Hitler and Appeasement

Road to War
German Ultranationalism: Germany after WWI

• After the Kaiser was exiled and overthrown from the German monarchy, Germany experimented with democracy.
• Proportional voting in the Reichstag (parliament) lead to 28 parties being formed. This meant it was almost impossible to create a majority, which meant the government in power changed frequently.
• The army was not entirely under government control. This led to frequent revolts.
German Ultranationalism: Germany after WWI

- Hundred of politicians were murdered the following two decades after WWI due to nationalist revolts and civil war.
- Because Germany was unable to pay reparations, France invaded the industrial heartland of the Ruhr in 1923.
- As a sign of protest, Germany declared a general strike for all workers, but could only pay the strikers by printing more money…which led to hyperinflation (devaluing of currency).
German Ultranationalism: Germany after WWI

- Extreme inflation: rising prices/sharp drop in buying power of money
- Great Depression 1930s
- Struggling to recover from WWI
- Germans looked for a strong leader…
German Ultranationalism: Germany after WWI

- By 1923, Hitler and the Nazi party (one of the many parties in the Reichstag) had tried to seize control during the Munich Putsch. A failed attempt at taking over the government.
- Hitler returned from jail as a hero to the Germans and continued to gain support from the people until he elected Chancellor of Germany in 1933.
- [http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/history/mwh/germany/weimaract.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/history/mwh/germany/weimaract.shtml)
Instilling Ultrananationalist Values in Nazi Germany

- Domestic and foreign policies enforced by a strong military and police force
- Control over Education
- Control over culture, art, media
- Propaganda
- Scapegoating— in particular, Jews— Anti-Jewish Laws
- Promises to restore Germany and the superiority of the “Aryan” race
What is Appeasement?

- **Appeasement** is giving into the demands of a nation when faced with a possible crisis if one did not.
- In the decade before World War Two, the bloody trauma from the previous war had still not healed. On top of this, people also had to suffer through the Great Depression.
- When Adolf Hitler started to take back German lands and refuse the terms to the Treaty of Versailles, the previous allies decided appeasement was the best policy to avoid confrontation.
Why Appeasement?

• By this time, many countries had also realized that the reparations on Germany’s shoulder were too harsh.
• Many felt pity for Germany’s poor state and decided that Germany should have some of its dignity back.

• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6YvSCIPBAA
Why Appeasement?

• Communism was on the rise in China and Russia. Many European nations feared the spread of revolutionary ideas and supported a new powerful Germany which could act as a buffer against Stalin.

• Why shouldn’t Germany be allowed to rearm and defend itself against increasing nationalist pressure?

• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aytQJzdhlLM
Hitler's Foreign Policy

- The Stresa Front
  - Was a meeting between Britain, France, and Fascist Italy in 1935.
  - The meeting was supposed to reaffirm the Locarno Treaty and the Treaty of Versailles in an attempt to establish permanent Austrian independence and halt Germany's ideas of rearmament and expansion.
  - This meeting failed due to:
    - Allies did not want to agitate Germany. Aims on how to uphold policies were vague.
    - No one wanted to invade Germany.
    - Britain did not inform Italy of Agreements (Anglo-German Naval Agreement). Italy felt betrayed and moved away from supporting the allies to supporting Germany instead.
Hitler's Foreign Policy

- **AUSTRIA – 1938**
- Hitler had been prepared to invade Austria since the writing of his book, Mein Kampf.
- Austria was annexed by Nazi Germany in March, 1938. This event was known as Anschluss.
- Hitler wanted to unify the German people in the surrounding territories and Austria was the obvious first choice.
- The majority of citizens in Austria agreed to the union.
Hitler's Foreign Policy

- **Czechoslovakia – 1938**
  - When the Treaty of Versailles was created, the Sudetenland, which was a large area of German people, was given to the Czechs.
  - Hitler and the Nazi’s wanted to absorb all of Czechoslovakia into the Reich.
  - In an effort to stop German expansion, Chamberlain flew to meet Hitler near Munich.
  - There, he tried along with the French to dissuade Hitler from annexing the Czechs.
  - Reluctantly, in an attempt to avoid war, Britain agreed to give Hitler the Sudetenland.
  - The Czechs capitulated and gave the Nazis a huge industrial sector and large segment of their population.
Chamberlain returned to Britain saying that he had achieved “peace for our time.” Hitler’s expansion was believed to be stopped. However,

- In March 1938, the Nazis invaded the rest of Czechoslovakia and incorporated it into the Third Reich.
- Chamberlain had finally realized that the policy of appeasement had failed and thus took a harder line towards future Anglo-German negotiation.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/history/mwh/ir1/war2act.shtml
Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact

• When it became clear that the British were not going to play ball, Hitler decided he would find a new partner to contend with.

• Although Hitler hated communists and Stalin vice-versa:
  – Hitler needed an excuse to divide and conquer Poland without going to war (which did not work).
  – Hitler wanted neutrality with Soviet Russia while he attacked France in the event of war.

• On 23 August, 1939, the world was shocked when, suddenly, Russia and Germany signed a 'Non-aggression Pact'.
Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact

- Stalin distrusted the British. He believed that the former allies would appease Hitler once again and leave Russia fighting alone.
- Stalin knew Hitler was lying, but he did not trust the British either – the Munich Agreement had convinced him that Britain and France would never dare to go to war with Hitler.
- Stalin had two choices:
  - if he made an alliance with Britain, he would end up fighting a war with Hitler over Poland.
  - if he made an alliance with Germany, he would get half of Poland, and time to prepare for the coming war with Germany.
What does it take to incite ultranationalism?

After watching Hitler: Rise of Evil and the South Park Ginger Kid episode, describe to me in groups what attributes and policies a dictator must follow to incite an ultranationalist revolution.

  - Work in groups of four
  - Use your poster paper
    - Divide the poster into four sections.
    - Individually and with different colors, fill out and discuss what attributes fit into an ultranationalal dictatorship.
    - Discuss with the class after your findings.