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POPULO

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Introduction

Populo has now entered its second year as a biannual undergraduate journal presenting more first-class work from a variety of students in the Political and Cultural Studies Department at Swansea University.

As was previously the case, we have received many high quality pieces of work, with all three years represented. Students from Politics and International Relations, War and Society and American Studies will all find interesting essays written by their fellow students within this journal.

The current editorial team consists of four dedicated students; Anastasia Anderson, Louis Bromfield, Thomas Howard and Frances Smith. We are very grateful for all the guidance and support from Eugene Miakinkov, as well as the help in completing this journal from the society Presidents, Olivia Bray and Michael Rose.

To what extent did wars between 1870 and 1905 reshape military thinking?

Mac McMillan – HUA102

During the period from 1870 to 1905 the tactics and training procedures utilised within the British Army were outdated, comprising of poor doctrine that did not learn from failure. Although there were several conflicts that could have influenced British military strategy and doctrine, this essay will look at the key elements learnt from the Boer War from 1899 to 1902. It was the combat experience in this period that prompted the development of improved tactical doctrine in the main teeth arm, the infantry. It also highlighted to commanders the importance of tactical skills and individual initiative above drill and discipline at unit level, which later informed the success of the British Expeditionary Force at the beginning of the Great War in 1914. The Boer War ended in 1902 and in the twelve years from 1902 to the beginning of the Great War in 1914 the most critical and wide-ranging changes to British Military Infantry doctrine took place. The thesis of this essay will evidence that infantry doctrine, from 1902 to 1914, was developed from the surprising defeats suffered during the Boer War that removed the Victorian mentality of complacency and easy victory experienced in previous wars. The essay will show that this period, to some extent, did reshape military thinking and ethos in the first part of the 20th century. To achieve this, the essay will first consider British Infantry doctrine, prior to and during the Boer War. It will then develop the thesis by reviewing tactics and doctrine developed from the lessons of the Boer War. The essay will then consider the antithesis of its arguments and conclude with a summary of findings.

The Victorian Army was indoctrinated with Frederician theory and plagiarised Jominian text used first by Patrick MacDougall, the first

commandant of the staff college, in 1856 in his *'Theory of War'*. This was followed by the military historian E. B. Hamley in his 1866 work *'The Operations of War'* - although Hamley argued that the Jominian system only worked in short campaigns and was not as effective in long drawn out wars. Jomini argued the point of deploying masses onto the decisive point and spent much of his effort on the correct formation and the drilling of troops on marches and when deployed for combat¹. As will be seen this strategy would fail against highly effective mass fire from modern weapons in the hands of skilled riflemen.

Although the artillery and cavalry arms of the British Army learnt from fighting in South Africa it was the infantry that received the most lessons. This was due for the most part because the majority of the infantry in the British Army was present from the early stages of the war in 1899 until the end of the war in 1902. The failures in fighting a very mobile opponent armed with smokeless and magazine fed rifles made the British realise that reform was needed and urgently.² The fact that Great Britain had previously fought against the Boer in earlier conflicts should have appraised the Army of the excellent capabilities of the enemy, especially its skills with fire arms and small unit skirmishing. However, there was a complacency in British thinking that treated the Boers with contempt, with British Intelligence publishing a secret report that believed the Boers would only deploy raiders against the British and also assumed that they only had minimal armaments.³

¹ Hew Strachan, *European Armies and the Conduct of War*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2001).

² Great Britain Royal Commission, *Report of His Majesty's Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Military Preparations and Other Matters Connected with the War in South Africa*, 7 vols (H.M.S.O, 1903), Vol 2.

³ Britain Great, Office War, and Division Intelligence, *Military Notes on the Dutch Republics of South Africa*, (1899), p 49-52.

These views quickly changed during the opening salvos of combat in what would be later known as the 'Black Week' of December 1899.⁴ During the Battle of Talana Hill on 20th October 1899, the Boer forces used their Mausers to great effect and were able to take many British lives due to the skill of marksmanship, in conjunction with the ineffective British doctrine of close order marching and formation.⁵ During Lord Methuen's march to relieve Kimberly, an officer described the infantry fighting as "...an honest, straightforward British march up to a row of waiting rifles."⁶ Although the British had great success with close order battle in previous engagements, such as that in the Sudan, the Boer War highlighted its weaknesses against a well defended enemy capable of accurate small arms fire. At the Battle of Enslin on the 25th November 1899 Lord Methuen suffered a casualty rate of 44% and although the battle objectives were achieved, it was obvious that the attrition level could not be maintained.⁷

The British soon realised that the use of tight order formations and a failure to fight from cover where available would lead to further defeats. The *Infantry Drill Manual* of 1889 maintained the use of the traditional British Line formation and it was not until the 1896 edition that this was adapted to include "... all movements in contact with the enemy should be covered by a screen of troops in extended order..."⁸. Unfortunately, the lack of a cohesive national doctrine led to tactical

⁴ Field Marshal Lord Michael Carver, *The National Army Museum Book of the Boer War*, (Oxford: Pan Books, 2000), pp. 15-52.

⁵ L.S. Amery and others, *The Times History of the War in South Africa: 1899-1902*, (S. Low, Marston and Company, 1902), v. 2. p. 164

⁶ L.M. Phillipps, *With Rimington*, (General Books LLC, 2009).

⁷ Amery and others, *The Times History of the War in South Africa: 1899-1902*, pp. 338-339.

⁸ E.M. Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army, 1868-1902*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992).

decisions based on an individual regiment's experience of warfare, which therefore resulted in great variations of military formations at the battalion level. However, the development of a more open order form of advance and assault as laid out in the *Infantry Drill Manual* of 1896 did allow some battalions to incorporate these adaptations into their fighting formations against the Boers with some success. A very effective example would be General Sir Ian Hamilton – who, whilst stationed in Ladysmith prior to the Battle of Elanslaagte on the 21st October 1899, had begun a training regime with his brigade on tactical extension. During the ensuing battle, the 1st Devonshire regiment attacked using a frontal extension of over 700 yards and a gap of over 450 yards between each firing line. They used fire and manoeuvre whereby one line would rush forward in the advance whilst another would provide continuous covering fire.⁹ In the *Elgin Commission* of 1903, Sir William Gatacre espoused the use of extension and stated that the aim in training was to develop "...sudden, short, rapid and irregular in interval and strength, otherwise the defenders get many chances; each rush must be locally supported by comrades' fire till the runners have settled down ready to support the next group in turn¹⁰." By the end of the Boer War the infantry and, by extension, the British Army had developed the necessary tactics to face an enemy with modern fire power in a difficult situation. Although the beginning of the war had shown the Army to be inefficient for the conditions, it developed into a highly skilled and very capable fighting force.

⁹J. Lee, *A Soldier's Life: General Sir Ian Hamilton, 1853-1947*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), p. 49.

¹⁰ Commission, *Report of His Majesty's Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Military Preparations and Other Matters Connected with the War in South Africa*, p. 273.

The lessons of the war were not forgotten, and training of the Army concentrated on extension, concealment and cover, small unit tactics and a healthy respect for modern fire power. There were still many doubters to the lessons learnt in the *veldt* and they argued that the Boers fought differently to other armies. This was characterised by Sir Henry Colville's summation that the conditions of warfare in South Africa were exceptional and not likely to be repeated¹¹. Eventually, the 1911 edition of the *Infantry Manual* reflected the concerns of many doubters and the tactic of extended formations was still included. However, the manual included a new caveat, that had an emphasis on masses of supporting fire from direct and indirect means including machine guns and artillery¹². This allowed for the forward advance of troops in a dispersed formation who would then reform for the final push towards the enemy's positions. During the early battles of the Great War British Infantry tactics used extension, fire and manoeuvre compared to the German and French forces who favoured the same deep and close order formations of the previous century.¹³ The British had learnt the lessons of the Boer War and adapted them to combat against modern technology and masses of fire from machine guns and artillery at the outbreak of the Great War.

This essay has considered only a specific area of change that the wars of the late 19th and early 20th century brought about in military thinking. The requirements of the length of the essay has prevented any inclusion or discussion of the use of earthen works, accurate rifle

¹¹ Commission, *Report of His Majesty's Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Military Preparations and Other Matters Connected with the War in South Africa*, pp. 288.

¹² Great Britain. War Office. General Staff, *Infantry Training, 1911*, (London: H.M.S.O., 1911).

¹³ M. Gilbert, *First World War*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1994).

skills, camouflage, artillery tactics and the use of the machine gun, and so has concentrated on one of the key reforms of tactics and doctrine that has influenced future battlefields since the Boer War and continues to do so. There has been much written about the Boer War and its influence on the reform of the British Army prior to 1914, however, much of the work concentrates on the strategic and management level of the army and the General staff.¹⁴ Other writers, such as GR Searle, have argued that the Boer War had a negative impact on British tactical thinking as the difference in military tactics and requirements when comparing the Boer War and the Great War demonstrate the changes made in the period in between were irrelevant and, to some extent, even harmful.¹⁵ There is a serious gap in the historiography of the influence on tactics of the Boer War, and this has led to a failure of historians to consider the tactical level changes that came about from the period. The tactical doctrine of fire and manoeuvre provides an example of this failure, as it has few detractors and is still used today with combined arms operations as well as single unit combat.

In conclusion, the Boer War, as experienced by the British Army culminated in the development of infantry tactics which are still used on the modern battlefield. The Army of the Victorian period – influenced heavily by Frederician and Jominian theory and which had been defeated at Colenso, Stormberg and Magersfontein – had been replaced by a force that recognised the tactical use of terrain and the extended advance to contact, resulting in reduced casualties and

¹⁴ J.E. Tyler, *The British Army and the Continent, 1904-1914*, (London: E. Arnold and Co, 1938).

¹⁵ G.R. Searle, *The Quest for National Efficiency: A Study in British Politics and Political Thought, 1899-1914*, (California: University of California Press, 1971).

allowing for an effective attack in force. Not all lessons from the period were effective but the Boer War provided the catalyst needed for full scale reforms that had been casually ignored in previous conflicts. The British Expeditionary Force of 1914 utilised infantry tactics that far outperformed their European counterparts. This is shown from the early battles of the Great War in Mons and Le Cateau, as whilst the German armies had superiority in their numbers, the British, using dispersed formations and accurate fire, were able to achieve early successes and gain a reputation for having the best infantry with the best tactics on the field of battle.

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Would it be possible for us to have free will if determinism were true?

David Sinton – HUP100

This essay will be arguing that it is not possible for us to have free will if determinism is true. To do this, I will begin by broadly defining what is meant by these two terms before examining and challenging some arguments on the compatibilist side of the debate. The arguments I will be examining come from Kai Nielson, Harry Frankfurt and Susan Wolff. These philosophers provide a classic compatibilist argument, and deep-self theories respectively. After examining these arguments, I believe it will be clear to the reader that free will is not compatible with determinism and that each of these philosophers fail to demonstrate anything other than determinism may be false. It would only take one example to prove that free will is compatible with determinism, but I will argue that this is yet to be demonstrated.

Firstly, determinism can broadly be defined as the theory that every event is causally determined by events that have come beforehand. Determinism is sometimes confused with fatalism which is the idea that whatever will happen will happen. Fatalism is just a logical truth and does not make any reference to causation which is the main point of determinism. Determinism also differs from constraints we face in life such as our genes, upbringing, and threats of reward or punishment. These constraints almost certainly determine some aspects of human behaviour, but determinism is an all-encompassing theory that requires all events to be causally by events that have come before.

Free will can broadly be defined as free to do otherwise. An example is that I have chosen to write this essay, but I am equally free

to not write the essay and accept any consequences that this may bring. For free will to be compatible with determinism it would be necessary for all previous events to play out in the same way and yet it still be possible for me to choose not to write this essay. The question of whether free will is compatible with determinism is a question of whether human beings have genuine choices in any given situation or whether our actions are inevitable.

Free will is closely linked to ideas of personal responsibility and the idea that people are morally responsible for their actions. I will focus on two essays by Harry G. Frankfurt and one by Susan Wolf that follow this line of argument, but I will begin by looking at a classical compatibilist argument by Kai Nielson. Nielson is a soft determinist which means that he believes that determinism is true, but determinism is compatible with free will. This is in contrast with hard determinists and libertarians who both believe that free will is incompatible with determinism. However, hard determinists believe that determinism is true, and libertarians believe that it is false.

Nielson's main line of argument focuses on the fact that he believes that many incompatibilist arguments are making a false contrast between the idea of an action being free and it being causally determined. Nielson states that the idea of a causeless event does not make any sense. Therefore, every event and action are causally determined. Nielson believes that the correct concept to contrast with freedom is constraint and that just because it is theoretically possible to predict a man's actions by knowing enough about his inclinations and past events does not mean that the man is compelled to act or constrained from acting in a certain way. The three conditions for freedom set out are:

1. He could have done otherwise if he had chosen to.

2. His actions are voluntary in the sense that the kleptomaniacs are not.
3. Nobody compelled him to choose as he did.¹⁶

If all these conditions are met, then an action is free, and Nielson believes that this is compatible with determinism. The problem with this argument is the first condition: Nielson talks of people being free from constraints to perform actions but makes no mention of what causes these actions to be performed. Determinism is the theory that every event is necessitated by previous events. If people could have chosen to act otherwise, then the action performed was not necessitated by prior events; it was merely made possible by them.

Part of the causal chain of events that lead to an action being performed includes a person choosing to perform the action in question. If the person making the choice had instead made a different choice, then the causal chain leading to the action is different and this would explain what had caused the eventual action. For example, it feels possible that I could choose not to submit essay in before the deadline, but I am going to (or did by the time this is read). For me to choose not to submit would have needed a different sequence of events leading up to this point for me to have made that choice. I may have crossed paths with a more rebellious group of friends and learned not to respect deadlines. However, that never happened, therefore the essay was bound to be submitted. The ability to choose to do otherwise is entirely unprovable and determinism is a theory that attempts to explain the world without leaving space for free will.

¹⁶ Kai Nielson, 'The Compatibility of Freedom and Determinism', in *Free Will* (Malden: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 39-46

Nielson's theory is a more accurate description of freedom of action which is distinguished from freedom of the will in deep-self theories.

Examples of deep-self arguments are offered by Susan Wolf and Harry Frankfurt. I will mainly concentrate on Wolf's argument as she covers the same areas and ideas as Frankfurt in addition to offering more support for them. The deep-self theory makes the distinction between freedom of action and freedom of the will. Freedom of action is the freedom to act on our desires, whereas freedom of the will allows us to exert control over what we desire, which is in other words, the freedom to want to want something. Frankfurt describes freedom of the will as being demonstrated when what we want to want aligns with our desires. One point worth examining is that there may be competing desires within an individual. An example of this would be an individual going through the process of becoming fit. To begin, the person will have competing desires, one of which is to go to the gym and the other is to stay at home. Yet the person needs to go the gym to improve their fitness. The person will sometimes have a stronger desire to stay at home and eat pizza as opposed to going to the gym so they will stay at home on these occasions. According to Frankfurt this person is not demonstrating free will. After time, the person motivates themselves to overcome the desire to stay home and eat pizza and starts going to the gym every day. Eventually the desire to stay at home at gym time disappears and the person's desire to want to become fit aligns with their desire to do exercise. At this point, according to Frankfurt, the person is demonstrating free will.¹⁷

Susan Wolff finds a problem with this argument by using the example of a dictator's son named Jojo. Jojo was brought up by his

¹⁷ Harry Frankfurt, 'Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person', in *Free Will* (Malden: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 127-144

father Jo the first and would often accompany his father on his daily routine. While accompanying his father, Jojo witnesses some brutal behaviour such as arbitrary torture and his father imprisoning citizens at random. After Jo the first dies Jojo takes his place and continues his father's brutal form of governing. When asked, Jojo claims he is happy with his actions and would not want to change them. In other words, he is controlled by his desires which are the desires that he wants to have. According to Frankfurt, Jojo is demonstrating free will but Wolff believes that this is dubious due to his childhood upbringing. To counteract this, Wolff adds a further condition, which is sanity. This condition must be met to show that free will is being demonstrated.

Wolff defines sanity as a person knowing what they are doing and the person knowing the difference between right and wrong. This definition of sanity would disqualify the dictator's son from being able to exercise free will as he would be diagnosed as insane. Wolff argues that sane "deep-selves" can evaluate themselves and correct themselves accordingly. If these conditions are met, then a person can exercise free will and are then responsible for their actions. Wolff claims that if we are free to act on our desires and are free to control our desires then no more freedom is necessary. Something must have caused the deep-self to be the way that it is. If people are capable of choosing which desires they will follow, and which desires they would like to have separate of causes external to themselves then determinism is not true. If Jojo's deep-self is insane due to his upbringing, then sane deep-selves must be sane because of their upbringing. Both deep-selves could have been causally determined to be how they are. The sane deep-self argument is a strong argument in favour of people being able to demonstrate free will, but it does not demonstrate that free will is compatible with determinism. The deep-

self merely adds to the chain of causes and Wolff recognises this dilemma in her essay.¹⁸

Finally, Frankfurt makes a separate argument that people can be held morally responsible for their actions if determinism is true and uses a thought experiment to attempt to prove this. In Frankfurt's example, Jones is coerced into performing an action by Black. The action is to leave town, or he will be killed. Frankfurt then adds the condition that Jones wanted to leave town anyway, so the coercive threat had no bearing on his decision. This is meant to illustrate that Jones has chosen to leave town when he has not been free to have done otherwise. Frankfurt then anticipates that someone may object that Jones could have acted otherwise. For example, the threat of being killed unless Jones sets off a nuclear bomb can, and surely should be ignored. To counteract this objection Frankfurt makes Black's powers more sophisticated and allows him to read and control Jones mind. Now, Black can know what Jones will do in advance and if Black sees that Jones is going to act in a way that Black disapproves of, like, for example by not leaving town, then Black is able to hypnotize Jones so that he acts in the way that Black chooses. However, throughout Jones life it is not necessary for Black to use these powers as Jones freely acts in the way that Black would have chosen without the need for Black to interfere. In this thought experiment Frankfurt has shown that Jones is morally responsible for his actions without being free to act otherwise. Frankfurt concludes that people can be morally responsible for their actions if they really wanted to perform the action anyway. He believes that moral responsibility is compatible with

¹⁸ Susan Wolf, *Sanity and the Metaphysics of Responsibility*, in *Free Will* (Malden: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 145-163

determinism if the fact that the individual could not have done otherwise is only partly why they performed an action.¹⁹

This thought experiment deals with the problematic first condition that is in place in Nielson's conditions for freedom by making it impossible for Jones to do otherwise if he had chosen to while still seeming to demonstrate that Jones has free will. This appears to be a very strong analogy to determinism and how personal responsibility is compatible with it. However, the problem with this argument is that in a deterministic world, Jones' actions are necessitated by previous events. There is nothing in this argument that suggests that the reason that Jones actions aligned with Black's intentions is anything other than chance. Frankfurt does not address what caused Jones to act in the way that so happened to align with Black's intentions. If determinism is true, then Jones actions were necessitated by previous events and he could not have acted otherwise with or without the addition of Black's magical powers. If Jones had murdered someone and liked it then there is a utilitarian argument for imprisoning him as he may be more likely to murder again but that is a different topic as to whether Jones is responsible for what he has done.²⁰

In conclusion, if determinism is true, then it is not possible for people to have free will as their actions are performed to satisfy a desire and these desires are determined by previous events over which they have no control. If determinism is true, then the feeling of having control over desires which is guided by a deep-self is merely an

¹⁹ Harry Frankfurt, 'Freedom, Responsibility and the Ability to do Otherwise', in *Western Philosophy An Anthology*, 2nd edn, ed. by John Cottingham (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), pp. 332- 338

²⁰ Peter Strawson, Determinism and our Attitudes to Others, in *Western Philosophy An Anthology*, 2nd edn, ed. by John Cottingham (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), pp. 326-331

illusion as the choices made by the deep-self have been made inevitable by prior events. However, if this feeling is not an illusion, and we are free to act on and control our desires, and this decision is guided by a deep-self, then we have free will. If this is the case, determinism is false. Our choices are either free or they are determined, they cannot be both.

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Would Kennedy have escalated or de-escalated America's involvement in Vietnam if re-elected in 1964?

Mitchell J Skinner – AM245

“We don’t want our American boys to do the fighting for the Asian boys”.²¹ This quote from Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964 can be seen in hindsight as crazy, stupid, and outright unthinkable. That LBJ could say that, only a matter of years before 543,000 American soldiers were entrenched in America’s longest war - Vietnam. However, could all of this been different if John F. Kennedy was not assassinated in 1963 and then re-elected in ’64? A truly hypothetical question, but an important one when looking at the character of JFK, the legacy of Vietnam, and most importantly, the Cold War. Many historians believe that Kennedy would have simply continued in Vietnam and left a legacy similar to LBJ, due to the combined pressures presented by the Cold War and domestic hawkishness. However, there are historians and writers who believe a second Kennedy term would have de-escalated the war in Vietnam, and avoided the deaths of 59,000 Americans and Vietnamese. There are various reasons why historians believe this: his experience in World War 2, his preference for negotiations, and the more immediate European threat. Despite having just 3 years of his Presidency to base this hypothetical question on, it is possible to conduct a thorough and balanced argument with a reasonable conclusion, which this essay aims to achieve.

In order to reassure American allies of the U.S’s commitment to defeating communism and preserve its status as the defender of liberty in the world, the tone of an American President was vitally

²¹ Noam, Chomsky, *Rethinking Camelot: JFK, the Vietnam War and US Political Culture* (London: Verso, 1993), p. 108.

important during the Cold War. Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States, gave every intention that he would not back down to the Soviets in Vietnam. Kennedy's rhetoric from his inauguration to his assassination assured that America would fight for freedom, and would not de-escalate the war against the communists in Vietnam. His inaugural address spoke of standing up to America's adversaries, by stating that America will "pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty".²² John Donovan argued this rhetoric paved the way for America's "activism" in defending freedom in the world, as part of America's activism in the Cold War, JFK oversaw the biggest build-up of American arms in peace-time history.²³ Another key element of Kennedy's cold war rhetoric was his proactive attitude, Kennedy was sure that America must "move forward to meet communism, rather than waiting for it to come to us and then reacting to it".²⁴ So, to suggest that Kennedy would have withdrawn from Vietnam is a fundamentally flawed notion, as he always wanted to be on the front foot taking the war to the Soviets, not withdrawing and waiting. Kennedy substantiated his claims by deploying over 15,000 military advisors to Vietnam²⁵, this was part of his plan to assist South

²² *John F. Kennedy Presidential Library* [online]. [cited 5 November 2017]. Available from: <<https://www.jfklibrary.org/Research/Research-Aids/Ready-Reference/JFK-Quotations/Inaugural-Address.aspx>>

²³ John C., Donovan, *The Cold Warriors: A Policy-Making Elite* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1974), pp. 175-177.

²⁴ George C., Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, 2nd edn (New York: Knopf, 1986), p. 74.

²⁵ Dean, Robert D., 'Masculinity as Ideology: John F. Kennedy and the Domestic Politics of Foreign Policy', *Diplomatic History*, 22 (1998), pp. 29-62. <<https://academic-oup-com.openathens-proxy.swan.ac.uk/dh/article/22/1/29/article>> [accessed 5 November 2017] (p. 52).

Vietnam “in every way we properly can” which he also addressed at the General Assembly of the United Nations.²⁶

After the Second World War, America was placed centre stage; the gatekeeper to global capitalism. They were charged with defending any country under threat from authoritarianism and harsh regimes. Scholars such as Brian VanDeMark go as far as to claim that America became “arrogant and stubborn... [in their] power to shape foreign events”.²⁷ This attitude translated into a hawkish mentality that dominated much of Congress, the military, and the public - which ultimately pushed Kennedy into a corner he couldn't escape. In a 1963 interview with Walter Cronkite, he sharply criticised the Diem government and adds that “I do not agree with those who say we should withdraw. That would be a big mistake.”²⁸ The argument against withdrawing was strongly advertised by his military advisors as the ‘Domino Theory’, where, if South Vietnam falls, so will the rest of Southeast Asia, Kennedy would later subscribe to this theory and reiterate his view that the war must be won.²⁹ In publicly supporting

²⁶ Denise M., Bostdorff, and Steven R. Goldzwig, ‘Idealism and Pragmatism in American Foreign Policy Rhetoric: The Case of John F. Kennedy and Vietnam’, *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 24 (1994), pp. 1-16.<
<https://search-proquest-com.openathens-proxy.swan.ac.uk/docview/215692085?OpenUrlRefId=info:xri/sid:primo&countid=14680>> [accessed 5 November 2017] (p. 4).

²⁷ Brian, VanDeMark, *Into the Quagmire: Lyndon Johnson and the escalation of the Vietnam War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. xiv.

²⁸ *Cronkite Interview of JFK* [online]. YouTube, 2009 [cited 5 November 2017]. Available from:

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UM3uaXp8DAk>>

²⁹ Lawrence, Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars: Berlin, Cuba, Laos and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001)

<<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/swansea->

this theory, credence is lent to the notion that he was being pressured by his advisors to be strong on Vietnam. Following the Taylor report that was sent to Kennedy (which advised him to send an 8,000-man task force to Vietnam) the Joint Chiefs and the Defence Secretary said they'd only support the idea if the President gave his word that the U.S. would commit over 200,000 troops if the plan failed, deeming it the "necessary military action".³⁰

At the start of the 1960s, the United States were on red-alert from the Soviet threat and the ever-present Cold War. The victor of the 1960 Presidential election could not be seen as soft on communism, when every citizen depended on that person to defend them from nuclear war. Subsequently, it became overwhelmingly important that Kennedy, the youngest President ever with minimal political achievements to his name, worked to convey that he was strong leader. He needed to show he would beat the Soviets - this necessitated a strong front in Vietnam and at home. The consequences of failure here were drastic, something Kennedy had seen firsthand through McCarthyism and the major defeats for democrats in subsequent elections. The political ramifications were heightened even more in 1961 when Khrushchev promised to give the Soviet support to any country in a war of "liberation", this meant that Kennedy had to match any showing of Soviet strength in Vietnam.³¹ Otherwise, as Geoffrey Warner warned, Kennedy would receive a large amount of criticism from the Republicans "accusing the

[ebooks/detail.action?docID=279605](#)> [accessed 6 November 2017], pp. 511-512.

³⁰ William J., Rust, and U.S. News Books, *Kennedy in Vietnam* (New York: Scribner, 1985), p. 50.

³¹ Guenter, Lewy, *America in Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 19.

democrats of having 'lost' Vietnam as they had 'lost' Cuba and China".³² As Freedman points out "Democracy thus affects crisis management in a basic way, mismanagement will lose votes".³³

Despite these claims, it is entirely feasible that President Kennedy would have de-escalated the war in Vietnam. A major factor towards this was JFK's military experience, stemming from his experiences during WW2. These experiences had given him a negative view of military leadership. His failed mission during his captaining of PT-109 and the absolute failure of the Bay of Pigs in 1962, these experiences caused him to distrust his military advisors and be cautious to their suggestions.³⁴ When consulting advisors on the American attempt to overthrow the Diem regime, which Kennedy viewed with extreme scepticism, he said to them "I know from experience that failure is more destructive than the appearance of indecision".³⁵ This experience was from the humiliation of the Bay of Pigs invasion, where the CIA and Joint Chiefs had made many mistakes in their attempted coup of Castro, which Kennedy had to take

³² Geoffrey, Warner, 'Review Article the United States and Vietnam: From Kennedy to Johnson', *International Affairs*, 73 (1997), pp. 333-349.
<<http://web.b.ebscohost.com/openathens-proxy.swan.ac.uk/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=b8992a01-4b68-40a9-ad94-a66a9d6536ed%40sessionmgr101>> [accessed 5 November 2017] (p. 346).

³³ Lawrence, Freedman, 'Kennedy, Bush and Crisis Management', *Cold War History*, 2 (2002), pp. 1-14.
<<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/713999964>> [accessed 5 November 2017] (p. 7).

³⁴ James N., Giglio, 'The Third World', in *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy* (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 1991), pp. 237-270.
<<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/j.ctt1f5g4vd.15.pdf>> [accessed 5 November 2017] (p. 269).

³⁵ Giglio, p. 265.

responsibility for.³⁶ During the Bay of Pigs incident, military advisors only considered one option, invade Cuba. Freedman notes that “Kennedy clearly learned that it is essential for leaders to have multiple options available for debate and discussion”.³⁷ Kennedy always wanted to avoid full scale war in Vietnam, knowing that a prolonged military intervention would not necessarily win the war for the US, and did not want to put American lives on the line for an uncertain outcome.³⁸

The “Jaw jaw is better than war war” quote from Winston Churchill embodied JFK’s attitude to foreign policy.³⁹ In his 3-year tenure, Kennedy managed to resolve many crises with diplomatic actions rather than military force. Garry Hess wrote that “Kennedy brought about imaginative and modernised policies which moved American foreign policy towards international peace”.⁴⁰ Kennedy’s legacy is not embodied in just words, but through his actions as well. Most notably was his attitude towards the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, where he committed the U.S. to pursuing a negotiated outcome with Khrushchev instead of bombing the missiles as his military

³⁶ Jack, Colhoun, ‘Bay of Pigs: A Disaster Waiting to Happen’, in *Gangsterismo: The United States, Cuba and the Mafia, 1933-1966* (New York, US: OR Books, 2014), pp. 110-124.

<<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/j.ctt18z4gvc.15.pdf>> [accessed 5 November 2017] (p. 114).

³⁷ Steve, Aduato, ‘Leadership Lessons from JFK’, in *Lessons in Leadership* (Rutgers University Press, 2016), pp. 182-186.

<<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/j.ctt1f2qqz2.25.pdf>> [accessed 5 November 2017] (pp. 184-185).

³⁸ Giglio, p. 269.

³⁹ Freedman, p. 11.

⁴⁰ David L., Anderson, ed., *Shadow on the White House: Presidents and the Vietnam War, 1945-1975* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993), p. 67.

advisors suggested.⁴¹ Bruce Riedel suggests that this diplomatic outcome can be attributed to *The Guns of August*, a book written by Barbara Tuchman, and read by Kennedy a few months before the crisis. The book outlines how leaders during WW1 did not want to go to war, and Riedel suggests this changed how Kennedy dealt with crises, noting how Kennedy believed “the United States had to proceed by diplomacy, not by a military action that would escalate to Armageddon”.⁴² In relation to de-escalation in Vietnam, James Giglio states, “[G]iven what we know about President Kennedy, it is difficult to conceive of his pulling out of Vietnam without an acceptable resolution”.⁴³ This was shown by Kennedy a short time before his assassination asking his ambassador to Vietnam, to “explore the possibility of some sort of deal with North Vietnam”.⁴⁴ It was foreseeable that Kennedy was looking at a negotiated outcome so that he could withdraw Americans from Vietnam. Freedman continues to argue that Kennedy was “anxious not to be seen committing US forces to combat as he was admitting an interest in negotiated outcomes”.⁴⁵ Freedman assures us that Kennedy was not looking to escalate the war in Vietnam, rather he was looking for a diplomatic solution where Vietnam could decide their own future.

Kennedy’s attitude towards the Cold War was very different to his military advisors, as Teresa Thomas acknowledged that “JFK was

⁴¹ Arthur M., Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (New York: Fawcett Premier, 1971), pp. 691-695.

⁴² Bruce, Riedel, ‘From JFK to Today’, in *JFK’S Forgotten Crises: Tibet, the CIA and Sino-Indian War* (Brookings Institution Press, 2015), pp. 147-182.

<<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/10.7864/j.ctt15hvr1q.9.pdf>> [accessed 5 November 2017] (pp. 180-181).

⁴³ Giglio, p. 269.

⁴⁴ Freedman, p. 9.

⁴⁵ Freedman, p. 9.

not hostile to Cold War neutralism”, Kennedy came to believe that the Cold War was a situation which could not be won through outright military action.⁴⁶ Kennedy’s reluctance to send more Americans to Vietnam came out of the belief that he wanted to, as Schlesinger describes, “take the hysteria out of the Cold War and get down to the business at hand”.⁴⁷ However, this doesn’t disregard how seriously Kennedy took the Cold War, but he did believe that the real battlefield was not Vietnam, but instead places like Berlin and Cuba, where a devastating nuclear war could break out at any time.⁴⁸ This view was also reflected by Khrushchev’s actions in Vietnam, as Khrushchev sensed the danger of focusing too much on Vietnam believing it was “a great trap for the USSR”.⁴⁹ Kennedy meanwhile, only wanted to help the Vietnamese through economic means and not get into a head to head war with the soviets⁵⁰, so it is absurd to say that he would have escalated the war in Vietnam, just as the Soviets were pulling out, and with Berlin becoming the centre of attention in the timeline of the Cold War.

Kennedy was hesitant about sending more Americans into Vietnam both for their safety and the fact that he didn’t believe sending more troops would solve the situation. Freedman notes Kennedy was “dubious” over adding American troops to swing

⁴⁶ Teresa Fava, Thomas, ‘Quiet Diplomacy in Action: The Kennedy and Johnson Years’, in *American Arabists in the Cold War Middle East, 1946–75: From Orientalism to Professionalism* (Imprint: Anthem Press, 2016), pp. 109-133. <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/j.ctt1ffjq60.10.pdf>> [accessed 5 November 2017] (p. 111).

⁴⁷ Schlesinger, p. 272.

⁴⁸ Freedman, p. 7.

⁴⁹ Douglas, Pike, *Vietnam and the Soviet Union: Anatomy of an alliance* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), p. 45.

⁵⁰ Schlesinger, p. 273.

Vietnam towards the “free world”.⁵¹ Kennedy was worried about turning Vietnam into a full-fledged American commitment by “over militarisation” and an “over-americanisation” of the war.⁵² Since his time as a Senator, Kennedy always believed in self-determination for Vietnam. At the time, he argued against French colonisation of Vietnam and was convinced that with the allowing of political and civil liberties, a non-communist movement would prosper.⁵³ It was this belief which spurred Kennedy into not wanting any more military involvement as he believed it “would compromise the Vietnamese nationalism of Diem’s cause”.⁵⁴ Kennedy’s rhetoric of non-military action was finally backed up with actions in October 1963, where Kennedy authorised military disengagement in Vietnam, he wanted to reduce the number of advisors in Vietnam back down to the numbers of early 1961.⁵⁵ In January 1963, at the State of the Union, preceding this decision to gradually withdraw, Kennedy stated that “the spearpoint of aggression has been blunted in South Vietnam”.⁵⁶ Part of the reasoning behind the withdrawal is Kennedy’s mindset over what America’s role was in Vietnam. Hess notes that Kennedy was “determined to draw a distinction between the U.S. supportive role and the military mission of the South Vietnamese”.⁵⁷

⁵¹ Freedman, p. 6.

⁵² Schlesinger, p. 839.

⁵³ Anderson, p. 68-69.

⁵⁴ Schlesinger, p. 839.

⁵⁵ Howard, Jones, *Death of a Generation: How the Assassinations of Diem and JFK prolonged the Vietnam War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003) <<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/swansea-ebooks/detail.action?docID=271285>> [accessed 6 November 2017], p. 330.

⁵⁶ Schlesinger, p. 550.

⁵⁷ Anderson, p. 81.

From the arguments which were presented throughout this essay, it is safe to say that behind the scenes, Kennedy was in favour of de-escalation in Vietnam. However due to the “indoctrinated” public, Kennedy could not publicise his views, as he would be viewed as ‘soft’ on Communism. So inevitably in JFK’s short presidency, the United States “involvement in Vietnam became more military and less political”.⁵⁸ Historians who argue that Kennedy would have escalated the Vietnam war point out that LBJ was similar to Kennedy in terms of foreign policy approach, he wasn’t an out and out Hawk, and he also subscribed to the containment policy, a policy which had lasted Kennedy and 10 years previous.⁵⁹ However, people close to Kennedy and historians who wrote in the ‘Camelot’ era have a different perspective; Middle East advisor Curtis Jones saw the events unfold in Dallas and noted that with LBJ’s “Middle East policy did almost a 180 degree turn”.⁶⁰ This example of a major difference in opinion is completely reflective of the literature which covers the Kennedy era. Mark White notes that because Kennedy was assassinated, the immediate assessments of his life were overwhelmingly positive, this period became known as the Camelot School, with major contributors being Arthur Schlesinger and Theodore Sorensen.⁶¹ To balance the literature on Kennedy, a wave of “counter-Camelot school emerged”

⁵⁸ Donovan, p. 198.

⁵⁹ VanDeMark, pp. 9-10.

⁶⁰ Thomas, p. 121.

⁶¹ Mark J., White, ‘Introduction: A New Synthesis for the New Frontier’, in *Kennedy: The New Frontier Revisited* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), pp. 1-17.

https://blackboard.swan.ac.uk/bbcswebdav/pid-2392992-dt-content-rid-2304151_2/courses/1718_AM-245/Mark%20White%20JFK%20Literature%20Review.pdf [accessed 5 November 2017] (pp. 1-2).

in the 1970s and 80s which was “as extravagant in its criticisms of Kennedy as earlier writers had been in their praise”.⁶² For this reason, it is hard to gain an unbiased perspective into Kennedy’s mind and gauge how he might have dealt with Vietnam if he had been re-elected in ’64, and obviously it is impossible to have a definitive judgement, but I believe a conclusion can be built on the facts presented.

Before Kennedy died, he had both escalated the involvement of America in Vietnam, by committing 16,000 advisors to help the Diem government, but also ordered the first 1,000 to come home, so there is conflicting evidence which could be argued in both directions. My conclusion is based on the personality of Kennedy, and his experiences in foreign affairs and the military. During his WW2 mission with the PT-109 crew, he had seen that missions always have the chance of going horribly wrong, and as President he had seen how a bad mission can cause the loss of many lives which he was personally in charge of. In terms of foreign affairs, Kennedy had learned the lessons of bad diplomacy through the Vienna summit, but also seen how good negotiations can result in positives for both camps, like during the Cuban Missile Crisis. These are the main reasons why I believe John F. Kennedy, if re-elected as President in ’64, would have looked for a negotiated outcome with the communists in Vietnam, so that he could have withdrawn his advisors, and inevitably completely de-escalated the war in Vietnam.

⁶² White, p. 4.

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<https://blackboard.swan.ac.uk/bbcswebdav/pid-2392992-dt-content-rid-2304151_2/courses/1718_AM-245/Mark%20White%20JFK%20Literature%20Review.pdf> [accessed 5 November 2017]

Is intentional harm to civilians ever permissible during war?
Consider the principle of distinction, and the doctrine of
double effect to defend your answer.

Archie Castledine – PO239

Throughout history, civilian casualties and deaths have been an unfortunate side effect of war and conflict. In certain circumstances however, it can be argued that the intentional harm of civilians can be justified, as the act of causing intentional harm of civilians can be seen as a lesser of two evils and essential for competing essential and important military objectives. It can also be argued that any harm to civilians, whether its intentional or unintentional, is never permissible, as there are certain principles that exist in the international and domestic political system to protect civilians from harm in war zones. However, the enforcement of these principles in practice are hard to implement due to various factors in warfare.

The argument used by those who believe that intentional harm to civilians is permissible comes from the idea of the doctrine of double effect. The doctrine of double effect falls under the idea of just war theory, a doctrine “which nations seek to legally and morally justify going to war”.⁶³ The just war doctrine has its origins in Christianity with the 5th century writings of Saint Augustine who believed “that war is waged with the intent of long-term peace and that in wiling the collective good of our state we will sometimes have

⁶³ Jon Dorbolo, *Just War Theory* (2001),
<https://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl201/modules/just_war_theory/criteria_intro.htm> [Accessed 14 February 2019].

to go against the will of another".⁶⁴ In order for a conflict to be considered a just war according to just war theory it must adhere to three main tenants; *jus ad bellum* (the right to wage war), *jus in bello* (the just conduct of war) and *jus post bellum* (justice in the aftermath of war).⁶⁵ The doctrine of double effect falls under *jus in bello*. In the context of war and conflict it can be described as the deliberate targeting and killing of innocents in war so long as their deaths are a side-effect of military action or are not the primary military objective.⁶⁶ Other definitions describe the doctrine of double effect as being where an evil action (i.e. harming civilians) is permissible as long as the intended effect is morally good and outweigh the morally evil action.⁶⁷ This means that if civilian casualties are a side effect of a military operation and the intended effect morally outweighs the targeting of civilians, then it can be described as a just action and fit the doctrine of double effect.

A principle example of this theory in warfare is with the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States. The dropping of the two nuclear bombs over the cities killed an estimated 129,000 and 226,000, with most of these deaths being attributed to civilians who may have had nothing to do with the war effort of

⁶⁴ Potter, Charlie, *Pacifism and Just War Theory* (2015), <<https://www.senatehouselibrary.ac.uk/blog/pacifism-and-just-war-theory>> [Accessed 14 February 2019].

⁶⁵ *Just War Theory: A Reappraisal*, ed. by Mark Evans (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005).

⁶⁶ *Just War Theory*, Evans.

⁶⁷ Walzer, Michael, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (New York: Basic Books, 2015).

Japan.⁶⁸ Whilst many would argue that this was a high and inappropriate cost for victory, some argue and believe that this staggering loss of life was a necessary evil. For the United States, there were other options considered before they decided on the use of the atomic bomb; one of these options was a mainland invasion of Japan using conventional troops, akin to the island campaigns that they fought in the Pacific. However, the Japanese military and its civilian population at the time would not surrender without the assurance from the Emperor of Japan because of the way he was regarded in Japan: “the Japanese would very likely fight to the last man. Very few Japanese units had surrendered in the bloody island fighting, and there was ample evidence that the Japanese soldier was prepared to die for the Emperor”.⁶⁹ Other options were also considered by the United States, such as a naval blockade or strategic bombing campaign of major Japanese cities. However as proven in the island hopping campaigns, the Japanese were fanatical to the emperor and would have risked starvation and death. In addition, this was a time-consuming operation that the United States aimed to avoid in order to end the war with Japan as quickly as possible.⁷⁰ With this in mind the decision to use the nuclear bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki can be described as a necessary evil as when compared to the other military options presented by the US Armed Forces. Theoretically, the loss of civilian life by bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki would be a lot less than a mainland invasion, blockade or strategic bombing campaign.

⁶⁸ Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, *The Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki* (2016), <<http://www.cnduk.org/campaigns/global-abolition/hiroshima-a-nagasaki>> [Accessed 12 February 2019].

⁶⁹ Gar Alperovitz & Sanho Tree, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb: And the Architecture of an American Myth* (London: Fontana, 1996).

⁷⁰ Maciej Huczko, 'Alternatives to Dropping the A-Bomb in Bringing the War with Japan to an End', *Vistula Scientific Quarterly*, 39.1 (2014), 128-137

This shows the validity of the doctrine of double effect as in this situation, the action of killing civilians was outweighed by alternative option. In this example it would be prolonging the war, which would cause further combatant and non-combatant deaths, eventually revealing that intentional harm to civilians can be permissible.

There are other examples in warfare where it can be argued that intentional targeting of civilians can be permissible, such as the example of the allied bombing campaign during World War II. The Free French Air Force participated in a number of bombing raids against occupied France, which resulted in the deaths of French civilians who worked and lived near the factories. Simultaneously, it was also suggested that small commando teams or French Resistance Fighters carry out raids on the targets, a tactic which would not endanger the civilian population. However, these raids would have been dangerous and offered little chance of success, so it was decided the bombing campaign would go ahead. While this occurred, it was necessary to take precautions to limit civilian casualties, such as utilising low altitude precision bombing tactics.⁷¹ This example shows that in certain situations the targeting of civilians can be permissible, for example, in the case of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the alternatives to the bombing operation would have resulted in far more casualties. Also, in the bombing campaign over occupied France, the Free French Air Force took precautions to limit civilian casualties. The objective of the operation to destroy factories supporting Nazi Germany and occupied France can also morally outweigh the targeting of civilian areas. In this scenario, Michael Walzer argues that the Germans would take shared responsibility for the civilian deaths as they:

⁷¹ Walzer, 2015.

had attacked and conquered France... mobilized the French economy for their own strategic ends, forcing French workers to serve the German war machine, turning French factories into legitimate military targets, and putting the adjacent residential areas in danger.⁷²

This creates a distinguished scenario, where the occupying forces are responsible for the deaths of civilians under their control because they turned what would be commercial and civilian factories into legitimate military targets for the Free French Air Force. Furthermore, this portrays that the deliberate harm of non-combatants can be permissible in war.

Another example comes from occupied Norway. The target was a heavy water plant that would have aided the research of the atomic bomb by Nazi scientists. For this operation it was decided to utilise a commando raid over an air strike to avoid killing civilians, despite it having a very low chance of success. Although a second commando operation was a success (during which no civilians were harmed) after an initial operation where 34 commandos were killed, the facility was rebuilt and the United States Air Force conducted a bombing raid on the facility which resulted in 22 civilian casualties.⁷³ In this scenario, the US Air Force knew the significance of the target and that its destruction would give the allies a major advantage and cause a major setback to Germany. Moreover, the nuclear bomb was a weapon that would ultimately end the war. However, they also understood that the option resulting in the fewest civilian casualties also had the slimmest chance of success, as it had previously failed and resulted in 34 military deaths. The decision to conduct a bombing raid can be justified under the doctrine of double effect as “The importance

⁷² Walzer, 2015.

⁷³ Walzer, 2015.

of the military aim and the actual casualty figures would have justified a bombing raid in the first place. But the special value we attach to civilian life precluded it".⁷⁴ This can also be used to support the idea that the intentional harm of non-combatants can be permissible as seen in the example of the US Airforce weighing up the military aims of the operation and the possibility of military and civilian casualties. The US Airforce then determined that the importance of the destruction of the heavy water plant was deemed to outweigh the possibility of non-combatant deaths.

One of the largest criticisms of the doctrine of double effect, and the just war theory as a whole, comes from pacifists. Those who subscribe to the pacifist school of thought believe that few, if any, of the wars in modern history have ever met the criteria of the just war theory, pointing to the evidence that since the 1990s, there have been more non-combatant deaths than combatants in the major wars of this period.⁷⁵ Whilst this may be true for recent history, evidence from prior wars of the 20th Century show that any situation where civilians are likely to be targeted and in harm's way, the military and law is likely to permit civilian casualties if it means the destruction of a major military target that could potentially end the war and prevent further civilian deaths. This is applicable if the military has taken all necessary precautions to prevent any civilian deaths.

Those who see the intentional harm of civilians as being impermissible cite the principle of distinction, also known as the principle of discrimination, as their reasoning for this belief. The principle of distinction requires that soldiers are to distinguish between combatants and non-combatants in an attempt to prevent

⁷⁴ Walzer, 2015.

⁷⁵ Potter, 2015.

unnecessary civilian casualties.⁷⁶ This was entrenched in international law in an addition to the Geneva Convention in 1977 which states:

The civilian population as such, as well as individual civilians, shall not be the object of attack...Civilians shall enjoy the protection afforded by this Part, unless and for such time they take a direct part in hostilities.⁷⁷

Examples of the principle of distinction can also be found in a number of other documents, such as in the United Kingdom's Joint Service Manual of the Law of Armed Conflict which states:

Since military operations are to be conducted only against the enemy's armed forces and military objectives, there must be a clear distinction between the armed forces and civilians, or between combatants and non-combatants, and between objects that might legitimately be attacked and those that are protected from attack.⁷⁸

The existence of the principle of distinction in certain countries and international law proves that the intentional harm of civilians in war should not be permissible as these countries and international

⁷⁶ May, Larry, *War Crimes and Just War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁷⁷ International Committee of the Red Cross, *Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of August 1949* (2010), <https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc_002_0321.pdf> [Accessed 14 February 2019].

⁷⁸ International Committee of the Red Cross, *Practice Relating to Rule 1. The Principle of Distinction Between Civilians and Combatants* (2010), <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v2_cha_chapter1_rule1> [Accessed 14 February 2019].

organisations have outlined measures on how to prevent civilian casualties from occurring.

However, these can be difficult to enforce, especially when the conflict involves non-state actors, such as terrorist organisations, who utilise tactics which can result in the indiscriminate or deliberate harming of civilians. For example, in 2017 a joint Afghan-US raid on a Taliban stronghold resulted in the deaths of 22 civilians who were reportedly used as human shields by the Taliban.⁷⁹ Additionally, on another occasion the US troops were forced to stop firing at Taliban insurgents after they identified them using children as human shields.⁸⁰ Furthermore, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan reported that by 2017 a total of 10,453 civilians had been killed in the conflict in Afghanistan with the leading cause of death in 2017 being IEDs.⁸¹ Weapons such as IEDs can also prove problematic for distinguishing between combatants and non-combatants; this is highlighted by a report conducted by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs which reported that “in the period 2011-2015, 82

⁷⁹ Associated Press, *US and Afghan Troops Reportedly Kill 22 Human Shields in Anti-Taliban Operation* (2017), <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-02-13/afghan-joint-operation-deaths/8264290>> [Accessed 12 February 2019].

⁸⁰ Faiez, Rahim, ‘Taliban Used Kids as Human Shields’, *Washington Post* (September 19, 2007) <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/19/AR2007091900372.html>> [Accessed 14 February 2019].

⁸¹ United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, *Afghanistan: 10,000 Civilian Casualties in 2017* (2018), <<https://unama.unmissions.org/afghanistan-10000-civilian-casualties-2017-un-report-suicide-attacks-and-ieds-caused-high-number>> [Accessed 14 February 2019].

per cent of recorded [IED] casualties were civilians.”⁸² Despite the fact that various examples of the principle of distinction are available which, in theory should prevent harm to civilians, recent wars have shown that although it is impermissible when regarding Taliban tactics, for instance, intentional harm to civilians is still a prevalent issue in warfare. This highlights a flaw with the principle of distinction as in certain circumstances it can be difficult to enforce.

Due to different types of warfare, distinguishing between civilians and combatants is difficult as seen in the case of the Vietnam War, for example. It is estimated that over the course of the Vietnam War, around 2 million civilians were killed.⁸³ During the war, the Vietcong were considerably outgunned by the United States and South Vietnamese forces, as they were required to fight the war on a guerrilla footing. One of the key tenets of guerrilla warfare is that “guerrilla movements have usually preferred regions that are not easily accessible...in which they are difficult to locate, and in which the enemy force cannot deploy his full strength”.⁸⁴ Because of this style of warfare waged by the Viet Cong, it became increasingly hard for the United States and South Vietnamese forces to distinguish between civilians and Vietcong fighters. This was largely due to the fact that the Vietcong, much like other guerrilla and insurgent groups, did not

⁸² United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, *Impact of IEDs* (2015), <<https://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/impact-of-ieds/>> [Accessed 14 February 2019].

⁸³ Shenon, Philip, 20 Years After Victory, Vietnamese Communists Ponder How to Celebrate, *The New York Times* (April 23, 1995) <<https://www.nytimes.com/1995/04/23/world/20-years-after-victory-vietnamese-communists-ponder-how-to-celebrate.html>> [Accessed 14 February 2019].

⁸⁴ Laqueur, Walter, ‘The Character of Guerrilla Warfare’ in *War*, ed. by Lawrence Freedman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 323-330.

distinguish themselves from civilians. Throughout operations, United States and South Vietnamese forces resulted to other tactics such as bombing to prevent the Vietcong's guerrilla tactics from succeeding. However, the bombing mission was unable to distinguish between combatants and non-combatants which resulted in huge numbers of civilians being killed and displaced by these bombing campaigns.⁸⁵ It can be argued that because the US forces were unable to make the distinction between combatant and non-combatant it led to an assumption that everyone was involved with the Vietcong, which may have led to the My Lai massacre, where over 500 Vietnamese civilians were killed on the assumption that they either were Vietcong, or were aiding them.⁸⁶ This example shows that despite the existence of the principle of distinction certain types of warfare, such as guerrilla warfare, makes it hard for combatants to distinguish themselves from non-combatants, meaning that despite the existence of the principle of distinction, civilians were still targeted and killed.

There are also examples of states using tactics in wars which do not distinguish between combatants and non-combatants, such as the Military Reaction Force (also known as the Military Reconnaissance Force) created by the British Army during the Troubles in Northern Ireland. The MRF was tasked with intelligence gathering and drive-by assassination on potential IRA targets, which they carried out in civilian clothing and civilian cars.⁸⁷ However, because of the nature of the operation, non-combatants found themselves the

⁸⁵ Mitchell K. Hall, *The Vietnam War* (New York: Longman, 2000).

⁸⁶ BBC, *Murder in the Name of War – My Lai* (1998), <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/64344.stm>> [Accessed 12 February 2019].

⁸⁷ Rolston, Bill, 'An Effective Mask for Terror: Democracy, Death Squads and Northern Ireland', *Crime, Law & Social Change*, 44.2 (2005), 181-203.

targets of these attacks. An example of this happening occurred in 1972 when three taxi drivers in a republican area were shot by a soldier, who was later charged (and eventually acquitted) for the killings.⁸⁸ This highlights a problem with the principle of distinction; although states have taken precautions to enforce the principle of distinction during combat, such as in the UK Joint Service Manual of the Law of Armed Conflict, states have been known not to follow the principle and deploy troops in such a way that they cannot be distinguished from non-combatants.

As shown from the various examples, the intentional harm of civilians can be permitted. Often, in these examples, the decision to target civilians fits the just war doctrine, as the harm or deaths of civilians can be seen as the lesser of two evils or the deaths of civilians are an unfortunate, but necessary side effect of a military operation and that all other options have been explored and all necessary precautions have been taken to avoid civilian casualties. However, this doctrine has been criticised by those who believe the intentional harm of civilians is impermissible due to the existence of the principle of distinction. Despite its existence in multiple documents, both in the international legal community and amongst state laws, civilian casualties are still prevalent. This can be attributed to how wars have been fought in recent history: groups use tactics that render failure in distinguishing themselves from civilians and tactics that place civilians in direct harm for unjust reasons and cannot be justified under the doctrine of double effect or just war theory. To this extent the deliberate harming of civilians can be permitted during war, as long as the decision to target and potentially harm civilians is morally

⁸⁸ Rolston, 2005.

outweighed by the success of the military operation, and that all necessary precautions have been taken to prevent civilian casualties.

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Discuss the effects of Urban Renewal in New York City.

Katherine Brewster – AM245

New York City has never been slow to change to meet the ever-changing requirements of a bustling port city, for so long the gateway to America. Whether in its passing from the Dutch to the British or growth as an immigrant hub, New York City has hundreds of cultures represented in its fabled 'Melting Pot.' Arguably though, New York has faced its most drastic change in the urban renewal of the post-1945 period. The end of World War II left the USA as supreme superpower and caused the birth of the Atomic Age. America saw a massive economic boom during this period and rapid population growth due to the "Baby Boomers", children born in the decade following the war.⁸⁹ Post war America was and still is widely remembered as a golden period in American culture, often called the 'Great American Century'.⁹⁰ The same could not be said for its cities, however. New York City's efforts to reshape itself for the new era ushered the city into a period of far reaching urban renewal, which displaced many New Yorkers, but ultimately succeeded in keeping the city relevant in an ever more suburban society.

The post war period saw a battle between the old New York, the working city of the street that many saw as its beating heart, and the modern city built for commuters and cars. The city was to become unrecognizable from the image presented in Helen Levitt's 'In The Street' (1948) which depicts the immigrant neighbourhood of Spanish Harlem⁹¹, just one community of many to be uprooted and changed

⁸⁹ Robert A. Beauregard, *When America Became Suburban*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006) p. 11.

⁹⁰ IBID, p. 11.

⁹¹ *In The Streets*, Helen Levitt, 1948.

forever. It is still hotly debated whether this period was the making or destruction of New York City. A key player in post-war New York's urban renewal was Robert Moses, a public official who had already established his enthusiasm for redevelopment during the period of FDR's 'New Deal'. A polarizing figure, Moses was not without detractors, Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia (1931-1945), stated that Moses held too much power and without himself as Mayor there was no controlling him.⁹² Some, such as Robert Caro, blame him for the 'fall of New York' while others praised him for the 'rise of New York'.⁹³ Whatever the opinions of urbanists and historians, it is clear that Robert Moses greatly influenced the shape of modern New York. He made millions through expansive development of highway systems (notably at the expense of public transportation), new residential construction, and the building of vast suspension bridges that spanned right across the five boroughs and into Long Island⁹⁴, leaving a new kind of city in his wake.

The process of slum clearance and redevelopment that Moses oversaw was the biggest of its kind in the United States; twenty-six separate areas were cleared in an effort to address the physical disorder of the city. Across the U.S., slum clearance was a preferred development strategy in inner cities at this time, encouraged by the US Housing Act of 1949. The Act is sometimes referred to as the "bulldozer approach" as it wiped out so many areas, selling building

⁹²*New York: A Documentary Film: The City and the World: 1945–2000*, dir. by Ric Burns (New York: Steeplechase Films, 2001).

⁹³ Brian Tochtermann, *The Dying City: Postwar New York and the Ideology of Fear*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), p. 59.

⁹⁴ Tochtermann, p. 59.

rights to private developers such as Robert Moses.⁹⁵ Moses took advantage of Title 1 of the Act to gain 65.8 million dollars in funds for slum clearance in New York City. Many writers, like Hilary Ballon, suggest Moses was a great salesman, shaping perceptions of each development through the use of glossy brochures, public relations and in depth charts and presentations, representing the success of the end goal while ignoring the reality of how it would impact the current inhabitants.⁹⁶ Individuals like Sert criticise Moses, claiming that the replacement buildings had no place in a modern city, arguing that the new building stock, consisting of concentrated low rise blocks lacking in innovation, would soon be as obsolete as the slums they replaced. Sert compares it with similar developments in London, saying that it only ‘scratches the surface’ of the deeper issue of the city.⁹⁷ This questions whether or not this massive urban renewal helped the city, or if it was even necessary at all.

Another of Moses’ major projects was that of connecting the city with an expanse of highways, creating a city for the car more than the man. The Post War period saw booming production of automobiles to meet burgeoning consumer demand fuelled by the growing economy. Corporations such as Ford and GM were producing 25,000 cars a day.⁹⁸ Traffic had begun to dominate the city, a huge concern for many. The Interstate Highway Act of 1956 saw 41,000 miles of roads

⁹⁵ Gordon D. McDonald and Rosalind Tough. “New York: Social Action in Urban Renewal.” *Land Economics*, 42.4 (1966), pp. 514–522, p. 516.

⁹⁶ Themis Chronopoulos, “Robert Moses and the Visual Dimension of Physical Disorder: Efforts to Demonstrate Urban Blight in the Age of Slum Clearance”, *Journal of Planning History* 13, (August 2014): 207-33, pp. 208-209.

⁹⁷ Chronopoulos, p. 215.

⁹⁸ Robert A. Caro, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), p. 895.

spread across the United States, creating an influx of traffic into New York City. Moses, a man who never learned to drive himself, became a creature of the automobile.⁹⁹ He even responded to newspapers with long letters boasting that he could fix the problem of congestion within three years.¹⁰⁰ Throughout the city there was a widening of streets and expressways rose up, reshaping how different areas of the city were connected and changing the communities within them. Moses had worked on the city's roads under the New Deal in the 1930s. The plans he conducted at that time were bigger than that of any other city, but what he proposed in the 1940s dwarfed even that, opening up a new era of road and highway development in New York.¹⁰¹ Many city planners pointed out that 'traffic generation' was taking affect, arguing that the more accessible the city is, the more traffic will be attracted to it, building the congestion further. This was proved even before the war when Moses built and opened the Triborough Bridge to ease congestion on the Queensborough Bridge, but the congestion was so bad on both that he built another - the Bronx-Whitestone Bridge - to try and solve the problem. Many thought the city would be better off investing in public transport infrastructure.¹⁰² Moses' developments greatly influenced how people in the city lived, and simultaneously reshaped its population. New York had been a working city filled with working class men and women who lived close to work but could not afford to travel by car. Moses' highways shifted the demographics of those who worked in the city. As the city became

⁹⁹ Thomas J. Campanella, *How Low Did He Go?*, (July 9, 2017), <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2017/07/how-low-did-he-go/533019/> [Accessed 13/12/2017].

¹⁰⁰ Caro, pp. 896-897.

¹⁰¹ IBID.

¹⁰² Caro, p. 897.

more accessible, more New York workers were commuters from the suburbs of upstate New York or New Jersey, creating a city of traffic, no longer built for its own residents, but for wealthier visitors in their newly affordable cars.

A further consequence of Moses' actions was arguably racially divisive. Moses created highway bridges too low for busses to pass under, denying the working classes, predominantly comprised of Latino or African Americans (a group Moses actively despised), access to parts of the city. This suggested he was building a city for a 'narrowly constructed public', in direct opposition to New York's history as a "melting pot". Caro suggests that Moses' prejudices were a heavy influence on his public works stating that he was "the most racist human being I had ever really encountered".¹⁰³ Some disagree with Caro and redeem Moses by pointing out the bus drop off zones put into some parking lots. Despite this, it is clear that, as with other parts of U.S. history, issues of race are as important in considering the effects and impact of city development on its people.

Not all development should be seen as negative. One development that was key in throwing New York City into the future was the development of the United Nations Headquarters at Turtle Bay, beside the East River, on land donated by John D. Rockefeller Jr.¹⁰⁴ The USA had emerged from WWII as a global superpower with the richest economy and strongest military in history, with writers such as Luce stating that America had become 'the most powerful and vital nation in the world', making it an obvious location for the UN

¹⁰³ Campanella, *How Low Did He Go?*

¹⁰⁴ Samuel Zipp, *Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 35.

Headquarters.¹⁰⁵ This sleek new tower was to make New York the capital of the world and represented a step towards a more modern city. Oscar Niemeyer's design was deemed to have "a clean modern look" by *The New York Times* when the building began construction in 1947.¹⁰⁶ However the building represented much more than that; E. B. White called it "the greatest housing project of them all", suggesting that it brought New York to the forefront as an iconic city, saving it from the decline which many other American cities suffered in the post war period. He goes on to suggest that the establishment of the UN in New York also kept America at the forefront of global politics and high up on the international stage, allowing New York to continue to be the most successful U.S. city.¹⁰⁷ This set the course for further development in this era as it was important that images of New York, endlessly reproduced and rebroadcast across the world, lived up to the expectations of greatness in a leading city. The UN development created a ripple effecting in building modern office blocks across Midtown Manhattan which became home to many headquarters for major corporations and upscale housing.¹⁰⁸ This, in turn, launched New York into a different kind of globalism than that already established by the cities many immigrant groups and strengthened its position as a global financial and business centre.

Although many would see development of the city of as positive, some were critical of its effects. In her book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jane Jacobs declared it an "attack" on

¹⁰⁵ Beauregard, pp. 1-2.

¹⁰⁶ Zipp, p. 35.

¹⁰⁷ IBID, p. 34.

¹⁰⁸ Themis Chronopoulos, *Spatial Regulation in New York City*, (New York: Routledge, 2011), p. 21.

city planning and development.¹⁰⁹ Writers such as Jacobs blame Robert Moses and others like him for the decline and destruction of the traditional city of street-level communities and close neighbourhoods.

Writers such as Jacobs show concern over redevelopment even in areas that were thought to be thriving, such as Lincoln Square and Penn Station. Lincoln Square was a hub of lively shops, offices, and studios that housed many artists at the time. However, it was destined to be torn down to provide for the development of Lincoln Center to become part of the prestigious Juilliard School of the Arts.¹¹⁰ This was one of the many New York neighbourhoods that protested their concerns about the Title I redevelopment schemes across the city, in an effort to ensure that New York's history does not forget the people who were affected by the development. Zipp shows sympathy in his work, writing of the loss of the people of old New York, he criticises Robert Moses' "full-clearance-or-nothing" approach to his redevelopment strategy. This shows the impact of a community being lost, but this was something which happened all over the city, as communities were torn down or divided by new highways. This completely remodelled the New York in which people lived as day to day life and communities were either changed, diminished or destroyed.

The question of Penn Station returns to the aforementioned possibility that public transport would have been more beneficial for the city. Instead of expanding public transport, Moses demolished the renowned architectural beauty of Penn Station. Writers such as Robert

¹⁰⁹ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), p. 3.

¹¹⁰ Zipp, p. 197.

Caro suggest Moses was out of touch as a man so rich, he practically “bought the city itself.”¹¹¹ Working class families who could not afford a life in the new suburbs, or a car to get around, became unable to get a ticket to or from their place of work and were effectively barred from the city. Robert Moses’ 1955 proposal saw 9 major commuter railroads such as that to Penn Station, in the heart of the city, torn up. Once again this pushed out the great working class that once filled the city, sliding New York into life as a ‘Luxury City’ that would continue in Manhattan and its surrounding waterfront areas such as Williamsburg, for decades to come. It simultaneously set a pattern of upwardly shifting demographics which we still see today in the ‘gentrification’ of areas such as Brooklyn and Hell’s Kitchen.

Urban renewal in New York City allowed it to grow into the iconic city we see today. New York was always a world city, from its colonial days and its years as a vast multicultural ‘melting pot’ during the Great Waves of Immigration through Ellis Island, but the establishment of the UN and its transformation into a corporate and banking hub made it a city of the world in a whole new way. New York has established a pattern which has influenced and shaped other great modern cities throughout the world. If it was not for figures like Moses along with the 89.9 million dollars in redevelopment spending, New York may have become a city left behind, alongside so many of the ‘Rust Belt’ cities.¹¹² Although New York’s urban renewal projects were not without critics, writers such as Lindgren point out that the rapid reconstruction may have meant a man from New York 40 years before would not recognise the city; it was the vast growth during this period

¹¹¹ Caro, pp. 933-935.

¹¹² Brent D. Ryan, ‘Shrinkage or Renewal? The Fate of Older Cities, 1950-90’ *Design after Decline: How America Rebuilds Shrinking Cities*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), pp. 37-83 (p. 40).

that was key to the city's success.¹¹³ Keeping New York relevant in the ever-changing tides of the modern world was important, as it became a cultural, economic, artistic, architectural, luxurious centre - truly a city that was built for the world and one which will forever be present as a model of urbanisation followed all over the world. This would not be possible without the vast redevelopment the city has seen since 1945.

¹¹³ Caro, p. 890.

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“Deliberative democracy’ overcomes the participatory deficit that liberal democracy is perceived to have.” Discuss.

Joe Ansley – PO238

Systems of liberal democracy are widely criticised for producing and indeed encouraging a citizenry of largely passive, inactive and powerless individuals. Such criticisms can generally be attributed to the principles that liberal democracies prioritise and the values which they promote and inspire. The values in question -- ones that are central to the doctrine of liberal democracy and to liberal principles -- consist of privatism, individualism, pluralism and elitism. Remaining consistent with this set of values and principles, so as not to infringe on individual liberty, such systems do not require or even encourage citizen participation in the political sphere. Instead, they limit the citizen’s role to abiding by laws and voting in elections - which, as practiced, hand the power that they have to a small group of representatives. This essay seeks to justify the claim that deliberative forms of democracy have the ability to overcome the participatory deficit present in liberal systems. It will do so by focusing extensively on the inherent deliberative principles that counteract previously noted values held by liberal systems which disincentivize and indeed prevent public participation. These are, namely, the deliberative conception of democratic legitimacy, and their starkly different ideas of citizenship. In qualifying a decision as legitimate as a result of its formation and defining citizenship in terms of individuals’ ability to discuss and influence public policy, deliberative models prove themselves to be capable of creating a highly active, aware, and educated public. Accordingly, this essay will conclude that deliberative democracy can overcome the participatory deficit present in liberal

systems, provided it leaves behind all liberal institutions and traditions that are at odds with increased public involvement.

Quite possibly, the most fundamental distinction to be made between liberal and deliberative forms of democracy is their respective attitudes to legitimacy: what makes a decision legitimate and how this legitimacy is garnered. Crucially, liberal democratic systems tend to source legitimacy out of the decision itself, regardless of prior events. Deliberative models, by contrast, base the legitimacy of a political decision on the process of the decision's formation. In other words, a legitimate decision is the *result* of the discussion, debate and argumentation process from which the final decision has culminated from. Thus, both liberal democratic theorists and deliberative democratic theorists' respective conceptions of legitimacy are vital to the question of participation and why the level and nature of political participation is bound to change under a deliberative system. Essentially, the question of whether or not a decision is legitimate under a deliberative system is based primarily on the process of participation. For a decision to be considered legitimate in a liberal democratic system, no such levels of participation are required, but merely a single act of voting. Manin draws attention to liberal democratic theory that goes a distance in explaining its scepticism of citizen involvement in the formation of decisions.¹¹⁴ He makes note of Rousseau's idea that citizen deliberation on public policy can only be counterproductive and harmful to the uncovering of general public will. He argues this on the assumption that individual citizens' will is determined before he or she enters a public meeting or assembly in order to debate and discuss. Hence, any such process

¹¹⁴ Bernard Manin, 'On Legitimacy and Political Deliberation', *Political Theory*, 15.3 (1987), 338-368 (pp. 347-48).

among citizens serves only to taint and oppress it. Inevitably, according to Rousseau, the authentic will of citizens can only be warped if individuals are subjected to acts of persuasion and influence. Ultimately, as far as he was concerned, the democratic legitimacy of a decision lessens as citizen participation (discussion, debate, argumentation etc) increases. This is because the will of all and the general will are most reflective of one another before the process of citizen deliberation takes place. Shapiro also takes issue with the deliberative conception of legitimacy and does so on relatively similar grounds.¹¹⁵ He argues that such a heavy emphasis on the deliberation process as the source of legitimacy is often misplaced because in doing so, one must assume that those forwarding their opinions and ideas have no ulterior motives. Such an assumption, he claims, is simply naive, and that interest and power are often the primary motivators for the forwarding of supposedly moral causes. Consistent with Rousseau's conception that this process grants a disproportionate degree of influence to minority interest groups, the general will becomes distant from the will of all and, ergo, the decisions made are less legitimate.

By contrast, in regarding the process of discussion and debate as the primary source of legitimacy, deliberative models not only arouse public participation, but, by definition, are dependent on it. Gutmann and Thompson's model presents a number of rational justifications for this and demonstrate the vitality of public involvement and activity to the working of such systems. Central to their model is the need for presenting, evaluating and responding to

¹¹⁵ Ian Shapiro, 'Enough of Deliberation: Politics is about Interests and Power', in *Deliberative Politics*, ed. by Stephen Macedo (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 28-37 (p. 29).

reasons -- reasons that seek to justify proposed legislation that they (citizens) will be subjected to.¹¹⁶ These reasons must possess a number of qualities in order to be considered legitimate and accepted as justification by fellow citizens. They consist of, briefly: public accessibility, ability of citizens to easily understand and assess, and the ultimate purpose of creating binding legislation.¹¹⁷ The public accessibility principle, in its requirement that the reason provided must be comprehensible to the public, stands in direct opposition to Rousseau's idea of private deliberation. While Rousseau asserted that an individual's decision is immediately made less legitimate by the influence of external actors, Gutmann and Thompson argue that legitimacy cannot be achieved until the individual's ideas and conceptions are open to public scrutiny. They draw attention to the Bush administration's endeavours in Iraq with relation to this point, and their heavy use of secret information used to justify the invasion.¹¹⁸ On this occasion, in their view, the administration fell short of deliberative standards, and had they followed the author's model, public support might well have been in a different place. The point being, it was impossible to know whether the decision had genuine, authentic public support because the reasons used as justification were not entirely open to the public. It was therefore illegitimate. Again, in not requiring consent on every reason provided, the liberal republican model held by the United States undermines and discourages public participation. Another characteristic of deliberative models related to legitimacy is the idea of collective spirit on public issues, which seems to hold increased public participation as a central

¹¹⁶ Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, *Why Deliberative Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 1-21.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 3-4.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 5-6.

part. Specifically, the use of deliberation for the purpose of legitimising decisions that will inevitably benefit certain groups over others. In examining this principle, Freeman makes note of legislatures of liberal democratic states, claiming that they dishonestly put forward their arguments as if beneficial to all.¹¹⁹ However, in reality, this simply isn't possible, and creates a culture of distrust and furthers polarisation. Citizens and representatives should be transparent about where they believe public resources should be directed, who exactly it will benefit, and why they deserve to receive these benefits. In doing this, deliberative models promote a collective and honest nature, and individuals and groups who aren't benefited in certain areas are helped to understand the rationale behind it, rather than feel victimised and ignored. Consequently, alienation of sections of society is prevented, as they consider and understand why decisions that do not necessarily benefit them are legitimate and justified.

The differing conceptions and ideas of citizenship also provide an insight into how and why deliberative models seek to overcome the participatory deficit that exists in liberal democratic states. Liberal theorists, when defining citizenship, by and large, emphasise individual liberty as opposed to involvement and participation. In keeping with this priority, the citizens' role must be reduced to a bare minimum so as not to interfere with personal freedoms and liberties. By this logic, electoral turnout is the most accurate measure of useful public participation. This particular attitude regarding citizenship is undoubtedly the dominant one in western states and can be traced back to Burke's famous justification for elitist representative democracy: "When you have chosen [a member of parliament], he is

¹¹⁹ Samuel Freeman, 'Deliberative Democracy: A Sympathetic Comment', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 29.4 (2000), 371-418, (pp.397-98).

not a member for Bristol, but he is a member of *parliament*".¹²⁰ Thus, in accordance with this idea -- one that liberal democracies would come to reflect and champion -- the active role of citizens must be limited to electing representatives to act on their behalf. Understandably, deliberative theorists have labelled this as inherently anti-participatory because, by nature, it discourages and prevents citizens from any meaningful, active role in determining public policy. McAfee, making the case for a deliberative system, argues for a vastly different approach to citizenship and what should be asked of a citizen.¹²¹ She asserts that the qualification of citizenship must be defined in terms of the extent to which individuals have the ability to regard themselves members of a public space, with a direct influence in shaping policy. She makes her case on the grounds that citizens having an active role in the process of determining legislation is the only means of achieving a collective spirit and social harmony. Slim, while consistent with the argument made by McAfee, builds on this by pointing to the process of elections and claims that they serve only to exacerbate tensions and divisions.¹²² Further, in order to minimise these tensions and create a maximum level of societal unity, the individual's role must be moved from the confines of him or herself to the wider realm of citizen actor.¹²³ Changing the role of the citizen to one which requires the individual to be both aware of his or her own political preferences, as well as those of his or her fellow citizens, is crucial to the achievement of a just and unified society. A society made

¹²⁰ Edmund Burke, *The Works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke – Volume 1*, (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1754), pp. 446-48.

¹²¹ Noelle McAfee, *Democracy and the Political Unconscious*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), pp. 107-08.

¹²² Randa Slim, 'Facing the Challenges of Emerging Democracies', *Kettering Review*, 1.25 (2007), 27-38.

¹²³ Slim, p. 31.

up of passive, and largely inactive citizens serves to remove the potential for realising commonalities. On the other hand, one made up of active and aware citizens, in which there are dialogue spaces, deliberative meetings and collaborative works aimed at formulating binding legislation, as advocated by Slim and McAfee, maximises the possibility for unity and collective spirit.¹²⁴ Out of this transparency and openness, arises a society based on mutual respect and understanding, where individuals' commonalities are uncovered, while their respective differences are understood.

The models discussed have, inevitably, been criticised for their lack of workability and realism. It is perfectly reasonable to argue that, if such models were successfully implemented and practiced in accordance with their original theory, that the participatory deficit of liberal democracy would be overcome (for the reasons put forward). However, the assertion that these models are not workable in practice bears a degree of validity, and so must also be addressed. One of the central ideas of deliberative theory – that the process of discussion and debate among citizens as a means of creating mutual and self-understanding in order to promote a collective spirit – is viewed as particularly problematic. Shapiro, notably, addresses these shortcomings.¹²⁵ Shedding light on Gutmann and Thompson's argument that a long process of discussion, debate, argumentation and testing promotes a collective spirit, he claims the opposite.¹²⁶ As far as he is concerned, such a process not only falls short of promoting harmony and commonality but actually serves to bring any possible grounds for division and conflict to the forefront.¹²⁷ This, in turn,

¹²⁴ McAfee, pp. 96-110.

¹²⁵ Shapiro, pp. 28-36.

¹²⁶ Gutmann and Thompson, pp. 1-21.

¹²⁷ Shapiro, p. 30.

creates a heavily polarised citizenry. According to this viewpoint then, the very principle of deliberative democracy is inherently paradoxical and contradictory. On the one hand, it prioritises the need for a unified and harmonious society, and on the other, advocates a process which achieves the opposite, creating new sources of tension and division, while inflating existing ones. Interestingly, he points to Marx's theory of class-consciousness -- that as a result of the process of discussing and assessing their position (as advocated by deliberative theorists), workers realise that their interests are entirely at odds with those of their bosses (bourgeoisie). Prior to this process of realisation, society is largely free of conflict and division. However, subsequent to the process, society becomes bitterly divided and polarised after realising the extent of their incompatibilities.¹²⁸ Blaug draws attention to republican forms of deliberative democracy, which attempt to deal with such aspects of previous models that could potentially be problematic.¹²⁹ Republican forms are, particularly, concerned with forwarding deliberation in democratic systems as a means of promoting harmony and understanding, but assert that such processes of deliberation must be kept within the realms of traditional institutions. Contrary to the theories presented by the likes of Gutmann and Thompson, Slim, and McAfee that society and its institutions must be transformed, republican forms of deliberative democracy present these institutions as a vital means of binding society together. And so, in maintaining them, while simultaneously adhering to deliberative principles, citizens remain united behind basic societal symbols, while enjoying the efficiency and involvement delivered by deliberation. Blaug also remarks, however, that the

¹²⁸ Shapiro, pp. 31-32.

¹²⁹ Ricardo Blaug, 'New Developments in Deliberative Democracy', *Politics*, 16.2 (1996), 71-77 (pp. 71-73).

enshrined values of the liberal democratic states that they seek to reform are in direct contradiction with the democratic principles that they promote.¹³⁰ Such values as familial privatism and possessive individualism are entirely incompatible with a culture of open discussion, understanding and debate. He further points towards the power structures found in institutions of liberal democratic states, and that maintaining them makes equal and fair debate impossible. The latter argument -- that republican forms of deliberative democracy are ultimately paradoxical -- appears to be the more compelling, leading to the conclusion that in order for deliberative models to be successful, they must replace those burdensome aspects of liberal democracy that hinder widespread public involvement and prevent equality in debate.

This essay, in conclusion, settles on the case that deliberative forms of democracy can overcome the participatory deficit present in liberal democratic systems. Deliberative models' ability to overcome this deficiency can be attributed, by and large, to how and where democratic legitimacy is sourced and how this differs from liberal models, and their transformative approach to citizenship. In only seeking to source democratic legitimacy from the final result of the decision, liberal democratic models deny the opportunity for public involvement in the crucial stage of the decision's formation. Deliberative models, on the other hand, in holding the process of the decision's formation as the primary source of legitimacy, rely solely on public participation (in the form of debate, discussion and argumentation) in order to work. By giving citizens a direct hand in shaping the decision, such models grant citizens a starkly more active and important political role. With regards to citizenship, in prioritising

¹³⁰ Blaug, pp. 73-74.

individual liberty as opposed to political activity and involvement, liberal systems limit the citizen's role to a largely passive and inactive one. By defining citizenship in terms of their ability to shape and influence public legislation, however, deliberative models require and indeed inspire a public of active, politically aware, and educated individuals. It must also be pointed out, finally, that such models can only succeed in creating the highly active and participatory public that they envisage, if they completely replace existing systems. Republican forms that seek to increase the feasibility of deliberative models fail to recognise the fundamental incompatibilities between liberal democracies and citizen-based deliberative systems, and so are incapable of overturning the participatory deficit.

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**THE THIRD REICH HAD “NOTHING TO
GAIN BY WAITING” STRATEGICALLY,
ECONOMICALLY OR MILITARILY
WHEN IT WENT TO WAR IN
SEPTEMBER 1939**

FREDDIE EVANS

HUA304

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the role of diplomacy, economics and the military capabilities of the Third Reich in late 1938, and 1939. During the course of 1938-1939 it became increasingly clear to the leadership of Nazi Germany that its planned diplomatic offensive and economic consolidation had failed, and so too had its efforts at further rapid military and economic expansion. Rather than back down to these difficulties the Reich's leadership chose to improvise a new strategy instead, one that would drive it to an early war. To explore these failures of policy and the subsequent realisation of a new policy, this dissertation analyses the available primary source material on the Reich's diplomatic efforts, economy, its military preparedness and the attitudes of its leaders. This dissertation will assert that the structural constraints of the Third Reich's position were the greatest impediment to the realisation of its long-term strategic and economic goals in 1939. This led to the outbreak of war far earlier than had been hoped for, but this was nonetheless accepted by the Nazi leadership as it was plain to them that the Reich had nothing to gain by waiting.

Introduction

It is often the case in history that the best laid plans founder upon the hard realities of the present. Indeed, Karl Marx argued as much when he wrote in 1852 that:

‘Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living.’¹³¹

So when Adolf Hitler committed Germany to be militarily operational and economically ready for war in four years in his memorandum on the Four-Year Plan of August 1936, it is hardly surprising that such plans fought against and failed to overcome the structural and material realities of the time.¹³² For while the German army and economy were certainly far more ready for war in 1939 than they had been three years previously, it was still a far cry from the level of readiness envisaged by Hitler in his memorandum. And yet, despite these failures the Third Reich still invaded Poland on 1 September 1939, which was swiftly followed by British and French declarations of war, thus beginning the bloodiest conflict in human history.

This had, however, not been the original plan, and while there had certainly been premonitions of war throughout 1938 and 1939 it had seemed to many that a general war was still some way off. This

¹³¹ Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, (1852), <<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1852/18th-brumaire/ch01.htm>>, para. 2, [01/04/2018].

¹³² Hitler, ‘Memorandum on the four-year plan’, August 1936, in Marwick, Arthur and Simpson, Wendy, *Primary Sources 2: Interwar and World War II*, (Open University Press, 2001), p. 42.

was not mere wishful thinking. It was in fact the strategic conception that the military and political leadership of the Reich were operating under at the start of 1939. The nexus of this conception can be found in the diary of Major-General Georg Thomas of the military-economic office of the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (OWK) who wrote in September 1938 that 'The day of Munich. By telephone I receive instructions: all preparations now for war against England, target 1942!'¹³³

With the invasion of Poland, it seemed to many that Germany had overplayed its hand and conjured upon itself the might of the British and French (the Allies), leaving Germany isolated and vulnerable. It would be true to say that Germany certainly found itself in a position of greater danger than its leadership had hoped for or anticipated at the start of the year. It has also often been asserted that Nazi Germany fell into war with Britain and France in September 1939 through some fundamental miscalculations on the part of Hitler, senior military figures and members of the Nazi Party who expected Britain and France to cave in on the issue of Poland's guarantees, just as they had with guarantees to Czechoslovakia in 1938.¹³⁴ It is often implicit in this analysis that in so doing Germany inflicted upon itself an early war that it would have preferred to have avoided. Worse still, it is argued, a war against the West was not the *Ostkreig* for *Lebensraum* that Germany desired, but one it was forced into with the West, and for which it was underprepared. This line of argument

¹³³ Adam Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy*, (London, Penguin Group, 2006), p. 288.

¹³⁴ Richard Overly, 'Hitler's War and the German Economy: A reinterpretation', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 35, No. 2, (Wiley, Economic History Society, May 1982), p. 275.

frames the drive into an early war as predominantly stemming from the leadership's overreach founded on their own delusions.

The above is a rough approximation of the view held by Richard Overy, who has consistently argued for an 'intentionalist' position towards the outbreak of the Second World War; intentionalists '... stress the individual responsibility of Hitler and his ministerial and party entourage in framing and carrying out a programme of foreign expansion, whose final goal was the achievement of world power.'¹³⁵ This position stands in opposition to the 'structuralist' and 'functionalist' approach to the outbreak, which posits that while Hitler and his entourage certainly bear the responsibility for the war, the driving factors behind the outbreak of war in 1939 were the domestic and structural problems within the Third Reich itself.¹³⁶ Some, such as Tim Mason, even went so far as to claim of there being a 'domestic crisis' within Germany in 1939.¹³⁷ Other structuralists, such as Adam Tooze, have argued a more nuanced position. Tooze has rejected the idea of a crisis, while still acknowledging the severe structural problems faced in 1939, arguing that 'Hitler was well informed about the state of German armaments production. And he was essentially correct in his assessment that Germany had reached the point at which it had very little to gain from a continuation of the peacetime arms race.'¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Richard Overy, 'Germany, "Domestic Crisis" and War in 1939, *Past & Present*, No. 116, (Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 138.

¹³⁶ Overy, 'Germany, "Domestic Crisis" and War in 1939, *Past & Present*, No. 116, (Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 138.

¹³⁷ David Kaiser and Tim Mason, 'Germany, "Domestic Crisis" and War in 1939, *Past & Present*, No. 122, (Oxford University Press, Feb., 1989), pp. 205-206.

¹³⁸ Tooze, p. 317.

This dissertation, too, rejects Mason's characterisation of Germany's situation in 1939. Yet while the Reich did not experience a domestic crisis in 1939, it was forced to realise the structural limits of its peacetime rearmament efforts, and in so doing to realise the fantastic nature of its plans that stretched into the mid-1940s. The Reich was also forced to realise, moreover, that its planned foreign policy was a failure, and that it would have to improvise in light of these changing circumstances. Thus, war in 1939 became the best option available due to increasingly desperate domestic and international constraints.

Therefore, instead of a series of miscalculations and blunders leading into war, the Reich was forced to improvise a new position in order to respond to its rapidly changing international and domestic problems. By July 1939 the Reich's diplomatic strategy had fallen to pieces, with Poland refusing to join Germany as a junior partner, despite the offer of territorial gains; the Italians and Japanese refusing to join any war against the British and French for the time being; the Allies were becoming increasingly unwilling to tolerate such a militarily belligerent Germany; and the Reich's increasingly over-cooked economy was unable to deliver on the gargantuan orders of military equipment needed by the Wehrmacht.

This thesis will explore these issues in three chapters, covering the diplomatic machinations of the Reich, including a detailed exploration of its relationship with Poland, the economic constraints to further peacetime rearmament, and the proportional superiority enjoyed by the Wehrmacht in 1939. Ultimately this thesis will show that, with the conclusion of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact with the Soviet Union in August 1939, and the comparative readiness of the Wehrmacht for war, Germany still possessed significant freedom of

manoeuvre. As a consequence, and in light of the swiftly deteriorating international situation, the leadership of the Reich came to see 1939 as the best time to launch a war, even if it was still far from ideal to do so. The only other option available to the Reich in 1939 was to throttle back armaments production and to pull back from hostilities. Due to the rapid pace of Allied rearmament and the total hostility of Hitler to such a move this was seen as completely impossible. Germany was then pushed into an early war due to structural economic problems, and the collapse of its international strategy.

Chapter One: The Third Reich's Strategic Dilemma

Germany began 1939 in a profoundly stronger strategic position than it had been just one year before. Austria had now been annexed to the Reich, and the Sudetenland had been absorbed. Großdeutschland – Greater Germany – had finally been achieved, but at the cost that Europe was now on the brink of war. Yet in the days following the Munich Agreement, and with scarcely concealed elation, the Reichsbank declared that:

‘With the incorporation of the Sudetenland into the Reich, the Fuehrer has completed a task that is without parallel in history. In barely five years of National Socialist rule, Germany has achieved military freedom, sovereign control of its territory and the incorporation of the Saarland, Austria and the Sudetenland. It has thereby turned itself from a politic non-valeur into the pre-eminent power in continental Europe.’¹³⁹

Such elation was not hyperbolic. In less than five years Hitler had achieved a greater expansion of German speaking lands than even the great Chancellor Otto Von Bismarck had managed to attain in his nearly twenty years in power, and all without firing a single shot in anger.¹⁴⁰ Indeed, after Munich Hitler even declared ‘I have no more territorial demands to make in Europe’.¹⁴¹ This was, of course, pure distraction and instead of winding down military spending the Reich increased it, while simultaneously creating a coherent short-to-medium term economic, diplomatic and military strategy.¹⁴² The

¹³⁹ Tooze, p. 285.

¹⁴⁰ Tooze, p. 285.

¹⁴¹ A. J. P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, (Hamish Hamilton, 1961), p. 66.

¹⁴² Tooze, pp. 286 & 293.

driving force behind such a change was that the Sudeten crisis had forced the Reich's leadership to contemplate and digest an unwelcome new reality: Germany would be forced to fight in the West before it could turn its attention eastward.¹⁴³ As part of this newly established strategy Germany set itself on a course of massively increased military spending, liquidation of the rump of Czechoslovakia¹⁴⁴, and alliance building with Japan, Italy and its eastern neighbours, particularly Poland. Its one objective – to create a strong Axis bloc that could stand up to the economic and military pressure of the Allies, their empires, and potentially even the United States.¹⁴⁵

From this moment the Reich firmly fixed its focus upon a confrontation with the West, and the first element of this nascent strategy was the enrolment of Poland into the Axis bloc. It is not hard to see why Germany found this idea appealing: Poland in 1938 was no democracy, but rather, in the words of Italian Foreign Minister Count Galeazzo Ciano 'Poland is living under the dictatorship of a dead man [Józef Piłsudski].'¹⁴⁶ Moreover, the Poles were vociferously anti-communist, with Hitler even describing the country as a 'bulwark against Bolshevism'.¹⁴⁷ Poland was, therefore, something of a natural

¹⁴³ Ibid, p. 288.

¹⁴⁴ *Nazism 1919-1945: Foreign Policy, War and Racial Extermination*, eds. J. Noakes and G. Pridham, Vol. 3, (Exeter, University of Exeter Press, 1988), p. 116.

¹⁴⁵ Tooze, p. 292.

¹⁴⁶ The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry, Rome, March 5, 1939, in *Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945*, Series D, Volume V, ed. by Bernadotte E. Schmitt et al, (London, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1953), p. 178.

¹⁴⁷ William Carr, *Arms, Autarky and Aggression: A Study in German Foreign Policy 1933-1939*, (London, Camelot Press, 1972), p. 107.

choice as an ally, and in the view of Hitler, could just as easily play the part of an accomplice to his grand designs or be the victim to them.¹⁴⁸ As such, and after years of increasingly friendly relations, Hitler set about attempting to create an agreement between Germany and Poland, both before, during and after the Sudeten crisis of September 1938.¹⁴⁹ During the crisis Germany and Poland closely cooperated over the latter's designs for the Teschen, a disputed area of western Czechoslovakia with a substantial Polish minority. This close cooperation extended even into the military sphere, with State Secretary Ernst von Weizsäcker reporting to the Foreign Ministry that:

‘This evening I showed the Polish Ambassador on a map prepared by the Headquarters of the Wehrmacht the demarcation line which, in the view of our Wehrmacht, should be observed between Polish and German troops if it came to an advance on Czechoslovakia. I added that it would no doubt be advisable if the Polish Military Attaché agreed on details with our military authorities tomorrow.’¹⁵⁰

This cooperation continued for the duration of the Sudeten crisis, culminating in Poland gaining the Teschen from Czechoslovakia following the Munich Agreement.¹⁵¹ So important was this cooperation that Polish Foreign Minister Józef Beck remarked that he

¹⁴⁸ Wilhelm Diest et al, *Germany and the Second World War: Volume I: The Build-up of German Aggression*, ed. by Research Institute for Military History, Germany, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 591.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 683.

¹⁵⁰ Minutes by State Secretary (Weizacker) for the Foreign Minister, Berlin, September 27, 1938, in *Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945*, Series D, Volume II, ed. John W. Wheeler-Bennet and others, (London, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1950), p. 975.

¹⁵¹ Carr, p. 107.

believed that the crisis had proven that German-Polish relations were founded on a sound basis, and that Poland's claims on the Teschen had proven useful to Germany's Sudeten policy.¹⁵² Such remarks and cooperation demonstrate that, just a year before Germany invaded Poland, relations between the two nations were surprisingly close, with both countries seemingly able to work together effectively.

Indeed, such was the closeness of the Poles to the Reich at this time that the then Soviet Prime Minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, denounced the country as 'Hitler's jackals'.¹⁵³ Following the Munich Agreement in October 1938 Germany attempted to further cement its relationship with Poland into a formal alliance based around military and political issues; an alliance crucial to securing Germany's increasingly anti-British turn in its foreign policy. The Reich hoped, first and foremost, that clearing up their frontier issues with Poland would lead to a broader understanding between the two nations: Danzig would be ceded to Germany, Poland would keep the corridor through which a German autobahn and railway would run, and Poland would also join the anti-Comintern pact and adopt 'a more and more pronounced anti-Russian attitude'.¹⁵⁴ As such, the role that Germany envisaged for Poland through such a settlement was one in which the Polish army would be its junior partner, effectively securing the Reich's eastern flank against the Soviet Union, and thereby freeing up the Wehrmacht to focus exclusively on a confrontation against Britain and France.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Memorandum by the Foreign Minister, Berlin, November 19, 1938, in Bernadotte E. Schmitt et al, (1953), p. 127.

¹⁵³ Richard Overy & Andrew Wheatcroft, *The Road to War: The Origins of World War II*, (London, Vintage, 2009), pp. 11-12.

¹⁵⁴ Diest et al, pp. 686-687.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 687.

Suffice to say, this effort quickly ran aground. Poland refused to countenance the cession of Danzig to Germany, with Beck primarily citing domestic political concerns and warning Ribbentrop that 'If the Danzig question were opened, German-Polish relations would be profoundly and seriously endangered.'¹⁵⁶ Germany persisted in the attempt to enrol Poland for a further five months following this offer, but with no more success than it had had previously. Indeed, after Germany's annexation of the rump of Czechoslovakia, a move that outflanked Polish border defences, Poland still refused to budge.¹⁵⁷ So it was that Hitler definitively switched from a policy of conciliation to one of outright aggression, issuing the following directive on 3 April 1939:

'For "Operation White" the Führer has issued the following additional directives:

1. Preparations must be made in such a way that the operation [against Poland] can be carried out at any time as from September 1939.¹⁵⁸

This was the first major setback to the Reich's efforts to establish a unified Axis bloc with which to confront the Allies.

While the invasion of Czechoslovakia on 15 March 1939 seemed at first to have been a wild success, securing the Reich's flank while simultaneously netting much needed foreign currency and rich

¹⁵⁶ Memorandum by the Foreign Minister, Berlin, November 19, 1938, in Bernadotte E. Schmitt et al, (1953), p. 128.

¹⁵⁷ Tooze, p. 306.

¹⁵⁸ Directive by the Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht, Berlin, April 3, 1939, in *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, Series D, Volume VI, ed. by Paul R. Sweet et al, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956), pp. 186-187.

Czech industrial areas, it instead caused Germany to be encircled from both East and West. The British publicly guaranteed Polish independence and opened negotiations with the Soviet Union to make this guarantee credible, while the United States became increasingly supportive of the Allies, and steadily more belligerent towards Germany. The U.S. had imposed a punitive 25 per cent tariff on German exports to the U.S., a move seen as tantamount to a declaration of economic war in Berlin.¹⁵⁹ With tensions mounting, the British Foreign Office worried that if pressured Hitler would ultimately commit a 'mad dog act'.¹⁶⁰ Indeed, seeing himself surrounded on all sides by potential enemies, Hitler did just that. He decided on war with Poland, but he also stepped up attempts to secure the backing of the Italians and Japanese.¹⁶¹ For while Germany alone could not hope to confront the power of Britain and France – least of all if they had the backing of the Soviet Union and the United States – with Italian and Japanese support, and acting in concert, the Axis would be able to severely stretch their adversaries. The Reich also aimed to consolidate its dominant economic position in south-eastern Europe, so as to protect itself from being starved of resources and food, as had happened in the First World War.¹⁶² In pursuit of such a strategy it signed the German-Romanian commercial treaty on 23 March, 1939, which Berlin hailed as vital to securing the Reich's oil and grain supplies in the future, a plan that was scotched by Britain and France who guaranteed Romanian independence. With the pressure off, Romania refused to deliver sufficient quantities of oil and grain, unless it was

¹⁵⁹ Tooze, pp. 306-307.

¹⁶⁰ Richard Overy, 'Germany, "Domestic Crisis" and War in 1939, *Past & Present*, No. 116, (Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 142-143.

¹⁶¹ Overy, (1987), p. 309.

¹⁶² Diest et al, p. 690.

provided with reciprocal deliveries of arms from the Reich.¹⁶³ Seemingly wherever the Reich sought to consolidate its position, it was confronted with an increasingly coherent and unified opposition, leaving it struggling once more.

Though partly frustrated in Romania, the Reich continued to pin its hopes upon a military alliance with the Italians and Japanese. Here too it faced huge obstacles and such an alliance would not be forthcoming. The 'Pact of Steel' between Italy and Germany was signed on 22 May 1939 and asserted that each would '...immediately [in the case of war] step to its side as an ally and will support it with all its military might...'.¹⁶⁴ This pact could do little, however, to counterbalance the overwhelming combination of the Allies, and potentially the Soviet Union and the United States against Germany. Moreover, shortly after signing the pact Italy informed Germany, on 31 May, that their country would not be ready for war before 1943.¹⁶⁵ This need not have been a fatal setback to the Reich's anti-British strategy, and waiting for war could still have been contemplated, so long as Japan committed itself to attacking the British and French empires in Asia when the time came. But Japan would commit to no such thing, however, and negotiations with them collapsed without agreement in July 1939.¹⁶⁶

Consequently, by early summer 1939 Germany found itself staring at the remnants and failures of its anti-British strategy. Poland

¹⁶³ Tooze, pp. 308-309.

¹⁶⁴ The Italo-German Alliance, May 22, 1939, *Volkischer Beobachter*, May 23, 1939,,
<https://astro.temple.edu/~rimmerma/Italo_German_alliance_1939.htm>,
[05/04/2018].

¹⁶⁵ Tooze, p. 319.

¹⁶⁶ Tooze, p. 320.

had warded off all the Reich's diplomatic gestures and still stood defiant; Japan was too busy in China to give Hitler's European machinations too much thought, and while Italy did stand by the Reich it was clear to all in Berlin that Mussolini's country would not join them if a war began too soon. With its strategy in tatters the Reich felt itself compelled to turn to its ideological nemesis for assistance: Stalin's Soviet Union.

Despite their historical animosity, differing ideologies and strategies, the Soviet Union and the Hitler's Reich had begun softening their attitudes toward one another not long after the Munich Agreement.¹⁶⁷ From early 1939 the Reich Foreign Ministry began to notice a softening in Soviet rhetoric towards Germany; the Ambassador in Moscow, Count Von Der Schulenberg, sent a telegram to Berlin saying that in Stalin's March speech to the Communist Party Congress '... it was noteworthy that Stalin's irony and criticism were directed in considerably sharper degree against Britain, i.e., against the reactionary forces in power there, than against the so-called aggressor States, and in particular, Germany.'¹⁶⁸ Stalin did, moreover, declare that he had decided 'not to allow our country to be drawn into conflicts by warmongers who are accustomed to get others to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them.'¹⁶⁹ In this he was referring to the British and French, who at that moment were attempting to sound out Russia for a potential security pact against Germany. What was clear from this is that Stalin had little desire to involve himself in a war that

¹⁶⁷ A. Rossi, *The Russo-German Alliance: 1939-1941*, (London, Chapman & Hall, 1950), p. 5.

¹⁶⁸ The Ambassador (Count Von Der Schulenberg) in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry, Moscow, March 13, 1939, in Paul R. Sweet et al, (1956), p. 1.

¹⁶⁹ Rossi, p. 8.

would predominantly cost Russian, not British and French, lives, and that he was essentially opening the door to improved Russo-German relations. Negotiations for an Anglo-French alliance with Russia did, nonetheless, get underway following Germany's annexation of Czechoslovakia, but there was little that the British and French could offer Stalin, whose primary motivation was defensive and expansionary, desiring to push Soviet frontiers further west into the Baltic States, Finland, Bessarabia and, if possible, Poland.¹⁷⁰ In addition to this difference in motivation between Russia and the West there was also a severe ideological gap. Britain, and Neville Chamberlain in particular, maintained a deep-seated distrust of Bolshevism, while Poland was largely hostile to any such alliance since it would reduce its importance and also leave itself vulnerable to Soviet encroachment.¹⁷¹ It was, therefore, unfortunate for the Allied powers that just as their negotiations with the Soviet Union seemed to be going nowhere, Germany stepped in and attempted to forge its own deal with Stalin. In the months that followed Stalin would entertain both sides, seeing who could offer him the best deal, but ultimately Germany would succeed in finally securing what it needed: security in the east to deal with the west.

In the months following the annexation of Czechoslovakia, while Paris and London tried and failed to reach an accord with the Soviets, Berlin and Moscow grew increasingly close. Emblematic of this newfound relationship between the two countries are the remarks of the Soviet Ambassador in Berlin to Weizsäcker, stating that:

‘Soviet policy had always moved in a straight line. Ideological differences had hardly influenced Russian-Italian relations, and

¹⁷⁰ Diest et al, p. 698.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

they did not have to prove a stumbling block with Germany either. [...] There existed for Russia no reason why she should not live with Germany on a normal footing. And from normal, relations might become better and better.¹⁷²

And relations did, indeed, become better and better in the following months. The pro-Western Foreign Minister, Litvinov, was sacked by Stalin, a move that was positively received in Berlin and which strengthened the two countries' increasing collaboration.¹⁷³ In the following months improvements in Russo-German relations continued apace, with initial negotiations held over economic and political factors, but moving quickly on to broader strategic concerns by June.¹⁷⁴ Finally on 24 August 1939, after months of negotiations on a wide range of issues, Foreign Minister Ribbentrop concluded a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union, which included secret provisions for the division of Eastern Europe into separate spheres of influence.¹⁷⁵ Days before the conclusion of the pact Hitler had boasted to his generals that Ribbentrop would soon wrap up negotiations, and that Poland was now in the position that he wanted her, stating that Germany '... need not be afraid of a blockade. The East will supply us with grain, cattle, coal, lead and zinc. It [war with Poland] is a mighty aim, which demands great efforts. I am only afraid that at the last moment some swine or other will yet submit to me a plan for mediation.'¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² Rossi, p. 15.

¹⁷³ Rossi, p. 15.

¹⁷⁴ Tooze, p. 320.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Speech by the Führer to the Commanders in Chief on August 22, 1939, *German History in Documents and Images (GHDI)*,

Thus, the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact concluded a year of German diplomatic manoeuvres that had increasingly backed the Reich into a corner, where the lofty plans drawn up following the Munich Agreement had foundered against realpolitik. Key to this was Britain's refusal to play the acquiescent role assigned to it by Hitler's foreign policy; the stiffening resistance of Britain, France, and even the United States to German aggression had put the Reich on a collision course with the West, one which it was increasingly hard and also unwilling to pull back from. Instrumental to this collision was the attitude of Poland, whose absolute intransigence towards German designs, and who despite previous close cooperation, now proved integral to Germany's increasingly reckless and warlike path. It is in doubt whether Germany, without the Russian pact, would have been able to do anything other than back down or enter a war in which it would have had no hope of success. It was no understatement when the Quartermaster-General of the German army, Colonel Eduard Wagner stated in reference to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact that "the conclusion of this treaty has saved us".¹⁷⁷ With the collapse of his long term strategic-vision Hitler chose instead to improvise a new one. It was imperfect and lacked many of the key elements of the previous one, and in particular it would start the war earlier than had previously been hoped. But with the Reich's enemies seemingly growing daily more numerous Hitler chose to invade Poland in September 1939, knowing full well that it was likely to start a war with the Britain and France.

<http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=1546>, para. 33-34, [07/02/2018].
¹⁷⁷ Tooze, p321.

Chapter Two: Problem's in the Reich's economy

In 1938, the last full year of peace in Europe, Nazi Germany was already allocating 17 per cent of gross national product (GNP) to military spending.¹⁷⁸ Yet despite this already impressive expenditure on arms the Reich's leadership sought to accelerate this expenditure following the Sudeten crisis. On 14 October 1938 at a conference at the Air Ministry Hermann Goering, the Reich Plenipotentiary of the Four Year Plan, announced that given 'the world situation' the 'Fuehrer has issued an order ... to carry out a gigantic programme compared to which previous achievements are insignificant'.¹⁷⁹ Nodding to the significant economic difficulties that were impeding rearmament Goering nonetheless announced that the Luftwaffe was to be increased in size by fivefold, the Kriegsmarine would be armed more rapidly, while the Heer would also procure more offensive weapons at a faster rate.¹⁸⁰ This would, in practice, have translated into a Luftwaffe with 21,750 aircraft by 1942, while the Heer had simply to complete and consolidate the build-up begun since 1936.¹⁸¹ For the Kriegsmarine, whose gargantuan Plan Z was signed into force on 27 January 1939, it would be necessary to construct 6 large battleships, 249 U-boats and 8 cruisers for long range operations, and by 1948 the Kriegsmarine aimed to have constructed a total of 797

¹⁷⁸ Adam Tooze and James R. Martin, 'The economics of the war with Nazi Germany', in *The Cambridge History of the Second World War*, ed. by Michael Geyer, (Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 36.

¹⁷⁹ Conference at General Field Goering's at 1000, 14 Oct. 38, in the Reich Air Ministry, in *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, Vol. III, (Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1946), p. 901, <https://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/NT_Nazi_Vol-III.pdf>, [10/03/2018].

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Tooze, p. 288.

vessels at a cost of 33 billion Reichsmarks.¹⁸² Thus, following the Sudeten crisis the Reich was in the process of creating a plan for increased rearmament that would have equipped it for a major continental war with Britain and France by 1941-42. There was, however, no possibility of such a grandiose plan ever being completed. Timothy Mason, writing in 1989, argued that 'There was no possible way in which the armaments plans of 1939 could be even approximately fulfilled within Germany's boundaries of March 1939'.¹⁸³ Rather than the untrammelled expansion of armaments production hoped for in 1939, the Reich instead found itself pushing the structural constraints of its own economy.

Perhaps the most significant problem facing the Reich throughout the 1930s was the binding balance of payments and trade issues, and the consequent foreign currency deficit it caused. The Reich was spending foreign currency through the purchase of imports at a faster rate than it was recouping foreign exchange through exports. Indeed, by the time war began in September 1939 Germany had almost entirely exhausted its reserves of gold and foreign exchange.¹⁸⁴ This lack of critical foreign exchange caused severe shortages in key raw materials necessary for rearmament, creating substantial backlogs in orders and generally placing pressure on any further increases in rearmament. This was largely the result of the incredibly high rate of military spending, and consequent neglect of exports, that had been pursued in the years prior to the war.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ David Kaiser and Tim Mason, 'Germany, "Domestic Crisis" and War in 1939, *Past & Present*, No. 122, (Oxford University Press, Feb. 1989), p. 217.

¹⁸⁴ Kaiser & Mason, p. 202.

Year	GNP (RM billions)	Military exp. (RM billions)	% of GNP
1933	59	1.9	3
1934	67	4.1	6
1935	74	6.0	8
1936	83	10.8	13
1937	93	11.7	13
1938	105	17.2	17
1939	130	30.0	23

Table 1: German GNP and defence expenditure, 1933 to 1939.¹⁸⁵

Such high levels of military spending in peacetime stood in stark contrast to that of Great Britain – still then a great world power – at just 8 per cent of GNP in 1938.¹⁸⁶ Such an over-stretching of the economy was of course an avoidable problem. Had the Reich settled on a less aggressive rate of rearmament expansion it would have been possible to balance the needs of exports and foreign currency on the one hand, and on the other, the raw materials for the armaments themselves. Such a decision was politically unpalatable, however, and the two had to be made to coexist through an ever more draconian and innovative system of price controls, tax credits and other mechanisms.

¹⁸⁵ *Nazism 1919-1945 Volume 2: State, Economy and Society 1933-39*, eds. J. Noakes and G. Pridham, (Exeter, University of Exeter Press, (1984), pp. 297-298.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p. 298.

The Reich's senior leadership was not, however, ignorant of these problems, and in a speech to the Reich Defence Council on 18 November 1938 Goering highlighted the danger of Germany's 'very critical' economic situation as exchange reserves were 'non-existent'.¹⁸⁷ Yet he nonetheless committed himself to somehow squaring the problems in the economy with continued and rapid rearmament.¹⁸⁸ But while it may have been politically convenient to attempt to avoid the economic problems through sheer force of will, they could not ultimately be avoided. Soon after Goering's speech, the Chief of Wehrmacht High Command, General Keitel, issued a memorandum on behalf of Hitler stating that 'The strained financial situation of the Reich makes it necessary that for the rest of the current fiscal year 38/39 the expense of the Armed Forces ... should be lowered again to a level which would be tolerable for some time.'¹⁸⁹

Significantly, then, no sooner than had the Reich established some degree of strategic coherence in the economy when, just as in the diplomatic sphere, conditions in the economy began to deteriorate. Just as the nations of the world would not bend themselves to the fantasies of Germany's leadership, neither would the realities of economics yield to their dictums.

It is thus necessary to briefly pause here and analyse the sheer absurdity of the plans drawn up in October and November 1938. The Luftwaffe's lofty goal of beginning the war with over 21,000 aircraft was pure fantasy and could never have been achieved within the

¹⁸⁷ Tooze, p. 290.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Documents for the conference at Field Marshal Goering's on 13 Dec 1938 with Supreme Commanders General Keitel, Neumann, Koerner, Gen. Thomas, in *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, p. 907.

economic boundaries of the Reich in 1938/39. Indeed, during World War II, the Luftwaffe's maximum strength never exceeded the 5,000 aircraft they possessed in December 1944,¹⁹⁰ while Britain, who by contrast devoted a much greater share of its total armaments effort to the Royal Airforce still only acquired 8,300 aircraft, and even then only towards the war's end.¹⁹¹ Moreover, to have serviced such a swollen air fleet would have required the purchasing of massive fuel reserves totalling 10.7 million cubic metres for which the Reich would have needed to purchase no less than 3 million cubic metres of fuel per annum: twice the level of global production in 1938.¹⁹² These plans had absolutely no hope of being achieved in peacetime within the prevailing boundaries of the Reich, and as such it would have been necessary to expand beyond those boundaries to have had even a hope of completing such an unrealistic plan.

It was not just in the air that the Reich was entertaining fantasy. Plan-Z, the Kriegsmarine's vastly ambitious plan to turn itself into a true ocean-going navy was another example of the sheer delusion permeating the Reich's economic planning. Like the plans for the Luftwaffe, Plan-Z was not feasible. By 23 January 1939, before the plan had even been officially formalised it was already facing severe problems; construction was stalled due to insufficient deliveries of non-ferrous metals and bar steel, and there were also issues with obtaining sufficient numbers of workers.¹⁹³ It was clear then, before Plan-Z was even officially began, that it would face severe problems. Moreover, Plan-Z shared a parallel problem with the Luftwaffe's own plan for expansion, which was the massive requirements for fuel

¹⁹⁰ Tooze, p. 294.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁹³ Diest et al, p. 478.

needed once such an enlarged force became operational. The mobilisation requirements for the Plan-Z Kriegsmarine of fuel-oil would have amounted to an astronomical 6 million tons, and a further 2 million tons of diesel-oil.¹⁹⁴ To give this figure some perspective, the total German consumption of mineral-oil products in 1938 was 6,150,000 tons.¹⁹⁵ It was therefore hardly surprising that the Reich's plans for military expansion hit upon serious problems almost as soon as they were conceived.

Significantly, these persistent issues dogging the Reich's rearmament drive were closely connected to its balance of payment issues and the subsequent problems with the procurement of raw materials. Germany at the outbreak of war in 1939 was still dependent on large imports of key raw materials amounting to roughly one third of the total requirement.¹⁹⁶ In some areas this dependence was even greater: 45 per cent for iron ore, 50 per cent for lead, and a staggering 99 per cent for aluminium.¹⁹⁷ With levels of foreign currency to purchase such products tumbling into non-existence, it was increasingly necessary for the Reich to step up its exports, as had been highlighted by Goering's speech of October 1938.¹⁹⁸ Although such a switch was not without its own problems, as what followed from the decision to prioritise exports was a further drastic reduction in the steel quotas available for rearmament in 1939.

The allocation of steel for the Wehrmacht fell from 530,000 to just 300,000 tons; this hurt all three branches of the Wehrmacht but

¹⁹⁴ Ibid et al, p. 479.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 355.

¹⁹⁷ Diest et al,

¹⁹⁸ Conference at Marshal Goering's at 1000, 14 Oct. 38, in the Reich Air Ministry, *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, p. 901.

hit the Heer the most when it saw its allocation cut back to levels not seen since 1937.¹⁹⁹ The Heer was, moreover, the service most vulnerable to a throttling back of steel quotas, as compared to the other armed services it was overwhelmingly dependent on steel for continued expansion.²⁰⁰ Considering that the army had requested a steel allocation of no less than 4.5 million tons of steel for 1939, such a grievous cutback came as a complete shock. And the effects of this policy change in favour of exports were dramatic: 300 infantry battalions were still living under canvass by the end of 1939; the production of mortar shells and infantry rifles ceased altogether; instead of receiving 61,000 Model 34 machine guns by 1940 this order was reduced to 13,000 and orders for 10.5 centimetre field howitzers and even medium battle tanks were halved.²⁰¹ The policy deprived training and replacement units of weapons and markedly reduced the fighting power of 34 of Germany's 105 wartime divisions. Once again, the Reich's plans for an acceleration of rearmament had collided with the structural constraints of its economy.

Furthermore, the Reich kept encountering these constraints precisely because there was simply no room for further peacetime expansion, at least not without destroying any semblance of normal civilian life within Germany. So, while the Reich's authorities would stop short of something that drastic, they still certainly attempted to find ways to combat the economic problems that were crippling further expansion. With this aim in mind the authorities looked toward ameliorating the shortage of workers – full employment had already been reached by 1938 – that presented another persistent challenge

¹⁹⁹ Tooze, p. 302.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 302-303.

to the Reich's rearmament. The problem was that by February 1939 the economy was already suffering a shortage of 1 million workers, and the Wehrmacht's Army Ordinance Office estimated that for all the armaments programmes to be carried out they would require a staggering 870 per cent increase in the number of workers available to them.²⁰² It was clear that something must be done. Yet the only options to escape these constraints was to import foreign labour or to conscript workers from non-essential industries. Thus, by June 1939 the regime had already brought in 40,000 foreign workers from recently occupied Czechoslovakia, while Poles were being encouraged to come to Germany as voluntary workers.²⁰³ Even with the addition of fresh workers from outside Germany it was still not enough to cover the shortage.

In addition to the importation of foreign workers, the regime also attempted to introduce labour conscription for German workers, starting in June 1938, which by the end of 1939 had resulted in 1.3 million workers being temporarily moved to different industries.²⁰⁴ While this number seems impressive, the system of labour rationing functioned poorly. Noakes and Pridham note that 'there were limits on the extent to which the German labour force could be mobilized – at any rate in peacetime – because of the shortages of housing in industrial areas and the unpopularity of labour conscription.'²⁰⁵ Ultimately though, the fact that the Reich had to introduce labour conscription at all was telling. It demonstrated that the economy was overcooking and had reached a level at which, save for increased efficiency savings, there was little that could be done to further expand

²⁰² Noakes and G. Pridham, (1988), pp. 121-122.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁴ Tooze, p. 261.

²⁰⁵ Noakes and G. Pridham, (1988), p. 122.

production of all goods in peacetime. It is not wrong to suggest then, as the Bundeswehr's Research Institute for Military History did, that 'without inroads into foreign states or attacks on the property of others' it would be impossible to keep to the current rearmament course.²⁰⁶

In late 1938, Nazi Germany approached some semblance of clarity and coherence on its economic strategy for rearmament, that would sit alongside its diplomatic strategy that would have prepared it for war. And yet, just as in the sphere of diplomacy, the Reich's economic plans had scarcely begun to unfold before they too suffered setbacks and reversals. This paints a picture of a regime that, while not in crisis, was increasingly unable to control the pace of events in any sphere it turned its attention to. Indeed, Karl Krauch, the head of the Reich Office for Economic Expansion, wrote a despairing memorandum in which he stated that:

'it seemed as if [German] political leadership would have the possibility of solely determining the time and scale of the political transformation of Europe – whilst avoiding a confrontation with the power group led by England. Since March of this year [1939] there can no longer be any doubt that this possibility no longer exists.'²⁰⁷

Such despair was motivated by the increasingly desperate conditions prevailing in the German economy that were holding it back from further rearmament in 1939. From the balance of payments deficit to the associated shortages of raw materials, and its overstretched workforce, the Reich was increasingly pushing the limit of what was economically possible in peacetime. As such, it became increasingly

²⁰⁶ Wilhelm Diest et al, p. 350.

²⁰⁷ Tooze, pp. 307-308.

necessary to acquire additional territory and resources from which to continue this expansion: war in 1939 became an overwhelming expedient to overcome the poor condition of the economy for further rearmament.

Chapter Three: The Military Superiority of the Reich in 1939

Despite the drastic failings of its chosen foreign and rearmament policy following the Sudeten crisis, and the subsequent occupation of Czechoslovakia, the Reich still had a strong military position in 1939 compared to that of its principle opponents. The Nazi leadership understood, however, that the proportional superiority of the Heer and the Luftwaffe was a declining asset in light of the increasingly rapid rearmament of its enemies. This fact had, moreover, been understood for some time. The Hossbach Conference of 5 November 1937 had underscored this long-term problem that the Reich would face in maintaining its superiority in the coming years.²⁰⁸ Yet at Hossbach the decline had not been predicted to become severe until the period 1943-1945, which was understandable considering the level of German armament spending at this time compared to the only slowly rearming Allies. Within just over a year, this prediction as to when the proportional superiority of the Wehrmacht would diminish was proven to be wildly optimistic: following the Anschluss of Austria and the annexation of the Sudetenland the Allies began to rearm ever more quickly.²⁰⁹ Thus the declining superiority of the Wehrmacht, and its concomitant superiority of the moment, increasingly became a significant concern for what Albert Speer dubbed the 'war party' within the Reich's leadership; in August 1939 Speer described how this group believed that 'They [the Allies] need at least one and a half to

²⁰⁸ Memorandum: Minutes of the Conference in the Reich Chancellery, Berlin, November 5, 1937, from 4:15 to 8:30 P.M., in *Documents on German Foreign Policy, Series D*, Vol. I, (London, His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1949), pp. 29-39.

²⁰⁹ This is demonstrated by the jump in British defence expenditure in 1938-1939 from 8 per cent to 17 per cent shown in Noakes and G. Pridham, (1984), p. 298.

two years before their production will reach its maximum yield. Only after 1940 can they begin to catch up [...] If they produce only as much as we do ... our proportional superiority will constantly diminish'.²¹⁰

The timeframe for when the Allies would catch up to and surpass Germany's hard-won proportional superiority was, therefore, deteriorating much more quickly than had been hoped for at Hossbach in 1937. As such, it became increasingly necessary to somehow respond to the potential loss of this advantage. One way to forestall such a loss, make good on the orders for the increasingly overwhelmed armaments industry and escape the diplomatic reversals of 1938-1939, was to go to war. Indeed, Hitler described this as his motivation when writing a letter to Mussolini in the spring of 1940.

'In light of Britain's intended armaments effort, as well as considering England's intention of mobilizing all conceivable auxiliaries ... it appeared to me after all to be right ... to begin immediately with the counterattack, even at the risk of thereby precipitating the war intended by the Western powers two or three years earlier. After all Duce, what could have been the improvement in our armaments in two or three years? As far as the Wehrmacht was concerned, in light of England's forced rearmament, a significant shift in the balance of forces in our favour was barely conceivable. And towards the east the situation could only deteriorate.'²¹¹

While this could have been an *ex post facto* justification for the outbreak of war in 1939, it would be a mistake to dismiss it as such. Within the available literature on Hitler in 1939 it is apparent that such

²¹⁰ Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, (London, Phoenix, 1995), pp. 235-236.

²¹¹ Tooze, p. 317.

a change in the balance of forces clearly concerned him and others greatly, and it is not incredible to suggest that the drive to war was, in part, driven by this consideration. This chapter will explore this theme further, and in doing so will discuss the state of the Wehrmacht at the outbreak of war, the state of British rearmament in 1939, and the accompanying push for war by Hitler.

On 24 May 1939 General Thomas gave a highly pessimistic lecture at the Foreign Ministry in which he laid out the significant challenges that Germany faced from a war with the Allies. Thomas stated that while ‘the western Great Powers are not yet pursuing rearmament with the same energy we are [...] we must of course realise that the Western Powers ... will be in a position to catch up with the German lead in 1-1½ years.’²¹² Thomas proceeded to elaborate on the inherent weaknesses of Germany’s rearmament in depth – its ability to endure in a long war – and of the superior staying power of the combined economic might of the Allies in this area.²¹³ And yet, while Thomas did paint an overwhelmingly negative picture of the Reich’s chances in the long-term, he also drew attention to his country’s considerable advantage in its rearmament in breadth – the number and strength of the armed forces in peacetime, and the preparations made to increase these in wartime. Thomas argued that ‘...we can perceive today German armament in its breadth and state of preparedness has a considerable start over the armament of all other countries.’²¹⁴ In light of these two vastly different states of readiness, in breadth and depth of armament, Thomas speculated that the success of any war would depend on the Axis being able to bring

²¹² Noakes and G. Pridham, (1988), p. 124.

²¹³ *Ibid*, pp. 123-124.

²¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 123.

‘... about a decision by a quick decisive blow’; if this was not successful ‘then the depth of military economic power, that is, the powers of endurance, will decide the issue.’²¹⁵ It was, then, clear to the Reich’s planners and strategists that Germany’s proportional superiority faced a serious challenge, and most likely failure, in the event of a long drawn out arms race or war, and as such the only solution was to pull back from the brink or to become yet more belligerent. Considering the state of German arms in 1939 and the regime’s implacable hostility to backing down, it is unsurprising that the latter option was chosen.

Moreover, the Reich’s leadership had good reason to be optimistic about its chances militarily, at least in the short-term. This was because, in the words of Tooze, even ‘if on the one hand Hitler knew that the outlook for the immediate future of the German armaments effort was not good, he also knew in the summer of 1939 that the Third Reich had assembled both the largest and most combat-ready army in Europe, as well as the best air force.’²¹⁶ This is attested to by the fact that by September 1939 Germany had 103 full strength divisions, – twenty six more than in 1938 – of which seventy were fit for active service, while the remainder were still capable of static defence.²¹⁷ It was promising, moreover, that the Wehrmacht was now capable of defending Germany on two fronts. During the assault on Poland there would still be 11 first-rate divisions defending the newly finished fortifications on the Westwall that now formed a deep defensive system of 11,283 bunkers and gun emplacements along the Franco-German frontier.²¹⁸ It was, therefore, perfectly rational, on the basis of the increasingly uncontrollable dynamics of the international

²¹⁵ Noakes and G. Pridham, (1988), p. 124.

²¹⁶ Tooze, p. 315.

²¹⁷ Carr, p. 120.

²¹⁸ Tooze, p. 316.

arms race and Hitler's own 'mad logic', for the Reich to charge toward war in the summer of 1939. Indeed, when one includes the Luftwaffe in this calculation then Germany's prospects in a short war became better still. In 1939 the Luftwaffe was the largest and most well-equipped air force in Europe: possessing nearly 4,000 planes of modern design, and benefitting from operational experience provided by its participation in the Spanish Civil War through the Condor Legion.²¹⁹ As such, Tooze argues that 'It was possible, in short, to construct a rationale for war in the autumn of 1939, considering only the dynamics of the armaments effort.'²²⁰ This rationale was indeed explicitly voiced by Hitler in an address to military leaders at Berchtesgaden on 22 August 1939; Hitler argued that 'It is easy for us to make decisions. We have nothing to lose; we have everything to gain. Because of our restrictions our economic situation is such that we can only hold out for a few more years. Göring can confirm this. We have no other choice, we must act.'²²¹ It is clear from this statement that while war in 1939 was not ideal, taking into consideration the dynamics of rearmament and military preparedness it was the best possible time for the Reich to embark upon one.

In order to understand this pressing demand for an early war, it is necessary to briefly divert to the Reich's principle enemy: Britain. As has been mentioned already, Britain had vastly increased its armaments expenditure from a low 8 per cent of its GNP in 1938 to 17 per cent in 1939. It was clear to Germany that Britain was rapidly

²¹⁹ Tooze, p. 316.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Speech by the Führer to the Commanders in Chief on August 22, 1939, *German History in Documents and Images (GHDI)*, <http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=1546>, para 10, [07/02/2018].

increasing the rate of its military expansion and mobilisation for war at precisely the time that Germany's efforts were increasingly under strain. In order to construct a coherent response to German rearmament and aggression Chamberlain's cabinet were, from early 1939, involved in serious discussions about the military readiness of Britain, and the British Army in particular since it was the least well prepared of the three services. Such was the severity of the issue that these concerns dominated many cabinet meetings, such as that of 2 February 1939, where the army's readiness was seriously questioned:

'... the General Staff wished formally to call attention to the fact that present arrangements would not permit the Army to meet satisfactorily or safely the responsibilities it might be called upon to discharge [...] the General Staff were greatly perturbed lest the present state of affairs might result in our soldiers having to run undue and unnecessary risks if they were sent overseas as at present equipped.'²²²

The same cabinet meeting also noted that at that time the army was not even equipped properly for continental service, which would require the re-equipment of four Regular divisions and four Territorial divisions for fighting on the continent.²²³ To make matters worse for Britain, in the short term at least, another cabinet meeting on 22 February conceded that even if war were to break out it would be six months before even four divisions could be deployed to France.²²⁴

²²² CABINET 5 (39), Meeting of the Cabinet to be held at No. 10 Downing Street, S.W.1., on THURSDAY, 2nd FEBRUARY 1939, at 11.0 a.m., pp. 3-4.

²²³ *Ibid*, pp. 5-6.

²²⁴ CABINET 8 (39), Meeting of the Cabinet to be held at No. 10 Downing Street, S.W.1., on WEDNESDAY, 22nd FEBRUARY 1939, at 11.0 a.m., p. 20.

Britain in 1939 was wholly unprepared for a major war, while Germany in 1939 was in an incredibly strong tactical and operational military position, leaving Britain very limited in its ability to respond robustly to German aggression. If Britain and France were given more time, however, it is clear that they were willing to bear the burden of increased defence expenditure and heightened military preparedness to close the gap with and substantially confront Germany.

Yet while Britain and France's rearmament increasingly gained pace, it would not be fast enough to offer any meaningful assistance to Poland if Germany invaded in 1939. Thus, for the Reich it became increasingly necessary for war to be initiated, and soon. And while Hitler certainly hoped to be able to isolate Poland from the west without provoking a declaration of war from the Allies, he accepted the risk of provoking such a war and pressed on regardless.

To speak of miscalculations and mistakes is to underestimate the deliberateness of Hitler's intent; at a conference on 23 May Hitler stated unequivocally that 'We cannot expect a repetition of the Czech affair. There will be war. Our task is to isolate Poland. The success of this isolation will be decisive.'²²⁵ This was followed with the stipulation that 'If this is impossible [to keep the west out of the conflict], then it will be better to attack in the West and to deal with Poland at the same time.'²²⁶ Indeed this view did not change between May and 22 August, when Hitler argued once again in a speech to his generals that 'The destruction of Poland has priority. [...] Even if war breaks out in the

²²⁵ Minutes of a conference on 23 May 1939, in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook: An Anthology of Texts*, ed. by Roderick Stackelberg, and Sally A. Winkle, Taylor and Francis, (Taylor & Francis, 2002), p. 233.

²²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 233.

West, the destruction of Poland remains the priority.²²⁷ What is clear from this is that while the combination of forces facing him in the summer of 1939 were not as he had hoped or planned for, it was a combination that he was nonetheless willing to risk going to war with due to the superiority of the Reich's military machine and its imperative to overcome the structural pressures and constraints outlined in the previous chapters.

²²⁷ Ibid, p. 246.

Conclusion

It is apposite to return here to Marx's quote from the beginning of this thesis. Adolf Hitler and the National Socialists of the Third Reich attempted to turn Germany from a depression-crippled country into the world power within just eight years. Great strides were achieved in this direction, yet it became clear that Hitler's lofty objectives were unachievable for a medium-sized European nation such as itself. Time and again, the Reich found itself fighting against the 'circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past.' Thus, 'The traditions of dead generations' certainly weighed 'like a nightmare' upon the designs of Nazi Germany's leadership.

Writing in 1989, the economic historian David Kaiser stated that the question of the outbreak of the Second World War having domestic origins 'is one of the most controversial issues in the historiography of Nazi Germany.'²²⁸ This thesis agrees with Kaiser, since it remains a struggle to give definitive answer to this question. Yet while a definitive answer will most likely elude historians forever, it is nonetheless possible to weigh the evidence available and endorse the structuralist position over that of the intentionalist. This thesis has taken the view of historians such as Kaiser and Tooze over that of Overy because it has found that the evidence of friction within the Reich's diplomacy and economy is the most compelling.

To take the intentionalist position is, moreover, to take a position on more sparse evidence than is available to the functionalist or structuralist. Indeed, the historians Noakes and Pridham have stated that:

²²⁸ David Kaiser & Tim Mason, p. 200.

‘It is, in fact, notoriously difficult to chart the channels through which information and power flowed to and from the Führer. Hitler was averse to paperwork; most of his involvement in government took the form of face to face encounters between himself and his subordinates of which little or no record survives save brief comments about his wishes or simply that “the Führer has been informed”’.²²⁹

This problem confronts any historiographical interpretation of the Third Reich, but in the case of examining the structural origins of the war it is a somewhat less obstructive problem due to the availability of more data on economics and rearmament than on the personal pronouncements of Hitler. What is more, from what is available of Hitler’s pronouncements it is possible to construct a compelling narrative of domestic pressure and friction leading to war.

Thus, the Third Reich entered 1939 with a short to mid-term conception of a diplomatic and economic strategy, only to see it founder against concerted international opposition and binding balance of payments problems and raw material shortages. Yet, by the summer of 1939 this position had been significantly alleviated by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact that freed Germany from many of its strategic concerns, both diplomatic and economic, and gave it freedom to act unilaterally where before it had been unable to. This decision to act was, moreover, taken in light of an increasingly unfavourable international situation that threatened to erode, and ultimately destroy, the Wehrmacht’s proportional superiority. There is sufficient evidence that Hitler took these problems seriously, and that combined they gave an added impetus for war that could otherwise

²²⁹ Noakes and G. Pridham, (1984), p. 196.

have been lacking. It is clear to this thesis that the Third Reich went to war in 1939 because it did, indeed, have nothing to gain by waiting.

Appendix

German Words:

Ostkrieg – Eastern war, a concept that had been driving Germany strategy for decades

Lebensraum – literally ‘living space’, the desire for it drove Nazi expansionism towards the east

Wehrmacht – The Wehrmacht were the unified armed forces of Nazi Germany, consisting of three branches:

The Luftwaffe – the air force

The Heer – the land forces

The Kriegsmarine – the navy

Anschluss – the ‘union’ between Austria and Germany achieved through annexation in 1938.

Westwall – the German defensive line that covered the Franco-German border.

Codenames:

Case White – the German invasion of Poland for September 1939

Events:

The Munich Agreement – the meeting at Munich between the leaders of Italy, Germany, France and Great Britain at which it was agreed that the ethnically German Sudetenland would be ceded from Czechoslovakia to the Reich.

Places:

Bessarabia – a region of eastern Romania – today Moldova – that was claimed by the Soviet Union

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