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Was Hitler really a peace lover?



In 2004 somebody asked me the following question:

I wonder, if Hitler was such a peace lover, why did he attack us Dutchies and the Belgians, Danes, French, Czechoslovakians, Norwegians etc.?

My reply consisted only of eighty one sentences in total, however, I believe I did answer the question to the best of my abilities and with minimal errors.

The Reply

Let us investigate whether Adolf Hitler was a peace-loving individual, or not. Let's look at what the historical record can reveal to us.

Let's begin.

'Czechoslovakia'

First, you are mistaken about the so-called Czechoslovakians. He never attacked them. Secondly there are no Czechoslovakians, only Czechs and Slovaks. The Slovaks seceded from a country they never asked to join, run by a people they hated; it was a dictatorship, just like pre-Anschluss Austria and 1939 Poland. Perhaps you recall that they did the same thing in 1991, at the first possible opportunity. The Czechs and Slovaks both asked for German protection, chiefly against the Poles, but also against the Hungarians, Roumanians. Every neighbouring country hated the Czechs because they were the only pro-Communists in Eastern Europe, and hogged huge pieces of land stolen from other countries at the so-called 1919 Peace Conference. Beneš was hated by everyone who ever dealt with him; he was not a sainted martyr as the Americans like to pretend.

Sweden

The Germans derived nearly all their iron ore from Sweden, shipped through the Baltic. The British intended to invade Norway to interdict these shipments, i.e., Sweden would have been next. The British made one invasion attempt, which failed, they also sank a German ship in Norwegian territorial waters, the Altmark ^[1], and machine gunned German shipwreck survivors as they attempted to escape over the ice, which of course is in violation of international law. It is a basic principle of warfare that if you know your enemy is going to occupy a strategic position from which he can inflict damage on you, you must occupy the position first. Incidentally the violation of neutral territory was never much of an issue until the British made it a big propaganda issue in 1914. The Russo-Japanese war was fought almost entirely in China, which was neutral, and nobody cared. The British invaded the Boer Republics and killed 10-20% of the country by putting them in concentration camps, in 1900-1902, then in 1914, presto! Britain becomes the champion of the independence and neutrality of small countries, i.e., Belgium, and, in 1939, Poland. Belgium was never a neutral country anyway and the degree of British hypocrisy may be judged by what happened to Poland in 1945. More or less the same story for Denmark, it was to prevent British violation of Danish territory; same with Luxembourg, where there were already French tanks.

Belgium

Belgium was invaded in 1940 because the Belgians permitted the British to fly over Belgian air space for 6 months to bomb Germany. Hitler protested in writing 120 times. Same for Holland, more or less. It's not like checkers, where you can just leave a square and hope the other player won't occupy the square. There wouldn't have been any war if Britain and France hadn't declared war; people forget that. In 1914, Germany declared war on France first, but the situation was different. Once the Russians and French mobilized, the Germans had no choice but to go on the offensive and knock the French out of the war before the Russians could mobilize completely; otherwise the whole war would have taken place in Germany; Germany would have been invaded by combined armies of over 5 million men. That's 1914, but 1939 was very similar, except that Hitler delayed for 6 months making peace offers that were ignored, just as he made dozens of disarmament proposals that were ignored before he decided to rearm. Then the British claimed they had to arm (even more than before) in self-defense to keep Germany from "conquering the world", and all their other lies.

Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia was invaded because Hitler had to protect his supply lines to Greece; the country had just had an anti-German coup d'etat. Russia was invaded because the Russians had 300 divisions and 24,000 modern tanks on the

Polish border; they were moving millions of men to the front, demolishing protective fortifications for 50 miles inside Russia. It was obviously a pre-emptive strike, which in fact saved Europe from Communism. Except for Poland, etc...

Denmark

I am not sure of the strategic importance of a country like Denmark but in the case of Holland and Belgium it is obvious that if the British were going to continue to bomb Germany then the Germans had to shorten the distance involved in order to bomb back at better advantage, i.e., they could take off from air fields in Holland or Belgium. I assume they occupied Denmark to protect the Baltic, after all they had major submarine bases at Kiel and places not far away. In any case it did the Danes very little harm; one person was killed, that's all. People forget that Britain and France declared war on Germany, not the other way around. Hitler made 20 peace proposals in the first year of the war; all he ever got was insults. The British have rightfully been called "a country so peace-loving that for 1000 years they never let a generation go by without engaging in warfare someplace else in the world."

Incidentally the British would have gone to war in 1914 even without a violation of Belgium neutrality because they had secret agreements with the French; Prime Minister Grey lied to Parliament about this. The French had plans to violate Belgian neutrality and openly admitted this.

Another thing, there are no natural barriers between Belgium and northern Germany so if the French had been allowed to violate Belgian neutrality and invade Germany the whole war would have taken place in Germany and Germany would have been wrecked. Belgium was never a neutral country: they had agreements with the British and French against the Germans, but no agreements with the Germans against the British and French. Their manner of resistance (guerilla warfare) proves they were never neutral. Anyway, the Germans were accused of violating two treaties relating to Belgian neutrality: one dated 1838 and one dated 1870 (I believe). The latter expired in 12 months. The 1838 treaty no longer applied partly because of the incorporation of the Belgian Congo into Belgium proper. Under international law, a colony was considered part of the mother country. Hence the Germans and all other parties to the 1839 treaty were supposed to respect the neutrality of the Belgian Congo as well! But they were never asked. A French general said that if anybody on the French General Staff had suggested respecting Belgian neutrality he would have sacked, if not accused of treason. The French moved their entire navy into the Mediterranean on the basis of a secret agreement with the British in 1907, I believe, that the British would protect the French Atlantic sea coast. So Belgium was just an excuse.

Preparations for War

Another point is that the Germans were never prepared for a lengthy war, only a war of 2 or 3 months duration. They invaded Poland with a two-week ammunition supply, and when it came time to invade Western Europe, they found they had no war plans for Western Europe whatsoever, everything had to be improvised last moment. German armaments production in 1939 was 8% what it was in 1944. One source on this is John Kenneth Galbraith, who was an official expert on strategic bombing, he drew up an official report on it for the US government after the war, and one of his conclusions was not only that, but that the mass bombings of population centres actually helped the German war effort because everything bombed was of no importance, when the British bombed all the restaurants and hotels the workers all went to work in the armaments industries. Many writers have remarked on this, strategic bombing was a failure. Another source is C.P. Snow, SCIENCE AND GOVERNMENT. Hitler always thought he could reach a political settlement. This is in complete contradiction even with his own (occasionally) expressed philosophy of peace through strength and preparedness. Of course, this was interpreted as planning to conquer the world. Not only did he not intend to destroy Poland, he WANTED a strong, independent Poland as a buffer state against Russia. The Poles destroyed themselves and so did the Czechs. Rest in peace and good riddance.

Concessions

Hitler wanted a Europe of independent nations working together in peace and to obtain peace he gave up all claim to Alsace-Lorraine, for example. It was the 1919 Allies who created a dozen Alsace-Lorraines in the form of so-called Czechoslovakia.

The End

The most astonishing really is that Hitler waited six months to do anything. The British declared war fully believing that London would be bombed with gas bombs immediately. Instead they had to bomb Germany for six months to get any reaction. Even then Hitler refused to occupy all of France or any part of French North Africa (which would probably have permitted him to win the war); he refused to destroy or even capture the British expeditionary forces at Dunkirk, he warned the Belgians 120 times, as I said, he made repeated offers to the Poles, repeatedly putting off his "surprise attack"; he even offered to stop the invasion of Poland on the spot, if the Poles would negotiate. This was a terrible risk, because if the Poles had stalled, the whole German army would have gotten stuck in the mud a few weeks or a month or two later. He was told by his generals that if the attack didn't begin by September 1, that the whole country would be a morass of mud just a few weeks later; almost none of the roads in Poland were paved. Hitler turned the other cheek more times than any other statesman in history. This is true whether people believe it or not. He could have destroyed France much more easily if he had done so immediately after the Polish campaign, instead he waited, making peace proposals. He even refused to ask for any monetary settlement. He treated all his enemies with respect. In Belgrade the Germans put up a monument "To the Great Serbian Enemy" and made many similar comments about the bravery of the French, etc, hopes of friendship with the British, Poles, Czechs, everyone. He hated Edvard Beneš, but that was because of Beneš actions in politics. During the war there were fewer acts of sabotage in Bohemia-Moravia (Prague, etc.) than in Germany itself. He admired the Poles and wanted nothing but a peace settlement with them, which would have been in the interests of both countries. They were natural trading partners, and could have formed a very powerful bulwark against Bolshevism in Europe.

Have I forgotten anything?

References

1. ["I have seen nothing yet to confirm the shooting of men on the ice when Altmark was boarded"](#)