



# **Collision Course for WWII**

# After Munich

- Was the whole conference was a fraud – **Taylor** = no, but each country had reservations.
  - FRA: Surrendered their power in EUR; humiliated (189)
  - UK: Triumph of appeasement. Avoided war by giving up land on moral grounds to Sud. GERs (190); NC caught up in his own policy. Says UK is too weak to fight → should rearm, but that would be distrusting AH!
  - USA: First, praises Munich, then denounces it. T says lack of USA led to Munich.
  - USSR: Hope AH would attack UK, not them, but secretly wasn't sure; Ukraine next?



# Poland?

- AH: If we can have Danzig back, the rest of the Polish Corridor can remain Polish → POL refuses; too proud. Think themselves a great power (196)
- FRA takes lead in App in Winter '38- '39
  - No mention of POL
- West waits for AH's next move. Taylor says, he didn't have one; East given to him, so why attack?



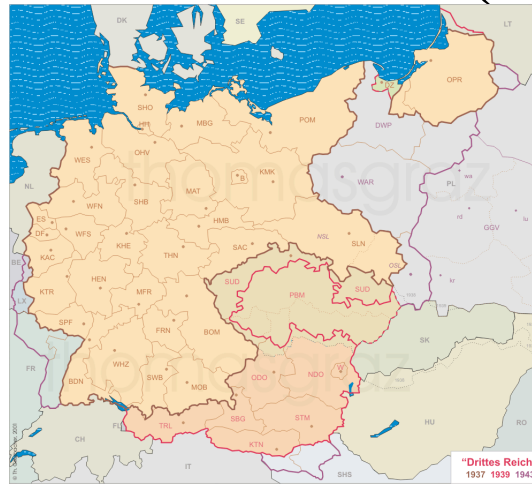
# Back to Czechoslovakia

- **3/9/1939** – Hitler sees CZE mobilize army toward Slovaks to assert independence → Seizes all CZE.
  - **Taylor**: Decisive step of his career (202)
  - → Anti-appeasement rhetoric in UK (finally!)
- Public warning to AH (205)
  - Taylor: Turning point in UK policy
  - UK, FRA, USSR, POL agree to consult on next move
- AH annexes **Memel** (in Lithuania), UK forms “**Peace Front**” with POL for fear of GER-POL alliance → POL FM **Beck** refuses to ally w/ AH → Alliance



# War of Nerves

- Causes of GER drive in '39 refuted by Taylor
  1. Economic: Not really. USSR was developing & GER cut back
  2. Armaments: No. GER lead waning, gens say tech not ready
  3. World moving against GER → US/USSR growing in power; No. War not designed to attack them. (223)
- “War of 1939 was a mistake” (219)



# Alliances Galore!

- **April** – AH gives terms to POL → refused → no more negotiations until August
- **May 22** – “**Pact of Steel**” – GER & ITA → wage war in common
  - AH downplays Anti-Bolshevism, blames Jews
  - UK/FRA try to ally w/ strong USSR → can’t reach terms.
  - UK & POL ally. Force FRA to ally too b/c UK doesn’t have continental army.





# Where do we put the USSR?

- Taylor: varying views of their intentions (230)
  - Soviets push for neutrality (233)
  - UK thinks fascism/communism can't coexist (234)
- USSR proposes assistance to POL and Baltics→
  - UK sees as takeover attempt; want war aims in their control (235)→
  - USSR offers assistance to UK/POL (237)
  - **Why?**: Fears GER; thinks Western Alliance safer



# March toward September

- **4/3** – Plans for invasion anytime after 9/1/1939
- POL gamblers, just like AH → underestimated, but less equipped than CZE; UK/FRA don't want war over POL (251)
- AH says he wants nothing from West, but wants free hand in East (254)
  - ITA won't be ready for war until '42 b/c of SCW
- **8/12** – UK/FRA/USSR resume negotiations
  - Break down by 8/17, never to resume
  - **Why?** USSR wanted to be principal power, not secondary
  - **Taylor** – Failure of UK/USSR did much to cause WWII (247)





# Nazi-Soviet Pact

- 8/14 – Negotiations begin (258)
- 8/23 – **Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-Aggression Pact**
  - Taylor – Pact was anti-GER b/c it limited AH's advance
  - Hitler & Stalin thought was avoided (262)
- BUT UK rallies to maintain POL support (266)
- 8/25 – Final GER offer to POL
  - Meanwhile, BM tells AH ITA can't be involved militarily
  - POL rejects offer (Taylor argues UK meddling) (273)



# Invasion of Poland

- Even after invasion began, UK/FRA still try to give AH an out (276)
  - BM intercedes again, but conference never convenes
  - Because UK gov. puts pressure on NC to declare war
- 9/3/1939 – **Taylor** – Britain ends up pulling France into WWII against a much more powerful GER. Hitler destroys the sources of his success by bringing US & USSR into war.

