

League of Nations

General Assembly 1938



MOSMUN XIV



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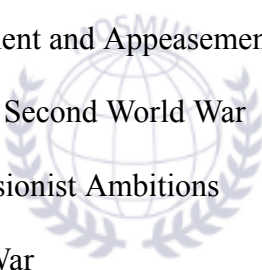
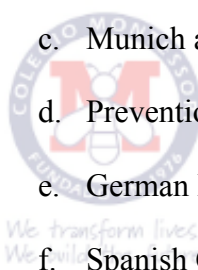
Presidentes:

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1. Letter from the chair

Dear Delegates,

We extend our warmest greetings to the delegates, esteemed advisors, and distinguished guests participating in the League of Nations committee at MOSMUN XII. It is an honor and a privilege to serve as the Chair of this committee, and we are eager to engage in constructive dialogue and collaborative problem-solving throughout our session.

The League of Nations, founded in the aftermath of the First World War, represents a historic effort to maintain international peace and security through diplomatic means. As we gather in the spirit of diplomacy and cooperation, we must approach our discussions with an open mind, a commitment to understanding diverse perspectives, and a dedication to finding innovative solutions to the challenges before us.

The year 1938 marked a tumultuous period in global affairs, with the world grappling with the shadows of the past and the uncertainties of the future. Against this backdrop, our committee has the unique responsibility of navigating the complexities of diplomacy and addressing the pressing issues of the time.

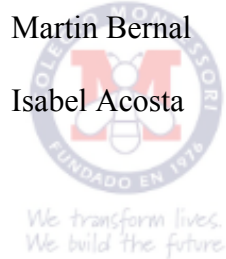
The General Assembly of 1938 convened at a juncture when the international community faced formidable challenges, and the decisions made during this period had profound consequences for the course of history. As we step into the shoes of those who deliberated during this era, let us consider the gravity of our responsibilities and the impact our discussions may have on the world we are tasked with shaping.

To ensure a productive and orderly committee session, we kindly request that all delegates familiarize themselves with the Rules of Procedure and adhere to the established guidelines. Timeliness, courtesy, and a spirit of collaboration will be paramount as we navigate the complexities of international relations.

If you have any questions or concerns before the conference, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We look forward to meeting each of you and embarking on a rewarding and impactful Model United Nations experience.

Kind regards,

Martin Bernal and Isabel Acosta.



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2. Glossary

Anschluss: Connection (translation from German); Anschluss, the political union of Austria with Germany, was achieved through annexation by Adolf Hitler in 1938.

Appeasement: the act of giving the opposing side in an argument or war an advantage that they have demanded, to prevent further disagreement.

Nazism: totalitarian movement led by Adolf Hitler as head of the Nazi Party in Germany.

Fascism: political philosophy, movement, or regime (such as that of the Fascisti) that exalts nation and often race above the individual and that stands for a centralized autocratic government headed by a dictatorial leader, severe economic and social regimentation, and forcible suppression of opposition, for further information please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uE-ewzt9Yfg>

Lebensraum: policy of Nazi Germany that involved expanding German territories to the east to provide land and material resources for the German people, while driving out Jewish and Slavic people, so that German people could expand, Germany be self-sufficient and create the so called “living space”

3. Introduction to the Committee

The League of Nations was the first worldwide intergovernmental organization whose principal mission was to maintain world peace. It was founded in 1920 after the First World War and was formally disbanded on April 19, 1946. The League of Nations was the brainchild of United States President Woodrow Wilson, who believed that it was necessary to create an international organization to prevent future wars. Wilson's ideas were based on the belief that if countries could cooperate to resolve their disputes peacefully, then war could be avoided. During the 1918 Paris Peace conference, he envisioned an organization that would be open to all countries, regardless of their size or power. He also believed that the League should have the authority to enforce its decisions, if necessary, by military force, based upon his 14 points, a list of demands for the creation of a new more prosperous world.

Throughout its existence, it solved several conflicts like the Åland Islands dispute between Finland and Sweden and the Corfu Channel crisis between Greece and Italy, but it also failed to deliver progress and action on crucial areas like the rise of Fascism and dictatorial governments, the enforcement of its resolutions and most importantly its failure to prevent World War Two.

The 1938 General Assembly of the League of Nations stood as a crucial part of the organization's story, often overlooked in history. This gathering of delegates from around the globe served as a meeting for discussions on pressing issues of the time, including the Spanish Civil War, the Anschluss of Austria, the rise of fascism in Europe, and the Munich Agreement. Despite the urgency of these issues, the 1938 General Assembly's discussions proved largely fruitless, paving the way for World War II and the League of Nations' practical dissolution just a year later, this was mainly due to the lack of cooperation between the nations and lack of action. A crucial factor in the League's ineffectiveness was the limited

power of its resolutions, which could only promote, recommend, coordinate, and condemn. These actions, though well-intentioned, lacked teeth, rendering them largely ineffective in deterring aggression or enforcing international law. No country was obligated to follow the recommendations of the League, and there was no way of enforcing its resolutions. For example, in 1936 Nazi Germany militarized the Rhineland a demilitarized area defined as such by the Treaty of Versailles, but the League was completely ineffective in deterring or condemning the German action.



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4. Functioning of the committee

To understand the League of Nations functioning, it is vital to comprehend the league's covenant as it acted as the guidelines for the debate and resolutions of the League.. To read the covenant, please visit: [The Covenant of the League of Nations](#). This committee works similarly to other United Nations committees, with the only relevant difference being the power held by itself, the League's purpose is to promote international cooperation and create a platform for international dialogue, which means that it cannot enforce any of its actions on any member state, highlighting the importance of cooperation and mutual assistance.



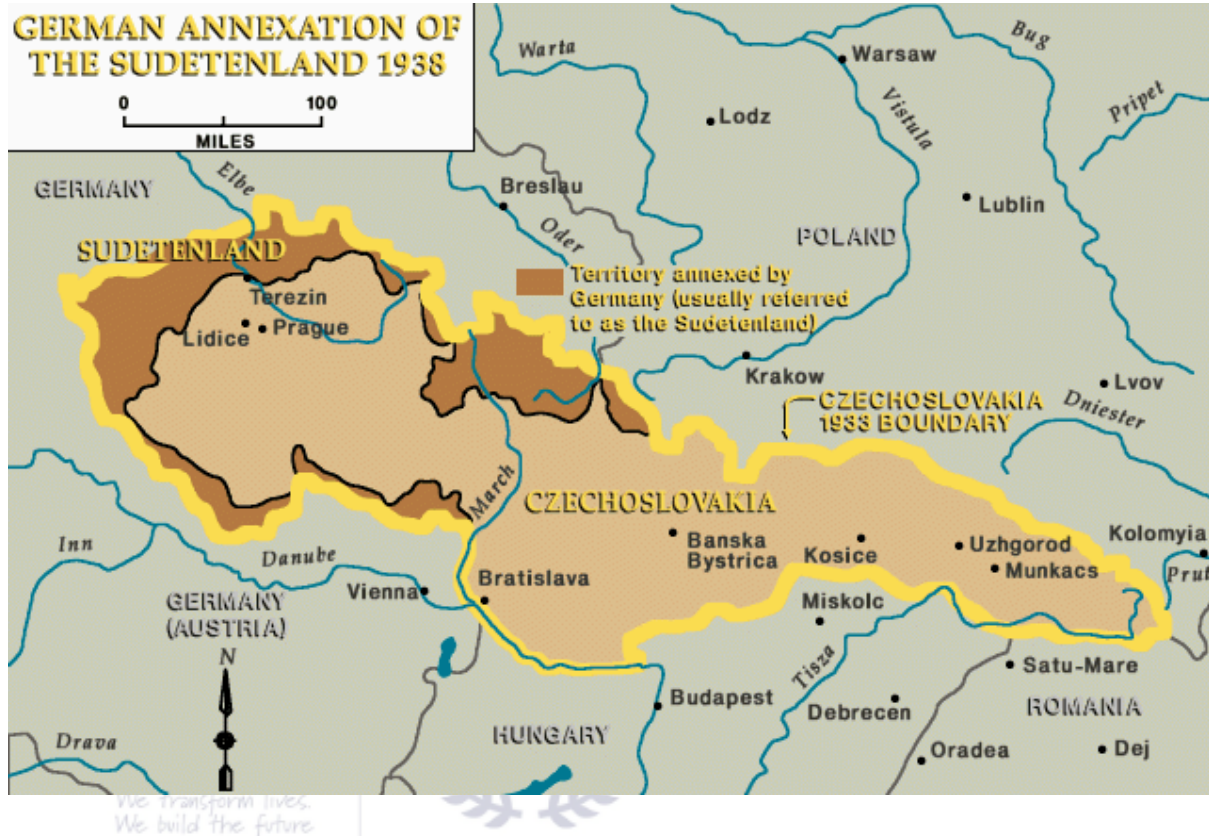
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5. Historical context

The world in 1938 had a complex political stage and a growing uneasiness about the future. In Europe, fascist regimes like Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy terrorized the continent. In the years leading up to 1938, the League of Nations faced a number of challenges, including the failure to prevent the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935. The organization's credibility was further undermined by the rise of fascism in Europe, with the Nazi Party in Germany, Francisco Franco in Spain and the Fascist Party in Italy actively pursuing expansionist policies that flouted international law.

The Munich Agreement, established on September 30, 1938, was a settlement reached by Germany, Great Britain, France, and Italy that permitted German annexation of the Sudetenland, in western Czechoslovakia. After Hitler's success in absorbing Austria in March of that same year, he invaded Czechoslovakia, where over three million people in the Sudetenland were of German origin. Consequently, he discussed with Wilhelm Keitel, the head of the German Armed Forces High Command, the political and military aspects of "Case Green," the code name for the takeover of the Sudetenland. A surprising, yet powerful attack from the Germans, reported as "out of a clear sky without any cause or possibility of justification" was rejected because the result would have been "a hostile world opinion which could lead to a critical situation." After the attack was rejected by the authorities, decisive action was to be taken, as Czechoslovakia and Germany would enter a period of political tensions and diplomatic ordeal, which grew more serious over time and built ground for an excuse for war or produce the occasion for a lightning offensive after some "incident" of German creation. Moreover, disruptive political activities inside Czechoslovakia had been

underway since as early as October 1933, when Konrad Henlein founded the Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront (Sudeten-German Home Front).



German annexation of the Sudetenland, 1938 | *Holocaust Encyclopedia*. (n.d.). Holocaust Encyclopedia. Retrieved April 5, 2024, from <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/map/german-annexation-of-the-sudetenland-1938>

By May 1938, it was clear that Hitler and his generals were planning an invasion of Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovaks expected military assistance from their relationship with France. Furthermore, the Soviet Union, which was obligated by a contract with Czechoslovakia, expressed a willingness to work with France and the United Kingdom if they chose to come to Czechoslovakia's rescue. Unfortunately, the Soviet Union's potential support was ignored throughout the crisis, due to the internal problems of the country and the lack of

Western aid and assurance. Hitler's aggressive comments, in which he insisted on reuniting Germans in Czechoslovakia with their homeland, increased the risk of conflict.

Despite the approaching threat, neither France nor the United Kingdom felt prepared to defend Czechoslovakia, as both were determined to avoid a military conflict with Germany at any cost. In France, the Popular Front government came to an end, and on April 8, 1938, Édouard Daladier formed a new cabinet with no Socialist or Communist participation. Daladier met with British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain in London on April 28-29, 1938, to examine the issue. Chamberlain, unable to see how Hitler could be stopped from destroying Czechoslovakia if that was his aim (which he doubted), suggested that Prague should be pressed to make territorial concessions to Germany. Both the French and British leaders considered that only the removal of the Sudeten German territories from Czechoslovakia could save the peace.

On September 22, Chamberlain once again traveled to Germany and convened with Hitler in Bad Godesberg. To his dismay, Chamberlain discovered that Hitler had revised his demands; he now sought the occupation of the Sudetenland by the German army, with the evacuation of Czechoslovak inhabitants from the region to be completed by September 28. Chamberlain consented to present this new proposal to the Czechoslovaks. However, both the Czechoslovak government and the cabinets of Britain and France rejected the proposition.

On September 24, the French initiated a partial mobilization, while the Czechoslovaks had already undertaken a general mobilization a day earlier. Armed with one of the world's best-equipped armies, Czechoslovakia had the capability to mobilize 47 divisions, with 37 deployed along the German frontier, fortified along its predominantly mountainous terrain.

Conversely, the German side, outlined in the finalized version of “Case Green” approved by Hitler on May 30, designated 39 divisions for operations against Czechoslovakia.

Despite Czechoslovakia's readiness to engage in conflict, it was apparent that success could not be achieved independently. In a final attempt to avert hostilities, Chamberlain proposed an immediate convening of a four-power conference to address the escalating dispute. Hitler acquiesced, leading to a meeting in Munich on September 29, where Hitler, Chamberlain, Daladier, and Mussolini engaged in discussions.



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6. Current Situation

By 1938, the world order established after World War I was unraveling at an alarming pace. The League of Nations, formed in the aftermath of the "Great War" to prevent future global conflicts, found itself increasingly impotent in the face of rising tensions. The specter of another devastating war loomed large.

In Italy, Benito Mussolini's fascist regime had already established itself, flexing its muscles in Africa and challenging the colonial dominance of European powers. Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany had become a growing menace, aggressively expanding its territory and enacting racist policies that sowed discord internationally. Meanwhile, militaristic Japan had invaded Manchuria in 1931 and was actively pursuing further expansion in Asia, defying the League's authority. These aggressive powers, fueled by nationalist fervor and expansionist ambitions, directly threatened the fragile peace established after WWI.

The brutal civil war raging in Spain served as a stark reminder of the continent's vulnerability. The conflict became a proxy battleground for fascist and democratic ideologies, drawing international involvement and raising fears that it could escalate into a wider European war. The League's inability to effectively intervene in the Spanish Civil War further exposed its limitations and highlighted the growing divisions among member states.

Western democracies, deeply traumatized by the horrors of World War I and the perils of The Great Depression which had left their nations in a deep state of political, economic and social strain, pursued a policy of appeasement. Hoping to avoid another devastating

conflict, The United Kingdom and later France attempted to appease the fascist powers by making concessions, a strategy that ultimately emboldened the aggressors. This approach directly undermined the League's core principle of collective security, which relied on nations acting together to deter aggression. The League's reliance on unanimous votes and its lack of a standing military force made it difficult to take decisive action against violations of international law.

By 1938, the world stood precariously on the brink of another global war. The League of Nations, designed to ensure peace, was struggling to maintain international order. The rise of fascism, the Spanish Civil War, and the policy of appeasement all contributed to a climate of fear and uncertainty. This precarious situation forced world leaders to confront the limitations of the existing international order and consider the need for reform or potentially even the creation of a new international body to address the mounting global security challenges. Even though giving more power to the League would have likely been effective no government wanted to give any more concessions, due to the fear of further foreign intervention on their nations' issues.

7. General Assembly 1938

a. Anschluss of Austria

The Anschluss, also known as the Anschluß Österreichs, was the annexation of the Federal State of Austria into the German Reich on 12 March 1938. The idea of an Anschluss, a united Austria and Germany that would form a “Greater Germany,” arose after the Austro-Hungarian Empire fell in 1918. The new Republic of German-Austria attempted to establish a union with Germany, but the 1919 Treaty of Saint Germain and Treaty of Versailles forbade both the union and the annexation of Austria.

The Anschluss of Austria in 1938 was driven by a confluence of factors that shaped its causes and consequences. The idea of Anschluss found favor among Austrians, reflecting a desire for unity and the creation of a "Greater Germany." Concurrently, Adolf Hitler's expansionist ambitions, rooted in Nazi ideology, sought to enlarge Germany's territories and influence in Central Europe. The weakness and division within the Austrian government made it susceptible to German pressure, exacerbating the ease with which the annexation unfolded. Internationally, the policy of appeasement adopted by the United States, Britain, and France, coupled with the Soviet Union's call to halt German aggression, created a varied response. Inside Austria, many sectors of society wanted to unite with Germany to create the

so-called “Greater German Empire”, despite protests from some quarters, the lack of substantial opposition allowed the Anschluss to proceed unchecked.

The consequences of the Anschluss were profound and enduring. Austria lost its sovereignty, being entirely absorbed into Nazi Germany and reduced to a mere province of the Third Reich. The Nazi government in Austria, under Seyss-Inquart, collaborated with Hitler in implementing policies of political repression and persecution. The military occupation of Austria by German troops and the subsequent rule by the Nazi Party further cemented the loss of autonomy. The physical toll was significant, with much of Austria's urban infrastructure suffering damage or destruction during the Anschluss and the subsequent years of World War II.

The Anschluss was a complex issue involving a combination of Austrian, German, and international dynamics. The desire for unity, German expansionism, and the weaknesses within the Austrian government all played pivotal roles in the annexation. The international community's response varied, with some countries protesting the action, while others accepted it as a *fait accompli*¹. The far-reaching consequences of the Anschluss deeply impacted Austria's political, economic, and social life for years to come.

The Anschluss of Austria in 1938 had significant consequences on the League of Nations, as it marked a clear violation of the international treaties and norms that the organization was established to uphold. The Anschluss demonstrated that the League was unable to prevent major powers from breaking its rules and engaging in aggressive expansionism. The Anschluss was a direct violation of the Treaty of Saint Germain, which forbade the unification of Austria and Germany without the consent of the League of Nations. The League did not take strong measures to protest the Anschluss, and its inaction set a

¹ something that has already happened or been done and cannot be changed

dangerous precedent for other countries that might consider similar actions. This demonstrated the limitations of the League's ability to enforce its rules and maintain international peace.

Delegates are expected to talk about the Anschluss of Austria and its impact on international relations and world peace. They might discuss the violation of international treaties and norms that the Anschluss represented, and the League's inability to prevent major powers from breaking these rules and engaging in aggressive expansionism. The delegates might also discuss the consequences of the Anschluss, including Austria's loss of sovereignty, political repression, military occupation, and damage to infrastructure. Additionally, they might discuss the causes of the Anschluss, including Austrian desire for unity, German expansionism, and a weak Austrian government.

b. The Rise of Fascism



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Fascism is a political theory that emphasizes ultranationalism and authoritarianism. It combines aspects of nationalism, militarism, economic self-sufficiency, and tyranny. It rejects communism, socialism, pluralism, individual rights and equality, and democratic governance.

For further information, please visit:

<https://youtu.be/D74aEF1DmQU?si=Ytxxz17oje0NJeMd>

Fascism prioritizes the nation above anything else. Individual rights are ranked lower than national community cohesiveness. This generates a strong interest in determining which groups belong or do not belong to the national body. Fascism is defined by: Exclusionary nationalism: a focus on national decline and threats, and an embrace of paramilitarism.

The historical antecedents of fascism can be traced back to the latter part of the nineteenth century, with the rise of nationalism throughout Europe. However, the turbulent period of World War I (1914-1918) helped develop a more clearly defined fascist ideology. In the aftermath of this global conflict, various fascist movements and parties emerged across Europe, with additional manifestations observed in the United States. The Italian fascist movement stands out as the first to achieve formal organization and participate in a national election. In 1919, Benito Mussolini established the *Partito Nazionale Fascista*, translating to the National Fascist Party. Two years later, in 1921, he successfully secured a position within the Italian Chamber of Deputies. The subsequent year witnessed a pivotal moment, with Mussolini orchestrating the March on Rome. This act of force, involving 30,000 armed individuals, culminated in his ascension to the role of Prime Minister of Italy. This event marked a significant shift, transitioning Italy from a democratic system to a dictatorship under Mussolini's absolute rule. He assumed the title of "Il Duce" (the Leader), signifying his unchallenged authority and bypassing the parliamentary system.

Mussolini's victory influenced subsequent fascist movements throughout Europe. Oswald Mosely met Mussolini in Britain before establishing the British Union of Fascists in 1932. During the Spanish Civil War, Italy supported Francisco Franco. In Germany, Adolf Hitler saw the March on Rome as a model for the fascist takeover that he attempted in the 1923 Munich Beer Hall Putsch.

As a result, Germany's defeat in World War I caused substantial political unrest as the new government, the Weimar Republic, struggled to establish its legitimacy. Several groups, including fascist organizations, developed to threaten the Weimar Republic. Hitler joined one of these organizations, the Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (German Workers' Party), in 1919. Hitler took over the party's leadership in 1920. He called it the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche

Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP, or Nazi Party). Despite the party's name, which alludes to socialism, Hitler advocated National Socialism as the polar opposite of socialism and communism. He marketed it as an ideology dedicated to improving the welfare and power of the German Volk (a national or ethnic group defined by its purported race). The party created a 25-point platform focused on nationalism, antisemitism, and growth. The program also advocated for the repeal of the Treaty of Versailles. To achieve their objectives, the party established paramilitary organizations known as Sturmabteilungen (Stormtroopers, or SA).

c. Munich agreement and Appeasement

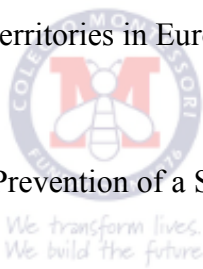
In September 1938, under the guise of maintaining peace, Britain, France, Italy, and Germany signed the Munich Agreement. This agreement ceded the Sudetenland, a German-speaking region of Czechoslovakia, to Nazi Germany. The agreement was seen as a way to avoid war and appease Hitler's territorial ambitions, but it ultimately failed to prevent the outbreak of World War II. The causes of Appeasement were complex. The fear of another global conflict, miscalculated strength in assessing Hitler's ambitions, and internal divisions within European democracies all played a role. The Western powers hoped that by giving in to Hitler's demands, they could avoid war and maintain peace in Europe. However, this policy of appeasement only emboldened Hitler and encouraged him to pursue further territorial gains, leading to the eventual invasion of Poland and the outbreak of World War II.

The policy of appeasement was based on the belief that Germany had legitimate grievances and that the Treaty of Versailles, which ended World War I, was too harsh on Germany. The policy was also based on the belief that Germany was a bulwark against the

spread of communism and that a strong Germany would help maintain the balance of power in Europe. Supporters of Appeasement, i.e., France, The United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy believed this was the only long-term solution to prevent further conflict in Europe as exposed by Neville Chamberlain's phrase "Peace in our time" as he arrived in London after signing the Munich agreement. When the Munich Agreement was signed, it was criticized for several reasons

- it betrayed Czechoslovakia, as they weren't invited to the conference in which their territory was partitioned.
- It eroded the power of the League.
- its extreme level of short-sightedness.
- It failed to prevent the outbreak of World War II, as Hitler continued to expand his territories in Europe.

d. Prevention of a Second World War



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The League failed to intervene in many conflicts leading up to World War II, including the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, the Spanish Civil War, and the Second Sino-Japanese War.

The onset of the Second World War demonstrated that the League had failed in its primary purpose, the prevention of another world war. There were a variety of reasons for this failure, many connected to general weaknesses within the organization, such as the voting structure that made ratifying resolutions difficult and incomplete representation among world nations. Additionally, the power of the League was limited by the United States' refusal to join.

President Wilson's vigorous lobbying efforts for US membership in the League of Nations were met with vehement resistance by isolationist members of Congress, particularly Republican Senators William Borah and Henry Cabot Lodge. They opposed Article X of the League's Covenant, which mandated that all League members aid any member endangered by external assault. In effect, Article X obligated the United States to defend any League member under assault. Isolationists in Congress opposed increasing US involvement in international conflicts, viewing Article X as a clear breach of US sovereignty. As a result, the Senate refused to ratify the treaty, and the United States never joined the League of Nations. Therefore, the Assembly never received a commitment from the Americans to join the League, and whilst this was not the main cause for the League's failure to prevent a Second World War, it was a major factor during such.

Events leading up to the war:



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- Italian Invasion of Abyssinia (1935-1936): Benito Mussolini's Italy conducted a savage invasion of Ethiopia, then known as Abyssinia, between 1935 and 1936, motivated by a desire for colonial expansion and fascist ideology. Despite international condemnation and League of Nations penalties, the technologically superior Italian forces used chemical weapons and airstrikes to defeat Ethiopia's resistance. This victory exposed the League's vulnerability in guaranteeing collective security and encouraging other powerful and dangerous nations.
- Spanish Civil War (1936-1939): A destructive and abrasive civil war broke out in Spain between the democratically elected Republican government and the Nationalist side commanded by Francisco Franco. The struggle served as a testing ground for

ideologies, with fascist Italy and Germany supporting Franco and the Soviet Union siding with the Republicans. This international component fueled fears of a larger European conflict. The Nationalists eventually prevailed, and Franco established a fascist government. The war's devastation damaged European democracy and revealed the continent's increasing divisions. During this War Hitler used Blitzkrieg tactics for the first time, and it could be considered that it was a training ground for German and Italian troops before World War Two

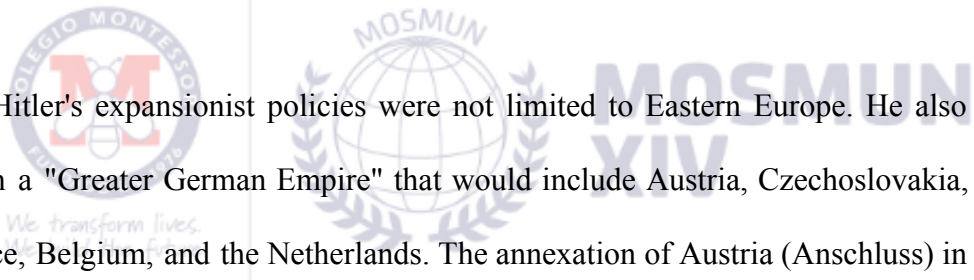
- Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945): After a series of escalating incidents, Japan launched a full-fledged invasion of China in 1937. This signified the full emergence of the Second Sino-Japanese War, which had been simmering for years. Japanese imperialism battled with Chinese nationalism, resulting in a bloody and lengthy war. The international community mostly sat on the sidelines, refusing to intervene directly. This war, however, became an important theater of World War II, bringing China into the worldwide conflict against the Axis powers.

e. German expansionist Ambitions

German Expansionist ambitions during the 1938 League of Nations General Assembly were driven by a desire for territorial expansion in Eastern Europe. Under Adolf Hitler, Nazi Germany pursued an ambitious strategy to regain lost territories and establish a pan-German racial state. This expansionist agenda was part of the broader concept of the “New Order” (Neuordnung) that aimed at consolidating massive territorial expansion into Central and Eastern Europe through colonization by German settlers, while implementing the physical annihilation of certain groups deemed “unworthy of life”.

The New Order envisioned by Nazi Germany included the formation of a pan-German racial state, the consolidation of territorial expansion through colonization, and the physical annihilation, expulsion, or enslavement of populations considered inferior. This aggressive desire for territorial expansion, known as Lebensraum, was a significant factor contributing to the outbreak of World War II.

The German expansionist agenda was fueled by a belief in the superiority of the German race and the need for (Lebensraum) for the German people. This ideology was based on the idea that the German people were destined to dominate the world and that they required vast territories to support their growing population and economy.



Hitler's expansionist policies were not limited to Eastern Europe. He also sought to establish a "Greater German Empire" that would include Austria, Czechoslovakia, and parts of France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. The annexation of Austria (Anschluss) in 1938 was a significant step towards achieving this goal. Germany believed that after World War One German territories were not rightfully taken and still were German, and thus they should be taken back.

The German expansionist ambitions were not only driven by ideological considerations but also by economic and strategic interests. The acquisition of new territories would provide access to valuable resources, such as oil, coal, and iron ore, which were essential for the German war machine and which it lacked.

Some of the key territories that Germany sought to conquer during this time include:

- Austria: Germany annexed Austria in March 1938 in an event known as the Anschluss, incorporating it into the German Reich.
- Sudetenland (Czechoslovakia): In 1938, Germany demanded the annexation of the Sudetenland, a border area of Czechoslovakia with an ethnic German majority. This demand led to the Munich Agreement, where the Sudetenland was ceded to Germany.
- Czechoslovakia: Following the annexation of the Sudetenland, Germany moved against the Czechoslovak state in March 1939. The Czech provinces of Bohemia and Moravia were proclaimed a German protectorate, while Slovakia became an independent state allied with Germany.
- Memel (Lithuania): In March 1939, German troops occupied Memel, a port city in Lithuania, which Lithuania was unable to prevent.
- Poland: Germany raised territorial demands on Poland in the spring of 1939, demanding the annexation of the Free City of Danzig and extraterritorial access through Polish territory. This demand led to tensions that eventually sparked the outbreak of World War II in September 1939.



(*Four Pulitzer-Winning Takes on the Rise of Adolf Hitler*, n.d.)

<https://www.pulitzer.org/article/four-pulitzer-winning-takes-rise-adolf-hitler>

The aggressive expansionist policies of Nazi Germany led to the outbreak of World War II. The invasion of Poland in 1939 marked the beginning of the war, and Germany's subsequent conquests of France, Belgium, and the Netherlands followed.

In conclusion, German Expansionist ambitions during the 1938 League of Nations General Assembly were driven by a desire for territorial expansion in Eastern Europe, fueled by a belief in the superiority of the German race and the need for "living space" (Lebensraum). This aggressive expansionist agenda was a significant factor contributing to the outbreak of World War II.

f. Spanish Civil War

The Spanish Civil War, a brutal conflict that raged from 1936 to 1939, became a pivotal moment exposing the weaknesses of the League of Nations and foreshadowing the

wider conflict of World War II. The war erupted when a military uprising led by General Francisco Franco challenged the democratically elected Spanish Republic. Franco's Nationalists sought to establish a fascist dictatorship, while the Republicans, a coalition of socialists, communists, and liberals, defended the existing democratic government.

The conflict quickly became internationalized as both sides sought external support. The Soviet Union provided military aid to the Republicans, while fascist Italy and Nazi Germany backed Franco. This international dimension placed the League of Nations in a precarious position. The League's principle of collective security aimed to deter aggression through collective action. However, member states were deeply divided. Western democracies, fearing a wider conflict, advocated for a policy of non-intervention, effectively allowing the flow of arms to both sides. This stance undermined the League's authority and emboldened the fascist powers. The League ultimately failed to effectively address the Spanish Civil War, highlighting its lack of enforcement power and its inability to maintain peace in the face of ideological clashes and rising nationalism. The Spanish Civil War became a grim preview of the larger conflict to come, showcasing the international divisions and the League's shortcomings that would contribute to the outbreak of World War II.



Spanish Civil War maps | NZHistory, New Zealand history online. (n.d.). NZ History.

Retrieved March 17, 2024, from <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/spanish-civil-war-map>

g. Future of the League of Nations

After the league's failure to prevent another world war, the League of Nations was eradicated thereafter. It operated until 1946, when it was formally liquidated. By this point, the Allied countries had begun to discuss the establishment of a new successor organization, the United Nations. The United Nations, which still exists today, was founded on many of the same concepts as the League of Nations, but was deliberately designed to avoid the League's primary flaws. The UN has considerably stronger enforcement tools, including its own peacekeeping forces, and its membership is far bigger than that of the League, even at its peak.

During the late stages of the League, some nations proposed for it to have a stronger enforcement of its resolutions, as some perceived it as far too weak to deal with any conflict between powers. This was exemplified as said before by its failure to deter Fascist aggression and finally World War Two, but many thought that a stronger league of nations would only become a mean for the stronger powers that won World War One to control the other nations and to pursue their agenda and many felt that this League would only take away power from their nations and their people.

8. Delegates

a. Adolf Hitler, Germany

Adolf Hitler, the Chancellor of Germany, staunchly defended the Anschluss of Austria, seeing it as a natural and justifiable extension of German territory, aligning with his vision of a Greater Germany. Hitler capitalized on nationalist sentiments within Austria and pursued the union with Austria to bolster his domestic support and expand German influence. Regarding the rise of Fascism, Hitler saw it as a necessary response to the perceived failures of democracy and capitalism, advocating for authoritarian rule and the supremacy of the Aryan race. He viewed the Munich Agreement and the policy of appeasement as diplomatic victories, enabling Germany to secure territorial gains in Czechoslovakia without facing significant opposition from France and Britain. Hitler's ambitions for German expansion were evident in his aggressive foreign policy, seeking to establish German dominance in Europe and overturn the Treaty of Versailles. He dismissed the League of Nations as ineffective and irrelevant, opting for bilateral agreements and military strength to achieve his objectives. Regarding the prevention of a Second World War, Hitler believed that a strong, assertive Germany was essential to maintain peace, but his aggressive actions

ultimately escalated tensions and precipitated global conflict. The Spanish Civil War presented an opportunity for Hitler to test his military and ideological prowess, as Germany supported Franco's Nationalist forces against the Republican government, furthering his goal of spreading fascism and weakening potential adversaries in Europe.

b. France Édouard Daladier

Édouard Daladier, the Prime Minister of France, vehemently opposed the Anschluss of Austria, viewing it as a flagrant violation of international law and a threat to European stability. Daladier recognized the dangers of the rise of Fascism, particularly in Italy and Germany, and sought to contain its spread through diplomatic means and alliances with like-minded nations. The Munich Agreement and the policy of appeasement were regarded by Daladier as short-sighted and cowardly, sacrificing the interests of smaller nations to appease Hitler's expansionist ambitions. He advocated for a firm stance against German aggression and territorial demands, warning that appeasement would only embolden Hitler and pave the way for further aggression. Daladier emphasized the importance of collective security and international cooperation through the League of Nations to prevent another catastrophic conflict, urging swift and decisive action to counter the growing threat posed by Nazi Germany. He recognized the significance of the Spanish Civil War as a precursor to broader ideological and geopolitical struggles in Europe, supporting the Republican government against Franco's Nationalist forces and denouncing foreign intervention in Spanish affairs as a dangerous precedent for future conflicts.

c. Neville Chamberlain, UK

Neville Chamberlain, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, initially pursued a policy of appeasement towards Nazi Germany, believing that concessions and negotiations could prevent another devastating war. He reluctantly accepted the Anschluss of Austria, hoping to avoid confrontation and maintain peace in Europe. Chamberlain's approach to the rise of Fascism in Italy and Germany was cautious, preferring diplomacy to confrontation, but he underestimated the aggressive intentions of dictators like Hitler and Mussolini not only because of his personal vision but because of the situation of his country. The Munich Agreement, brokered by Chamberlain, was hailed as a triumph of diplomacy, but its appeasement of Hitler's territorial ambitions proved short-lived and ultimately failed to prevent war. Chamberlain's leadership during this period was characterized by a desire to avoid conflict at all costs, but his policies were criticized for their naivety and lack of foresight. Following the outbreak of World War II, Chamberlain's reputation suffered, and he was replaced as Prime Minister by Winston Churchill, who advocated for a more resolute stance against Nazi aggression.

d. Benito Mussolini, Italy

Benito Mussolini, the Prime Minister of Italy, supported the Anschluss of Austria as part of his vision for a revived Roman Empire and the expansion of Italian influence in Europe. Mussolini embraced Fascism as a radical alternative to liberal democracy and communism, promoting nationalism, militarism, and authoritarianism as the foundations of his regime. He viewed the Munich Agreement and the policy of appeasement as signs of weakness on the part of the Western powers, exploiting their divisions to advance his own territorial ambitions in the Mediterranean and Africa.

Mussolini's aggressive foreign policy and alliance with Nazi Germany aimed to assert Italy as a major European power and challenge the established order. Despite his initial successes, Mussolini's overreach and strategic miscalculations would eventually lead to Italy's downfall, as the country faced defeat and occupation by Allied forces during World War II.

e. Joseph Stalin, URSS

Joseph Stalin, the Premier of the Soviet Union, closely monitored developments in Europe but remained largely detached from the affairs of the League of Nations and Western diplomatic initiatives. Stalin viewed the Anschluss of Austria with suspicion, recognizing it as a step towards German expansionism but also calculating its potential to weaken the capitalist powers. Stalin's regime, while ideologically opposed to Fascism, initially pursued a policy of non-intervention and neutrality towards the rise of Hitler and Mussolini, focusing instead on consolidating Soviet power domestically and in neighboring territories. The Munich Agreement and appeasement were seen by Stalin as opportunities to buy time and prepare for the inevitable conflict with Nazi Germany, allowing the Soviet Union to strengthen its military capabilities and form alliances with other European nations wary of Hitler's ambitions. Stalin's pragmatism and realpolitik guided Soviet foreign policy during this period, as he sought to safeguard Soviet interests and maintain stability in Eastern Europe.

f. Franklin D. Roosevelt, United States

Franklin D. Roosevelt, the President of the United States, closely observed the escalating tensions in Europe and the growing threat posed by Nazi Germany and

Fascist Italy. While the United States was officially neutral in European affairs, Roosevelt expressed concern over the erosion of democracy and human rights under totalitarian regimes and the potential for global conflict. He condemned the Anschluss of Austria as a violation of international law and sovereignty, warning of the dangers of unchecked aggression in Europe. Roosevelt criticized the policy of appeasement advocated by leaders like Chamberlain, advocating instead for collective security and a firm stance against Nazi expansionism. Despite domestic isolationist sentiments and the constraints of neutrality laws, Roosevelt provided diplomatic and material support to Allied nations facing aggression from Axis powers, laying the groundwork for America's eventual entry into World War II. The Spanish Civil War served as a testing ground for Roosevelt's principles of democracy and interventionism, as the United States supported the Republican government against Franco's Nationalist forces and condemned foreign interference in Spanish affairs.

g. Kurt von Schuschnigg, Austria

Kurt von Schuschnigg, the Chancellor of Austria, initially resisted the Anschluss of Austria, seeking to maintain Austria's independence and sovereignty in the face of Nazi aggression. However, faced with pressure from Hitler and lacking significant international support, Schuschnigg reluctantly acquiesced to the German annexation of Austria in the hopes of avoiding bloodshed and preserving Austrian autonomy. His tenure as Chancellor was marked by a delicate balancing act between Austrian nationalism and the realities of geopolitical power dynamics in Europe. Schuschnigg's efforts to resist Nazi influence ultimately proved futile, and he was forced to resign shortly after the Anschluss, paving the way for Austria's integration into the Third Reich.

h. Ignacy Mościcki, Poland

Ignacy Mościcki, the President of Poland, viewed the rise of Fascism and Nazi expansionism with deep concern, recognizing the threat posed to Polish sovereignty and security. Mościcki sought to bolster Poland's defenses and forge alliances with neighboring states to counter the growing aggression from Germany and the Soviet Union. Despite his efforts to maintain Poland's independence, Mościcki faced immense pressure from both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, culminating in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which divided Eastern Europe into spheres of influence and paved the way for the eventual invasion and partition of Poland. Mościcki's presidency came to an abrupt end with the outbreak of World War II, as Poland became a battleground for competing powers and endured occupation and oppression.

i. Francisco Franco, Spain

Francisco Franco, the leader of the Nationalist forces in the Spanish Civil War and eventual dictator of Spain, rose to power on the promise of restoring order and stability to a country torn apart by political turmoil and social unrest. Franco's regime espoused authoritarianism, nationalism, and traditional Catholic values, seeking to suppress leftist ideologies and centralize power under his control. Supported by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, Franco's Nationalists emerged victorious in the civil war, establishing a brutal dictatorship characterized by repression, censorship, and political purges. Franco's Spain remained officially neutral during World War II but provided crucial support to the Axis powers, allowing them to use Spanish territory for strategic purposes. Despite his authoritarian rule, Franco managed to maintain power until his death in 1975, shaping the trajectory of Spanish politics and society for decades to come.

j. Edvard Beneš, Czechoslovakia

Edvard Beneš, the President of Czechoslovakia, confronted the challenge of German expansionism and aggression with determination and resilience. Beneš staunchly opposed Hitler's demands for the annexation of the Sudetenland, advocating for the rights of Czechoslovakia's ethnic minorities and territorial integrity. Despite signing the Munich Agreement under duress, Beneš viewed it as a betrayal by Western powers and a capitulation to Nazi aggression. Following the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in 1939, Beneš went into exile and continued to advocate for the restoration of Czechoslovak independence and the defeat of Nazi Germany. His efforts would eventually contribute to the establishment of a free Czechoslovak government-in-exile and Czechoslovak participation in the Allied war effort, paving the way for the liberation of Czechoslovakia and the defeat of fascism in Europe.

k. Hendrik Colijn, Netherlands

Hendrik Colijn, the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, faced the challenges of maintaining Dutch neutrality and sovereignty in the midst of escalating tensions and aggression in Europe. Colijn pursued a policy of strict neutrality and non-intervention in foreign conflicts, seeking to avoid being drawn into the growing turmoil on the continent. However, the Netherlands' strategic location and economic importance made it a target for German expansionism, and Colijn recognized the need to bolster Dutch defenses and strengthen diplomatic ties with neighboring countries. Despite his efforts to preserve peace, the Netherlands would ultimately be invaded and occupied by Nazi Germany in 1940, leading to years of occupation and resistance until liberation in 1945. Colijn's leadership during this period was marked by a

commitment to Dutch interests and the preservation of national sovereignty in the face of external threats.

l. Paul van Zeeland, Belgium

Paul van Zeeland, the Prime Minister of Belgium, navigated the intricate diplomatic landscape of pre-war Europe with the aim of safeguarding Belgian neutrality and sovereignty. Van Zeeland recognized the looming threat posed by Nazi Germany's expansionist ambitions and sought to fortify Belgium's defenses while maintaining a policy of strict neutrality. However, despite efforts to bolster Belgian military readiness and forge alliances with neighboring states, Belgium would ultimately be invaded and occupied by German forces in 1940. Van Zeeland's leadership during this tumultuous period was characterized by a commitment to preserving Belgian independence and resilience in the face of external aggression.

m. Fumimaro Konoe, Japan

Fumimaro Konoe, the Prime Minister of Japan, presided over a period of increasing militarization and expansionism in East Asia. Konoe's government pursued a policy of aggressive expansion, seeking to establish Japan as a dominant power in the Asia-Pacific region. Konoe's administration oversaw Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and subsequent expansion into China, leading to escalating tensions with Western powers and ultimately culminating in Japan's entry into World War II. Despite his efforts to maintain stability and assert Japanese interests, Konoe's leadership would ultimately prove disastrous, as Japan faced defeat and occupation by Allied forces following its defeat in the war.

n. Chiang Kai-shek, China

Chiang Kai-shek, the leader of the Republic of China, confronted the dual challenges of internal strife and external aggression during this period. Chiang's government struggled to assert control over a fractured and war-torn China, facing opposition from various factions, including the Chinese Communist Party led by Mao Zedong. Despite these internal challenges, Chiang remained committed to resisting Japanese aggression and defending Chinese sovereignty. The Second Sino-Japanese War, which began in 1937, saw Chiang's Nationalist forces engage in a protracted conflict with Japanese invaders, with support from Allied powers. Chiang's leadership during this period was marked by resilience and determination in the face of overwhelming odds, laying the groundwork for China's eventual victory and emergence as a major global power.

o. Miklós Horthy, Hungary

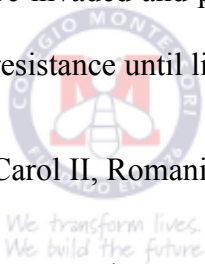
Miklós Horthy, the Regent of Hungary, presided over a period of political turmoil and shifting alliances in Central Europe. Horthy's government pursued a policy of revisionism, seeking to reclaim territories lost as a result of the Treaty of Trianon following World War I. Horthy's Hungary forged alliances with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, aligning with their expansionist ambitions in exchange for territorial gains. Despite his collaboration with Axis powers, Horthy sought to maintain Hungary's independence and sovereignty to some extent, resisting German pressure to fully commit to the war effort. However, Hungary would ultimately be drawn into the conflict, facing defeat and occupation by Allied forces as the tide of war turned against the Axis powers.

p. Milan Stojadinović, Yugoslavia

Milan Stojadinović, the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia, grappled with the challenges of maintaining Yugoslav unity and independence amid growing tensions in Europe. Stojadinović's government pursued a policy of neutrality and non-alignment, seeking to avoid entanglement in the escalating conflicts between major powers. However, Yugoslavia's strategic location and ethnic diversity made it a target for competing geopolitical interests, leading to internal divisions and external pressure. Stojadinović's leadership was marked by attempts to balance the interests of Yugoslavia's various ethnic groups and navigate the shifting alliances of the interwar period. Despite efforts to preserve Yugoslav sovereignty, the country would ultimately be invaded and partitioned by Axis forces in 1941, leading to years of occupation and resistance until liberation in 1945.

q. Carol II, Romania

King Carol II's reign in Romania coincided with a period of rising nationalism and instability in Europe. He initially pursued a cautious foreign policy, balancing relations with Germany and the Western democracies. However, as the 1930s progressed and Hitler's expansionist ambitions became clearer, Carol found himself navigating a precarious tightrope. Fearing Soviet aggression as well, Romania struggled to maintain its neutrality within the League of Nations framework. Ultimately, Carol's maneuvering proved unsuccessful. Romania was unable to secure strong enough alliances to withstand pressure from the Nazis, and the country eventually fell under German influence in the lead-up to World War II.



r. İsmet İnönü, Turkey

Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, İsmet İnönü played a critical role in establishing the Republic of Turkey and served as its first Prime Minister. He then became President in 1938. İnönü pursued a policy of neutrality and national defense, wary of entanglement in European conflicts. He saw the League of Nations as a potential platform for maintaining regional stability, but also recognized its limitations. Turkey's role within the League was primarily focused on ensuring its own security interests, particularly in the aftermath of World War I territorial settlements. İnönü's leadership helped Turkey maintain its neutrality until the later stages of World War II.

s. Ioannis Metaxas, Greece

Ioannis Metaxas came to power in Greece through a coup d'état in 1936, establishing a right-wing dictatorship. While initially maintaining a neutral stance within the League of Nations, the rise of fascist Italy in the Mediterranean posed a direct threat to Greece. Metaxas looked to the League for support against potential Italian aggression, but the organization's weakness became evident when Italy invaded Greece in 1940. The League's inability to deter or respond effectively to this act of aggression further exposed its limitations on the world stage.

10. QARMAS

- In light of the rising tensions and aggressive actions of fascist powers in the late 1930s, how effective do you believe the League of Nations was in maintaining global peace?

- Identify the key strengths and weaknesses of the League of Nations based on its structure and past actions. How did your delegation contribute to such?
- Reform or Replace?: Given the current global situation, would you advocate for reforming the League of Nations or creating a completely new international organization? why?
- How can the concept of collective security be strengthened in a new or reformed international body to effectively deter aggression and maintain peace?
- National Sovereignty or. Collective Action: How can we strike a balance between respecting national sovereignty and ensuring collective action to address global security threats?
- What kind of enforcement mechanisms, beyond sanctions, could be implemented within a new or reformed international body to ensure compliance with international law?
- When and how should a new or reformed international body intervene in internal conflicts within member states to prevent further escalation?
- How can a new or reformed international body address regional security concerns and foster cooperation among nations within specific geographic areas?
- What role should a new or reformed international body play in promoting global economic cooperation to prevent future conflicts fueled by economic disparity?
- Drawing from the historical experience of the League of Nations, what key lessons can be applied to the structure and operation of a new or reformed international body?

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