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After signing an agreement which is commonly called the "Pact of Steel," Hitler shows the treaty to Galeazzo Ciano (Italy's Foreign Minister). Leaders of the two countries signed the document at the Reich Chancellory, in Berlin, on 22 May 1939. Image online via [German History in Documents and Images](#).

As an Austrian, Hitler had a special reason to join the country of his birth with the country he now ruled. In March of 1938, as he announced the "peaceful" annexation (*Anschluss*) of Austria, the Fuhrer was greeted with a rousing ovation. Of course, it was just the first stage of his plan as his forces and equipment made ready to strike terror into the hearts of Europeans everywhere.

Soon Czechoslovakian Sudetenland, a place largely inhabited by German-speaking people, was part of the Nazi's regime. Not everyone in Sudetenland was happy with the change.

After Hitler was in power, he invited Mussolini to visit Germany. While in Munich, the two leaders appeared together. Hitler did his best to influence the Italian.

Not long after *Il Duce's* visit, his government began to formulate the basis for anti-Jewish race laws. Those Jews who dared to respond did not always fare well. Neither did the rest of the Jewish population in Italy.

The two dictators cemented an alliance with the Rome-Berlin Axis. Their "Pact of Steel" was signed on May 22, 1939.

Two years later, while the Germans were still celebrating the effects of the Blitzkrieg against London, the men of the Italian Acqui Division landed at Cephalonia.

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Hitler Demanded the Sudetenland

Image online, courtesy World War II Remembered.

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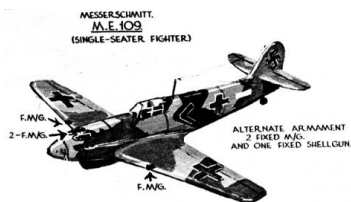
Standing Ovation Following the Anschluss Speech

Image online, courtesy U.S. National Archives. Image 208-N-39843.

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German Messerschmitt

Image online, courtesy warbirdphotos.net website.

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