States.

1933

Jan 30 - [Adolf Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany.](#)

Feb 27 - [The Reichstag burns.](#)

March 12 - [First concentration camp opened at Oranienburg outside Berlin.](#)

March 23 - [Enabling Act gives Hitler dictatorial power.](#)

April 1 - [Nazi boycott of Jewish owned shops.](#)

May 10 - [Nazis burn books in Germany.](#)

In June - [Nazis open Dachau concentration camp.](#)

July 14 - Nazi party declared only party in Germany.

Oct 14 - Germany quits the League of Nations.

1934

June 30 - [The "Night of the Long Knives."](#)

July 25 - Nazis murder Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss.

Aug 2 - German President Hindenburg dies.

Aug 19 - [Adolf Hitler becomes Führer of Germany.](#)

1935

March 16 - Hitler violates the Treaty of Versailles by introducing military conscription.

Sept 15 - [German Jews stripped of rights by Nuremberg Race Laws.](#)

1936

Feb 10 - The German Gestapo is placed above the law.

March 7 - German troops occupy the Rhineland.

May 9 - Mussolini's Italian forces take Ethiopia.

July 18 - Civil war erupts in Spain.

Aug 1 - Olympic games begin in Berlin.

Oct 1 - Franco declared head of Spanish State.

1937

June 11 - Soviet leader Stalin begins a purge of Red Army generals.

Nov 5 - [Hitler reveals war plans during Hossbach Conference.](#)

1938

March 12/13 - [Germany announces 'Anschluss' \(union\) with Austria.](#)

Aug 12 - German military mobilizes.

Sept 30 - British Prime Minister Chamberlain appeases Hitler at Munich.

Oct 15 - [German troops occupy the Sudetenland](#); Czech government resigns.

Nov 9/10 - [Kristallnacht - The Night of Broken Glass.](#)

1939

Jan 30, 1939 - [Hitler threatens Jews during Reichstag speech.](#) 

March 15/16 - Nazis take Czechoslovakia.

March 28, 1939 - Spanish Civil war ends.

May 22, 1939 - Nazis sign 'Pact of Steel' with Italy.

Aug 23, 1939 - [Nazis and Soviets sign Pact.](#)

Aug 25, 1939 - Britain and Poland sign a Mutual Assistance Treaty.

Aug 31, 1939 - British fleet mobilizes; Civilian evacuations begin from London.

Sept 1, 1939 - Nazis invade Poland.

Sept 3, 1939 - Britain, France, Australia and New Zealand declare war on Germany.

Sept 4, 1939 - British Royal Air Force attacks the German Navy.

Sept 5, 1939 - United States proclaims neutrality; German troops cross the Vistula River in Poland.

Sept 10, 1939 - Canada declares war on Germany; Battle of the Atlantic begins.

Sept 17, 1939 - Soviets invade Poland.

Sept 27, 1939 - [Warsaw surrenders to Nazis](#); [Reinhard Heydrich becomes the leader of new Reich Main Security Office \(RSHA\).](#)

Sept 29, 1939 - Nazis and Soviets divide up Poland.

In Oct - [Nazis begin euthanasia on sick and disabled in Germany.](#)

Nov 8, 1939 - Assassination attempt on Hitler fails.

Nov 30, 1939 - Soviets attack Finland.

Dec 14, 1939 - Soviet Union expelled from the League of Nations.

1940

Jan 8, 1940 - Rationing begins in Britain.

March 12, 1940 - Finland signs a peace treaty with Soviets.

March 16, 1940 - Germans bomb Scapa Flow naval base near Scotland.

April 9, 1940 - Nazis invade Denmark and Norway.

May 10, 1940 - Nazis invade France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands; Winston Churchill becomes British Prime Minister.

May 15, 1940 - Holland surrenders to the Nazis.

May 26, 1940 - Evacuation of Allied troops from Dunkirk begins.

May 28, 1940 - Belgium surrenders to the Nazis.

June 3, 1940 - Germans bomb Paris; [Dunkirk evacuation ends.](#)

June 10, 1940 - Norway surrenders to the Nazis; Italy declares war on Britain and France.

June 14, 1940 - [Germans enter Paris.](#)

June 16, 1940 - Marshal Pétain becomes French Prime Minister.

June 18, 1940 - [Hitler and Mussolini meet in Munich](#); Soviets begin occupation of the Baltic States.

June 22, 1940 - France signs an armistice with the Nazis.

June 23, 1940 - [Hitler tours Paris.](#)

June 28, 1940 - Britain recognizes Gen. Charles de Gaulle as the Free French leader.

July 1, 1940 - German U-boats attack merchant ships in the Atlantic.

July 5, 1940 - French Vichy government breaks off relations with Britain.

July 10, 1940 - Battle of Britain begins.

July 23, 1940 - Soviets take Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

Aug 3-19 - Italians occupy British Somaliland in East Africa.

Aug 13, 1940 - German bombing offensive against airfields and factories in England.

Aug 15, 1940 - Air battles and daylight raids over Britain.

Aug 17, 1940 - Hitler declares a blockade of the British Isles.

Aug 23/24 - First German air raids on Central London.

Aug 25/26 - First British air raid on Berlin.

Sept 3, 1940 - Hitler plans Operation Sealion (the invasion of Britain).

Sept 7, 1940 - [German Blitz against England begins.](#)

Sept 13, 1940 - Italians invade Egypt.

Sept 15, 1940 - [Massive German air raids on London, Southampton, Bristol, Cardiff, Liverpool and Manchester.](#)

Sept 16, 1940 - United States military conscription bill passed.

Sept 27, 1940 - Tripartite (Axis) Pact signed by Germany, Italy and Japan.

Oct 7, 1940 - German troops enter Romania.

Oct 12, 1940 - Germans postpone Operation Sealion until Spring of 1941.

Oct 28, 1940 - Italy invades Greece.

Nov 5, 1940 - Roosevelt re-elected as U.S. president.

Nov 10/11 - A torpedo bomber raid cripples the Italian fleet at Taranto, Italy.

Nov 14/15 - Germans bomb Coventry, England.

Nov 20, 1940 - Hungary joins the Axis Powers.

Nov 22, 1940 - Greeks defeat the Italian 9th Army.

Nov 23, 1940 - Romania joins the Axis Powers.

Dec 9/10 - British begin a western desert offensive in North Africa against the Italians.

Dec 29/30 - [Massive German air raid on London.](#)

Source: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/timeline/ww2time.htm>