German Foreign Policy

1933 - 1939

Presentation by Mr Young
Europe after World War I
Your Task

- You are an expert in foreign policy
- It is your job to advise the new leaders of Germany
- You will be told about various problems and given a choice of three policies to follow.
- Choose wisely. Your success will be rewarded. Failure will be punished!
Your policy has very clear aims:

- Destroy the Treaty of Versailles
- Gain ‘Lebensraum’ (living space) in the east
- Bring all Germans into one Reich
- Make Germany strong again
In violation of the Treaty of Versailles:
Crisis: Austria 1934

- The Depression has made Austria weak
- Taking over Austria will be very popular in Germany
- It will bring many Germans into the Reich
- However other countries might oppose you
Crisis: Austria 1934

A
Try to take over Austria by sending troops to Vienna

B
Try to take over Austria by political pressure

C
Do nothing, it's not worth annoying France, Britain and Italy
Crisis: Austria 1934

A
30 Points

B
10 Points

C
20 Points
Crisis: Rhineland 1936

- Italy has invaded Ethiopia
- The league of Nations is divided
- While the League is divided you could send troops to the Rhineland
- Be careful! Any opposition and you’ll have to withdraw
Crisis: Rhineland 1936

A: Send in the troops. France is divided and Britain wants peace.

B: Ask permission from the Allies before doing anything.

C: Do nothing, you can’t risk war with France. Germany is too weak.
Crisis: Rhineland 1936

A  10 Points
B  20 Points
C  30 Points
Crisis: Austria 1938

- Austria is even weaker than in 1934
- Italy is now your ally
- You have many supporters in Austria, who can help you
- Union with Austria is forbidden by the Treaty of Versailles
Crisis: Austria 1938

A
Try to take over Austria by sending troops to Vienna

B
Try to take over Austria by political pressure

C
Do nothing, it's not worth annoying France, Britain and Italy
Crisis: Austria 1938

A
20 Points

B
10 Points

C
30 Points
Crisis: Czechoslovakia 1938

- Three million German speakers live in Czechoslovakia
- Czechoslovakia has a strong army and alliances with Britain, France and the Soviet Union
- Victory over the Czechs will finally destroy the Treaty of Versailles
- The army is unwilling to fight over the Sudetenland
Crisis: Czechoslovakia 1938

A

Invade Czechoslovakia and hope the army follows your orders

B

Make a deal with Russia and hope Britain and France ignore your actions

C

Threaten the Czechs and make a deal with Britain and France
Crisis: Poland 1939

- After victory over the Czechs you can’t do wrong
- Poland splits German land and holds the German city of Danzig
- Poland has an alliance with Britain and France
- The Soviet Union could be a threat, the Red Army could easily help the Poles
Crisis: Poland 1939

A

Do a Deal with Russia to split Poland between you

B

Invade Poland without any agreements no-one can stop you now

C

Stop now, you’ve already achieved most of your aims
Crisis: Poland 1939

A 10 Points
B 30 Points
C 20 Points
How did you do?

- 120 - 150 Points
- Your advice has been superb for the outside world as war has been avoided
- However, your advice has not been good for you. The Gestapo have arrested you and you are never seen again
How did you do?

- 90 – 110 Points
- You’re not the expert the Nazi party thought you were. You’ve missed many opportunities to expand Germany’s population and resources
- You have been demoted but you still have a comfortable life in Berlin
How did you do?

- 50 – 80 Points
- Fantastic! you have made Germany strong again, the Treaty is a thing of the past and Germany is well prepared in case war comes.
- You have been rewarded with promotion in the Nazi party and all the privileges of power
What did Hitler do?

- Austria 1934
- Rhineland 1936
- Austria 1938
- Czechoslovakia 1938
- Poland 1939
What did Hitler do?
Crisis: Austria 1934

X

Try to take over Austria by sending troops to Vienna

B

Try to take over Austria by political pressure
(Austrian Nazi party tries a coup (Putsch) but fails because Mussolini’s army blocks them)

X

Do nothing, it’s not worth annoying France, Britain and Italy
What did Hitler do?
Crisis: Rhineland 1936

A: Send in the troops. France is divided and Britain wants peace

X: Ask permission from the Allies before doing anything

X: Do nothing, you can’t risk war with France. Germany is too weak
What did Hitler do?

Crisis: Austria 1938

A
Try to take over Austria by sending troops to Vienna

B
Try to take over Austria by political pressure

X
Do nothing, its not worth annoying France, Britain and Italy
What did Hitler do?
Crisis: Czechoslovakia 1938

Invade Czechoslovakia and hope the army follows your orders

Make a deal with Russia and hope Britain and France ignore your actions

Threaten the Czechs and make a deal with Britain and France
What did Hitler do?
Crisis: Poland 1939

Do a Deal with Russia to split Poland between you

Invade Poland without any agreements no-one can stop you now

Stop now, you’ve already achieved most of your aims
THE SCUM OF THE EARTH, I BELIEVE
THE BLOODY ASSASSIN OF THE WORKERS I PRESUME?
Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact
David Low’s accurate depiction of the results of appeasement: Using the “spineless leaders of democracy” as stepping stones, a nose-thumbing Hitler marches towards his ultimate goal. [Source: Lachen, p. 280.]
Did Hitler follow a successful Foreign Policy?

- Answer the following questions:
- Did Hitler achieve all his aims?
- Did Hitler’s policies cause the war?
- Did the war ultimately make Germany weak or strong?