

Chapter 4: Outbreak of WWII in Europe

- weakness of League of Nations
- appeasement policy
- hitler's expansionist policy

Reasons for WW2 in Europe:

1. weakness of the LoN

	Failure to Achieve disarmament
Reasons	major world powers (britain, france) refused to cooperate since they put their own interests above international peace. other members copied - they had already been weakened in WWI and Great Depression, disarmament will make them vulnerable
Examples	<u>league commission</u> (1926) - set up to prepare for world disarmament conference, britain and france refused to cooperate <u>world disarmament conference</u> (1932-1934) - germany insisted on matching other countries' armament levels - france refused, threatened by germany - brit and US refused - hitler withdrew from conference and LON <u>disarmament without LON:</u> - <u>Washington Naval Conference</u> (1921) - led by US, set ratio for size of diff countries' navies. helped curb arms race between major naval powers - <u>Locarno Treaties</u> (1925) - germany officially accepted certain terms of TOV they were unhappy with - accepted new borders with france n belgium - demilitarisation of rhineland - improved relationship between germany and WWI enemies
Outcome	<u>LoN lost credibility</u> - powerful nations on their own were more effective than LoN <u>disarmament not adequately achieved</u> - more likely for war to break out

	Abyssinian Crisis (1935) weak LoN response
Reasons	brit and france allies with italy, did not want to hurt relations. they felt like they needed italian support against hitler
LON actions	<u>banned sale of weapons to italy</u> <u>banned all imports from italy</u> they could've done more to hurt italy: - <u>no ban of sale of important resources (oil, coal, steel) to italy</u> - LoN were scared this would hurt their economies - <u>Suez Canal (controlled by British) not closed to Italian ships</u> - using canal made it easier for italy to ship military supplies to Abyssinia - LoN were scared this would lead to war with italy <u>brit and france secret proposed Hoare-Laval Pact</u> - planned to give $\frac{2}{3}$ Abyssinia to Italy in exchange for italy to stop military actions
Outcome	<u>Italy was not deterred by weak response</u> - went on to take full control of Abyssinia <u>LoN reputation damaged</u> - LoN leaders more concerned about own interests than ensuring peace in Abyssinia <u>LoN inaction backfired</u> - Mussolini and Hitler got bolder - formed Rome-Berlin Axis (treaty of friendship) later - paved way for outbreak of WWII

2. policy of appeasement

What	brit and france give into germany's demands - to satisfy hitler - stop further german aggression - prevent war with germany
Reason	<u>WWI memories</u> - brit and france devastated by WWI, dont want another <u>economic problems</u> - brit and france economies devastated by WWI and Great Depression - efforts at economic rebuilding destroyed by another war <u>TOV regrets</u> - many brits felt TOV was too harsh - regarded germany's aggressive actions as justified (taking back what rightfully belonged to them) <u>time needed to rearm</u> - brit and france felt they were not yet strong enough to stop hitler - buy as much time to rearm and strengthen themselves militarily <u>US support lacking</u> - US policy of isolationism (they dont wanna be kaypoh) - brit and france no US support if war again <u>LoN failure</u> - LoN weak, ineffective in stopping german aggression - brit saw appeasement as best way to stop german aggression <u>fear of communism</u> - saw communists as greater evil than nazi - believed they could work with strong germany to prevent further spread of communism
Examples	<u>Anglo-German Naval Agreement (1935)</u> - brit allowed germany to have larger navy than what was agreed under TOV (but still limited to be smaller than brit navy) to reduce

german anger at ToV

- sent signal that brit was encouraging germany to violate TOV

brit and france inaction in response to aggressive Hitler

- remilitarisation of Rhineland (1936) - not allowed
 - brit had sympathy for germany after TOV (hitler taking back what was his)
 - france unwilling to stop germany without brit support
- germany involvement in Spanish Civil War (1937)
 - germany provided military support to anti-communist side
 - western powers (especially brit) did not want pro-communist side to win civil war
 - thought they could still trust hitler as ally against communism
- german anschluss with Austria (1938. mar) - not allowed
 - Chamberlain (brit PM) not willing start war to defend TOV
 - hitler promised he would not take any more aggressive actions after

Munich Agreement (1938. sep)

- Sudetenland, a German-speaking part of Czechoslovakia that bordered Germany
- under nazi influence, German speakers in Sudetenland demanded to join germany
- hitler demanded to take control of Sudetenland
 - threatened to go to war to get his way
- Czechoslovakia willing to fight to defend Sudetenland, asked for help from brit france USSR
- BUT Chamberlain met with Hitler in Munich (germany)
 - Czechoslovakia and USSR not there, not consulted
 - gave into hitler's demands for sudetenland (he took control of Sudetenland without fighting)
 - Czechoslovakia protested but did not want to fight without brit france help
 - hitler promised he would make no more aggressive demands (brit thought war with germany avoided, peace was achieved)
- brit (and france) appeared weak and unwilling to stand up to hitler
 - gave hitler confidence to continue his acts of aggression

3. hitler's expansionist policy

what	hitler's actions	effect
Oct 1933: Withdrawal from World Disarmament Conference and LoN	<u>demand that france disarm to same level as germany had under TOV</u> - france said no - hitler used that as excuse to withdraw	<u>germany no longer had to obey LoN</u> - free to ignore terms of TOV - could reintroduce conscription (NS) and rearmament
1935: Conscription and Rearmament (not allowed under ToV: Army size only supposed to be 100k, no planes)	<u>secretly built up german air force and army from 1933</u> <u>only made public in 1935</u> - Air force: 2,500 planes - Army: 300,000 troops <u>conscription reintroduced</u> - he planned to increase size of army to 550k people <u>stated he was still committed to peace</u>	<u>LoN took no action</u> <u>brit and france also took no action</u> - unwilling to risk another war <u>germany became more ready for war</u>
1936: Remilitarisation of Rhineland (not allowed under ToV: would pose military threat to France)	<u>sent germany troops into Rhineland</u> - said germany had to defend itself from france and USSR	<u>brit and france no action</u> <u>hitler even more popular with germans and military</u> <u>hitler became even bolder in demands</u>
1937: Involvement in Spanish Civil War	<u>sent troops, equipment and warplanes to support Nationalist (anti-communist) forces</u> - give his troops practice in fighting <u>used excuse that he was fighting against communism</u>	<u>LoN, brit france no action</u> - <u>hitler viewed them as weak, even more confident</u>

Mar 1938: Anschluss with Austria (not allowed under ToV: would make Germany even more powerful)	<u>encouraged Austrian Nazis to cause trouble, pressure Austrian Chancellor agree to anschluss</u> - vote was held to decide if austrians wanted anschluss <u>sent troops into Austria before the vote</u> - excuse that he was helping to keep order - Austrian Chancellor resigned under germany pressure - vote abandoned - Austria province of germany - nazi party sabotage the vote and threaten the voters so 99.75% of them approved of the Anschluss	<u>brit france did nothing</u> <u>austrian resources, military forces and weapons available for germans</u> <u>hitler's success won him great support amongst military and people</u> <u>hitler even more confident to commit acts of aggression</u>
Sep 1938: Munich Agreement and taking over Sudetenland	<u>threatened to go to war if germany not given sudetenland</u> - brit and france followed policy of appeasement, gave into demands - czechoslovakia and USSR not consulted <u>promised not to invade any more territories</u>	<u>germany gained control of sudetenland without having to fight</u> <u>hitler secretly began to plan to take over the rest of czechoslovakia</u>
Mar 1939: Invasion of Czechoslovakia	<u>invaded the rest of czechoslovakia</u> - going against his promise at Munich Agreement - (brit and france were surprised)	<u>brit and france finally realised hitler could not be trusted</u> - but they still go against germany <u>hitler next targeted poland</u> - brit and france warned that they would declare war then

Aug 1939: Signing of Nazi-Soviet pact (background: <u>stalin (USSR) wanted to form an alliance with brit and france against germany</u> - brit and france were more suspicious of USSR/communism than germany/nazism, they refused)	<u>signed a pact of non-aggression with USSR</u> - USSR promised to remain neutral if germany attacked poland - germany and USSR secretly agreed to divide poland between themselves	<u>brit and france were shocked</u> - not expecting stalin and hitler to come to agreement <u>hitler now had confidence to invade poland</u> - would not have to fight a war on two fronts if he invaded poland - believed that brit and france would not help poland if he invaded since they don't have USSR support
Sep 1939: Invasion of Poland	<u>invaded poland</u> - was confident germany could handle any possible counter-attack from brit and france	<u>brit and france told hitler to withdraw from poland or they will declare war on germany</u> <u>hitler refused to withdraw</u> - brit and france declared war on germany - world war two!!! 🤖