

Document A: Neville Chamberlain (Modified)

Neville Chamberlain met with Adolf Hitler twice in 1938 to discuss Germany's aggressive foreign policy. On September 30, 1938, they signed the Munich Pact, which gave the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia to Germany. In exchange, Hitler agreed that Germany would not seek to acquire additional territory. In this excerpt, Chamberlain defends the agreement in front of the United Kingdom's House of Commons.

What is the alternative to this bleak and barren policy of the inevitability of war? In my view it is that we should seek by all means in our power to avoid war, by analyzing possible causes, by trying to remove them, by discussion in a spirit of collaboration and good will. I cannot believe that such a program would be rejected by the people of this country, even if it does mean the establishment of personal contact with dictators. . . .

I do indeed believe that we may yet secure peace for our time, but I never meant to suggest that we should do that by disarmament, until we can **induce** others to disarm too. Our past experience has shown us only too clearly that weakness in armed strength means weakness in diplomacy, and if we want to secure a lasting peace, I realize that diplomacy cannot be effective unless . . . behind the diplomacy is the strength to give effect. . . .

I cannot help feeling that if, after all, war had come upon us, the people of this Country would have lost their spiritual faith altogether. As it turned out the other way, I think we have all seen something like a new spiritual revival, and I know that everywhere there is a strong desire among the people to record their readiness to serve their Country, where-ever or however their services could be most useful.

Source: *Neville Chamberlain to the House of Commons, October 5, 1938.*

Vocabulary

induce: convince