

SECTION C

Study Extracts 1 and 2 in the Extracts Booklet before you answer this question.

- 5 Historians have different views about how far Hitler's foreign policy was responsible for the Second World War. Analyse and evaluate the extracts and use your knowledge of the issues to explain your answer to the following question.

How convincing do you find the view that Hitler wanted the Second World War primarily to make living space for Germans?

(20)

The question as to what extent Hitler's foreign policy was important in the ~~break out~~ ~~commencement~~ of the Second World War is a heated debate among modern historians. Up until 1961, most conformed to the intentionalist view that Hitler had always intended and planned world war as a means of attaining control of foreign territory, as is the essence of Carr's extract.

The cause of a radical change of thinking was A. J. P. Taylor's 'The Origins of the Second World War', as presented within Extract 2, in that it conveyed the structuralist ~~perspective~~ ~~concept~~, which suggests that Hitler was more opportunistic and did not have a master plan to attain the land of the East. Difference in view mainly hinges upon differing levels of analytical thinking in regard



of the evidence available.

Carr's extract fundamentally conforms to the perspective notoriously outlined in 1961 by German historian Fritz Fischer in 'Germany's Aims in the First World War', which suggests that Hitler's pursuit of land was planned in that it was a mere continuation of Germany's historically expansionist foreign policy, as seen within Otto von Bismarck's Second Reich (c. 1871-1918). He advocates that the land was pursued "at the expense of 'Jewish-Bolshevik Russia'". Thus not with the pure intention of showing dominance but out of practically contrary to what Taylor insinuates in outlining his view that Hitler's fundamental motivation was an intention to show dominance over the USSR in a ^{domestically} popular "anti-Bolshevik Crusade".

Accordingly, it can be seen that the extracts under analysis differ in the perspectives conveyed - with Taylor



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feeling to regard Lebensraum as "Germany's kitchen", as Carr does, but instead considering it a mere justification of ~~the~~ action, as such a minor element of 'Mein Kampf'.

Retrospectively, it seems apparent that indeed, as Taylor suggests, Hitler had "no plan" for Lebensraum; though it ought to be considered that a lack of organisation and strategic planning was quite characteristic of the Fuehrer, with most plans being left to Nazi deputies. Hence, this claim seems an invalid argument against the ~~idea~~ idea of Lebensraum being Hitler's fundamental motivation in pursuing war, for he was not only highly opportunistic in ^{nature} ~~practice~~.

In addition, Carr seems right to apply weight to the extent of evidence of expansionist ~~intentions~~ intentions within 'Mein Kampf'; a source underlined by Taylor-



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who fails to regard the ~~evident~~ evidence of such intentions beyond that within ~~the~~ a fraction of 'Mein Kampf'; namely the 1922 25 Point Plan and an extensive plethora of speeches given by Hitler ~~best~~ throughout the Nazi period. Furthermore, expansionist tendencies and intentions are evidenced through the fact that, in response to a lack of public morale in regard of prospective Czechoslovakian invasion, ^{in 1938} Hitler sought diplomatic agreements with Chamberlain at the Munich Agreement on 30th September 1938. With the intention to achieve war in order to pursue defeat of the USSR, as Taylor proposed, Hitler would not have sought diplomacy; a move which accentuates his focus upon Lebensraum. Furthermore, the poor public response stands as evidence of the unpopularity of war amongst the 'volk', accordingly almost ridiculing Taylor's idea that war was pursued in light of



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Hitler's fundamental aim to
"win the hearts and minds of those in
the west".

This quotation additionally
pragmatically regards the issue of
alternative western European
countries, thus suggesting that
Hitler intended to please ^{European} peers
by ~~leaving as the~~ participating in
"anti-Bolshevik" conflict. However it
seems improbable that this intention
was held as British appeasement
policy, and promises to protect
Poland's independence made by the
French and British governments on
31st March 1939, suggests that
war had not been ~~intended~~
desired across Europe, and so
this would logically from Hitler's
perspective, not be an effective
means of ~~attain~~ winning their "hearts
and minds"; especially so soon after
the 1939 Munich ~~Treaty~~ Molotov -
Ribbentrop Pact which seemed to be
greater proof with expansionist
intentions than an aim to please



^{western} ~~that~~ European Statesmen.

Conclusively thus, in fundamental agreement with the perspective of Carr, I believe that ~~the idea that~~ the idea that Hitler's main intention behind the pursuit of war was Lebensraum is a highly convincing view; for it is extensively evidenced. Whilst Taylor disputes that a more considerable element of Mein Kampf was "anti-semitism", his motivation for war seems to strongly link that of Lebensraum, as anti-semitic war time measures - like the enforcement of genocide at cross Polish death camps - were an aspect of making room in order to "gather all German-speaking people in one great Reich", as described by Carr.

