

# Notes: Basic Causes of World War II

## 1. Nationalism

- Rise of "super nationalism" - fascism and glorification of the state
- Germany, Italy, Spain, and Japan are examples

## 2. Neo-Imperialism

- "Have not" powers - Germany, Italy and Japan - demanded "Living room" for their overcrowded populations and raw materials for their industries
- Japan wanted a chance to compensate for its lack of "territory"
- The economic situation was further complicated by the collapse of world trade/tariffs after the 1930's.

## 3. Versailles Treaty - Demand for revisions

- Discontent with the Versailles Treaty and particularly boundary settlements, also led to war
- Germany was extremely resentful and Italy felt badly treated

## 4. The Failure of the League of Nations

- Not a cause, but a reflection of the problems
- It failed to protect all nations and the disarmament negotiations fell apart
- It could do nothing in response to Japan's invasion of Manchuria, Italy's invasion of Ethiopia and Germany's many violations of the Versailles Treaty

## 5. Division in the West

- France and Britain were at odds with each other regarding Germany
- Britain felt that concessions should be made to Germany; that a strong and prosperous Germany was an asset to English industries.
- France wanted to keep the Versailles Treaty in place and keep Germany poor and militarily weak.

## Notes: Steps Along the Road To War

1. **October 1933** – Hitler withdrew from the disarmament conference and the Versailles Treaty.
2. **March 1935** – Hitler creates an air force and obligatory military service.
3. **1935** – Mussolini attacked Ethiopia, by May 1936, Ethiopia overrun.
4. **October 1936** – *Rome-Berlin Axis* signed.
5. **November 1936** – *Anti-Comintern Pact* signed with Japan.
6. **November 1937** – Similar pact signed with Italy.
7. **April 1938** – Britain signs agreement with Mussolini – Italy's possession of Ethiopia is recognized and mutual friendship is pledged.
8. **September 1938** – *Munich Conference* - Hitler, Mussolini, Daladier of France and Chamberlain of England met. Agreement is reached – Hitler got 1/5 of Czechoslovakia, the Sudetenland and the Skoda armament works.
9. **March 1939** – Hitler violated the *Munich Pact* and took the rest of Czechoslovakia.
10. **April 1939** – Britain and France guaranteed the defense of Poland, but this agreement did not include Russia.
11. **August 1939** – *Nazi-Soviet Pact* – Hitler's strategy was to assure Russia's neutrality and isolate Poland. Hitler could attack Britain and France in the west without worrying about the eastern front... Later he could turn on Russia.
12. **September 1, 1939** – The Germany army, ignoring the non-aggression pact signed in 1934, invaded Poland. World War II had begun.