

## Was Britain correct in adopting a policy of appeasement towards the Nazis in the 1930s?

### **Appeasement:**

- To bring peace, quiet, or calm; to soothe
- To pacify or attempt to pacify an enemy by granting concessions



# White Hart Lane (Tottenham) 1935

## England Vs Germany



What are your thoughts on this?

Hey Bart,  
gimme all your  
sweets or else!

Get lost Nelson,  
pick on someone  
your own size  
for once.



Put up your  
hand if you  
think Bart has  
shown  
appeasement?

Hmmm, Bart  
stood up to me  
so who can I  
pick on now?



OK Millhouse, this is just a warning. Bring me candy tomorrow or I won't just be sitting on you next time.

Ok, ok, let me go - I promise I will.







Maybe if I just  
give him one bar  
of candy he will  
go away and  
leave me alone.

Thanks for the  
candy squirt,  
tomorrow I want  
your skateboard!



Er ok Nelson,  
after that you  
will leave me  
alone though  
eh?



Now what? I can't  
get that amount of  
money - no way dude.  
Perhaps he doesn't  
really mean me any  
harm!





I told you to  
keep me sweet,  
now I can do  
whatever I want  
with you.



You great bully,  
I should have  
told you to get  
stuffed from  
the beginning!



## Why might Britain (and other countries) favour a policy of appeasement?

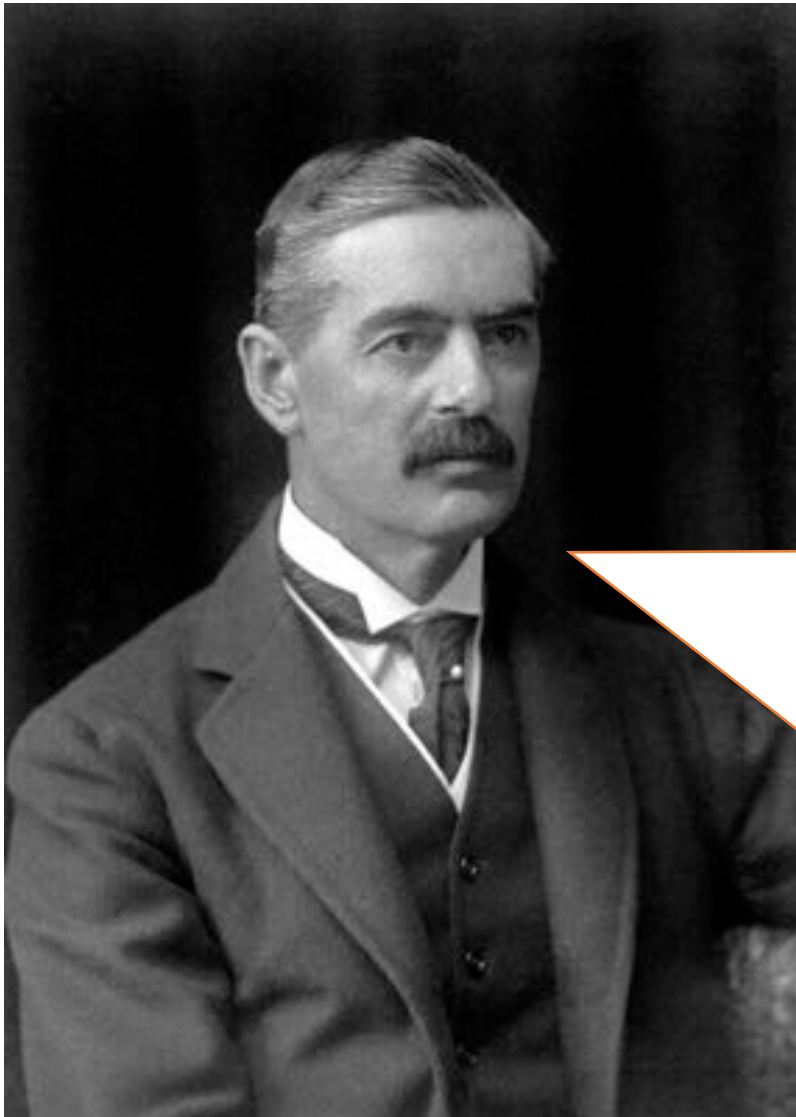
- Fear of another war
- Britain needs more time to prepare for another world war
- Germany had been too harshly treated at Versailles
- Public opinion at home was 'anti war'
- It was better that Germany was strong than risk Communism spreading West
- Anything else you can think of...?

Which of these arguments do you think are the strongest case FOR appeasement?

## Was the policy of appeasement a mistake?

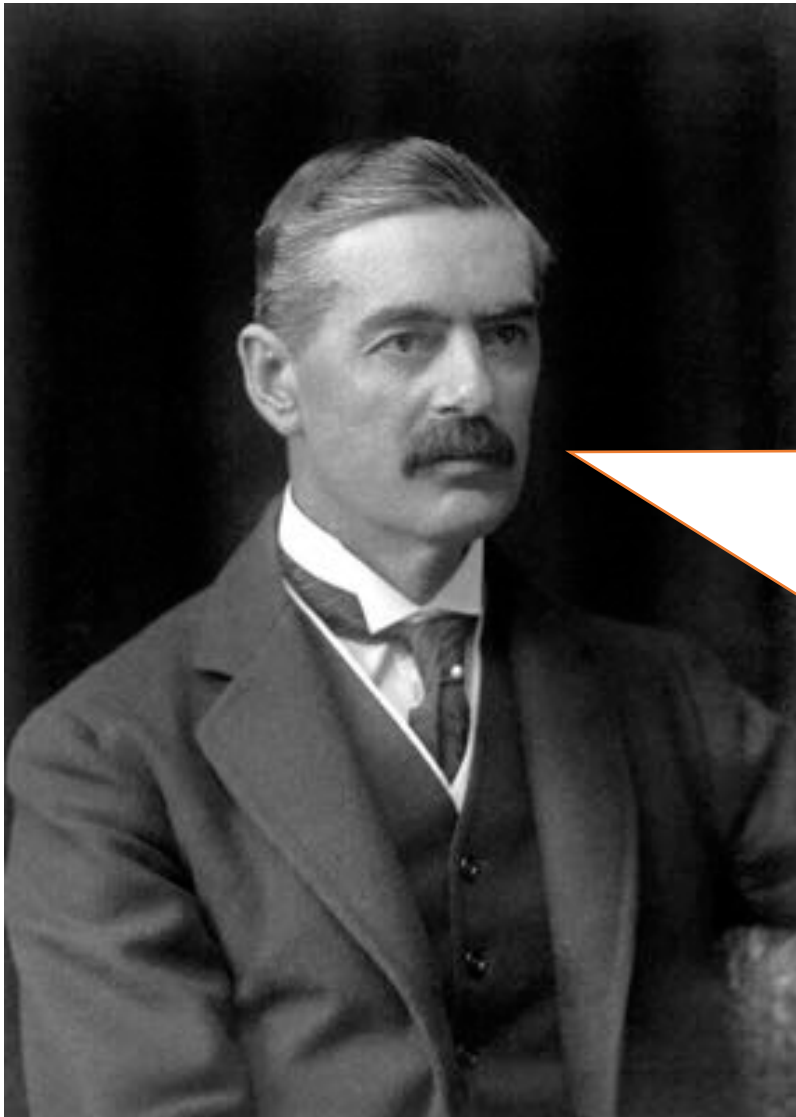
- Allowed Germany to grow stronger, too strong to stop!
- Germany and Austria joined together again
- Germany invaded and took control of Czechoslovakia
- Hitler felt encouraged by it and so grew more daring
- Hitler began moving to the East taking over these countries (**LEBENSRAUM**)
- USSR became scared at Britain and France's lack of action and so began thinking about making a deal with Hitler

Which of these arguments do you think are the strongest case for it being a mistake?



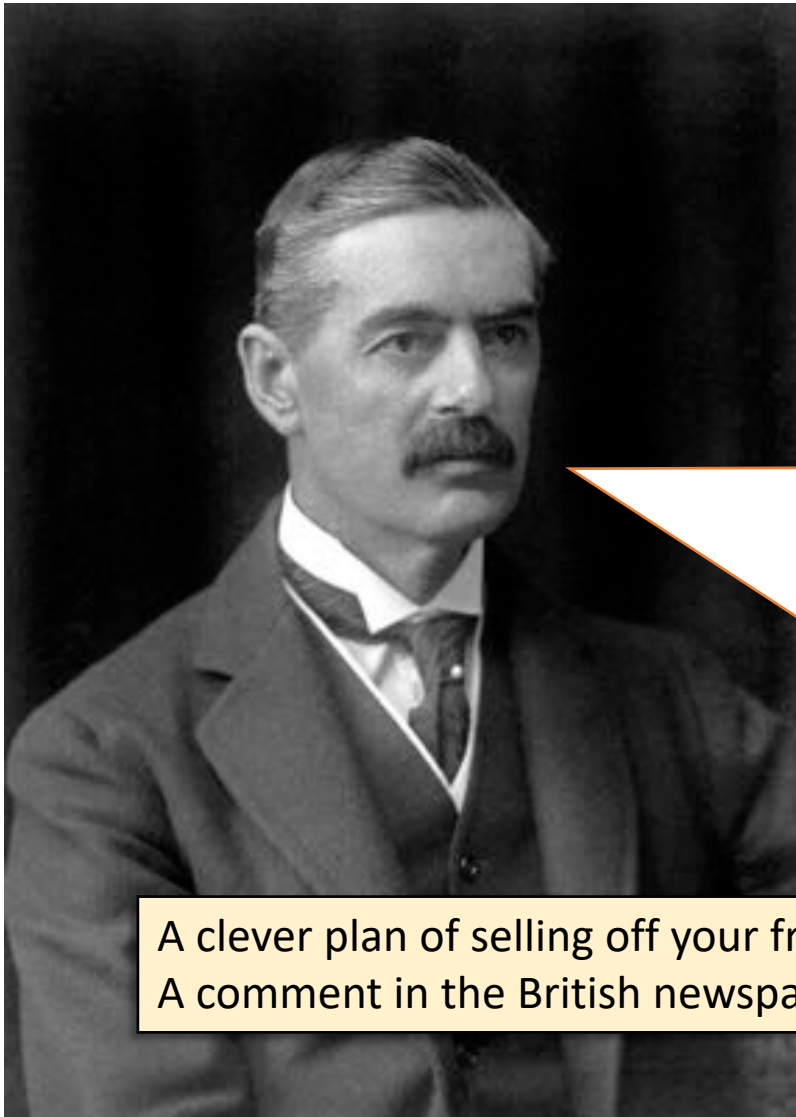
If only...we could sit down at a table with the Germans and run through all their complaints and claims with a pencil, this would greatly relieve all tension.

Prime Minister – Neville Chamberlain, speaking unofficially to Anthony Eden in 1937



You have only to look at the map to see that nothing we could do could possibly save Czechoslovakia from being overrun by the Germans.

Chamberlain, writing to his sister in 1938



How horrible, fantastic, incredible it is that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas-masks here because of a quarrel in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing.

Chamberlain, speaking in a radio broadcast about the Sudetenland crisis, 27 September 1938

A clever plan of selling off your friends in order to buy off your enemies.  
A comment in the British newspaper, *The Manchester Guardian*, February 1939



Annotate your source with your ideas on it's message



"Peace in our time" Neville Chamberlain returning from Munich Sept, 1938, with an agreement that Hitler could have Czechoslovakia, but that there would be no more invasions...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQ95ffnU4Sw>



**Source B**

It is a total defeat. Czechoslovakia will be swallowed up by the Nazis. And do not suppose that this is the end. This is only the beginning.

**Churchill**, speaking about the Munich Agreement in 1938

Do you agree with Churchill that this 'agreement' was not the great success Chamberlain claimed?



Use your individual country briefings to help you decide how to react to each of Germany's actions as we go through them on the board...



## **Top Secret – For Your Eyes Only**

### **Great Britain**

You are the British Prime Minister. You are concerned about what is going on in Germany but want to avoid war at all costs. The British people have only just got through the Great War. They would never forgive you if you got the country involved in another war with Germany. If anything Germany does sounds even remotely reasonable you would rather let them get away with it rather than risk a war. Where possible you would like to negotiate with Germany, rather than fight them. You would also like to know what France intend to do before taking any action.

**Remember: Are Germany's actions reasonable? Only declare war if it is unavoidable. Otherwise negotiate. You would rather know what France is doing before taking any action, and then do the same.**

## **Top Secret – For Your Eyes Only**

### **France**

You are the French Prime Minister. You are concerned about what is going on in Germany but want to avoid war at all costs. The French people have only just got through the Great War. They would never forgive you if you got the country involved in another war with Germany. If anything Germany does sounds even remotely reasonable you would rather let them get away with it rather than risk a war. Where possible you would like to negotiate with Germany, rather than fight them. You would also like to know what Britain intend to do before taking any action.

**Remember: Are Germany's actions reasonable? Only declare war if it is unavoidable. Otherwise negotiate. You would rather know what Britain is doing before taking any action, and then do the same.**

## **Top Secret – For Your Eyes Only**

### **USA**

You are the President of the USA. You do not want to get involved in what is going on in Europe. Last time you got involved in Europe's business was the Great War. You do not want the USA to get involved in another of Europe's wars. You do not even want to negotiate with Germany. Let Britain and France deal with it.

**Remember: You want nothing to do with Europe. Let Britain and France deal with it.**

Date	What happened?	Britain's reaction	France's reaction	USA's reaction	What was the actual response?
30th January 1933					
16th March 1935					
7th March 1936					
11th March 1938					
May 1938					
15th March 1939					
1st September 1939					



**30<sup>th</sup> January 1933**

Adolf Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany. He promises that he will smash the terms of the unpopular Treaty of Versailles. He is voted into power **democratically** as the biggest party in the Reichstag (Parliament) by the German people.

**Britain, France and the USA took no action**

**16th March 1935**

Hitler announces his intention to rebuild the German army. He also announces the creation of the Luftwaffe (air force), banned at Versailles. Hitler argues that other countries are allowed armies and air forces so Germany needs one to defend itself.

**Britain, France and the USA took no action. The following year Britain signed an agreement allowing Germany to have a bigger navy too.**



**7th March 1936**

German troops march into the Rhineland area of Germany to remilitarise it. The Rhineland is, and has always been, part of Germany.

This land was demilitarised at Versailles.

**Britain, France and the USA took no action.**



**11th March 1938**

German troops march into Austria and declare the Anschluss (union), again forbidden at Versailles. Austria is German speaking and many Austrians want to be united with Germany. Hitler now leads Germany and Austria.

**Britain, France and the USA took no action.**



May 1938

Germany demands the Sudetenland area of Czechoslovakia be taken under German control. 3 million Germans live in this area.

Britain and France called the Munich Conference to discuss the issue. The Sudetenland is given to Germany without consulting the Czech government. The USA chooses not to get involved.



15<sup>th</sup> March 1939

Germany invades the rest of Czechoslovakia. Almost no Germans live here.

**Britain, France and the USA took no action. Britain and France promise that if Germany invades any more countries they will declare war on them.**





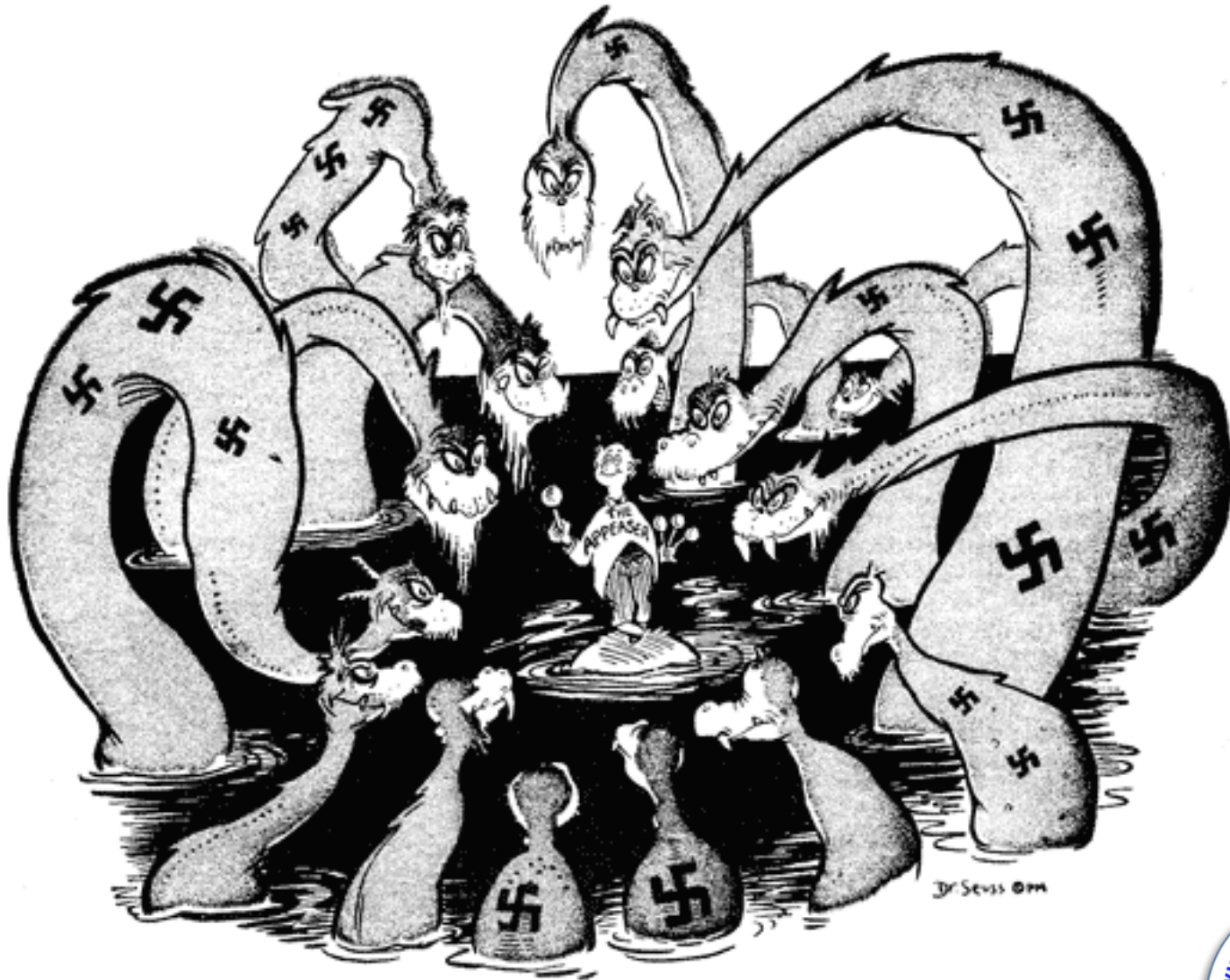
**1<sup>st</sup> September 1939**

Germany invades Poland Very few Germans live here.

**Britain and France declare war on Germany marking the beginning of the Second World War. The USA chooses not to get involved, and only eventually enters the war in two years later 1941 after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour.**



*'Remember . . . One More Lollypop, and Then You All Go Home!'*



What is the message of this source?

**Appeasement**: to pacify or placate someone by acceding to their demands (particularly to avoid conflict).

The policy of appeasement has become associated with the British Prime Minister **Neville Chamberlain** (1937-1940) and French Prime Minister **Édouard Daladier** (1938-40).

**Isolationism**: a policy of remaining apart from the affairs or interests of other countries.

The policy of isolationism was popular in the United States. Although the US President, **Franklin D. Roosevelt** (1933-45) was not keen on the policy, he knew that the American people would not accept the United States getting involved in another “European war”.

**Both of these policies were extremely popular with people at the time.**

**Why would appeasement and isolationism be popular with people? (think about previous lessons)**

**Is it only with the benefit of hindsight that we see Appeasement as a disaster?**

