# Hittler’s Approach to War Doctrine and His Success

## Introduction

War has often been viewed as an intentional and violent act meant to compel opponents into accomplishing an intended purpose. However, numerous debates have ensued concerning whether war has actually been used as an instrument of policy or not. The notion that war has and is repeatedly used in the course of history as a mechanism for advancing foreign policy has often been supported by the fact that States can only survive if they are willing to take up arms and protect their interests (Glantz & House, 2015). When fighting for national interests and acquire their share in the cake of global supremacy a country must be willing to exercise and display its military prowess through the act of war. Based on such arguments, most scholars have suggested that war is actually a mechanism used to further foreign policy. On the other hand, Bell (2014) argues that although war might have been used in such a manner in the past regimes have realized that such usage does not provide the necessary results but rather breeds resentment and more violence.

Nevertheless, if using war as a mechanism for advancing policy has been useful in the past success must have been based on the perspective different leaders had towards the war doctrine. As Badsey (2016) indicates, previous leaders may not have succeeded in obtaining desired changes but they can teach us a lot about their success as tied to their approach to the war doctrine. According to Murray and Millett (2009), the war doctrine guides and informs the actions of leaders by helping them standardize their operations and facilitate the willingness of their subjects to carry out military tasks. On the contrary, a leaders approach to the war doctrine may not guarantee success without the appropriate structures. This paper picks Adolf Hitler as a leader in World War II to demonstrate and discuss how his approach to the war doctrine caused him to succeed.

## Discussion

From Hitler’s perspective, war was a tool for advancing his aggressive policies on expansion. This understanding of war gave him the audacity to believe that violence would help Nazi’s policies come to fruition. According to Murray and Millett (2009), Hitler succeeded because the approach made him ken on his enemies’ moves and therefore war never took him by surprise. Exploratory studies into the success of Hitler to unearth why he commanded followership successfully indicate that his subjects gained confidence in him due to his capacity to predict his enemies’ strategies. Since his ascent to power in the year 1933, the summation of his political tactics aimed towards creating chaos and war. As Van Creveld (2009) suggests, this is because his approach towards war was that it was the only way that Germany could create a contusive economic environment allowing the Nazi’s to wage a successful war against Europe. Astoundingly, while maintaining such a perspective he managed to deceive the public that he had decided to go the way of peace. this confirms the assertion made by Herwig (2014) that Hitler’s success emanated from his ability to keep his approach on war only known to his military subjects until the time was ripe.

Hitler’s approach to the war doctrine was also embedded in the belief that war was the only remedy for oppressive and embarrassing foreign policies. This was after he had watched from the sidelines and seen Germany being forced to admit that it caused the First World War. Germany had apparently come under heavy force after the formation of the Treaty of Versailles back in the year 1919 (Ladwig III, 2008). After evaluating the situation, he decided to result to war as the only solution and way of regaining the honor of his country. As Johnson (2014) observes, the main reason why Hitler succeeded during his time was that his desire to reinstate the honor of Germany at the time resonated with most of the Nazi’s. Consequently, it was easy for him to get a following by inciting his fellow Nazi’s to adopt his view on the war doctrine. Studies actually reinforce this assertion suggesting that successful leaders in times of war must convince there to-be followers that their approach to war will help solve a common and pressing problem (Johnson, 2014).

Hitler also succeeded because he not only adopted a war doctrine but also developed a theory to back it up. As Herwig (2014) concedes, the success of Hitler emanated from his realization that war doctrines are incapable of producing the anticipated results if leaders fail to recognize that war doctrines thrive based on the appropriateness of the select conspiracy theory. So to say, Hitler’s approach to war incorporated the ‘stabbed in the back conspiracy theory’ (Murray & Millett, 2009). This explains why he went down into historical records as one of the most successful leaders of war. This theory as published by Hitler suggested that the politicians of Germany after being entrusted by the country to represent them in international policy making circles had stabbed the country at the back just when it was about to gain supremacy over its adversaries. According to Bell (2014), a war doctrine with a cleverly and timely constructed conspiracy theory to back it up is likely to give any leader of war command and loyalty of subjects given the same circumstances. Although some scholars have suggested that war doctrine and conspiracy theories are two separate entities, Glantz and House (2015) hold that for war doctrine to inform the actions of military leaders a conspiracy theory must be at the core. Thus, Hitler succeeded owing to his adept capability to merge war doctrine with an appropriate theory.

## Conclusion

This paper picked Adolf Hitler as a leader in World War II to demonstrate and discuss how his approach to the war doctrine caused him to succeed. Although a lot of previous research has focused on helping understand whether war has actually been used as an instrument of policy or not, there is a lack of studies exploring the leaders in past wars and their inclinations towards war doctrine that led to their success. Hitler viewed war as a mechanism for advancing his pre-planned expansion policies. This helped him to succeed because he was able to anticipate probable moves from his enemies in the time of war thus gaining the confidence of his subjects. Further, his approach towards war doctrine was that war was the only remedy if overrun by foreign policies as was the case with Germany under the heavy arm of the Treaty of Versailles. Since the Nazi’s held the same opinion about the need to restore Germany’s honor, he succeeded by convincing them war was the only way that could be accomplished. Moreover, Hitler’s approach to war doctrine was that it needed to be merged with an appropriate theory of conspiracy. His choice of ‘stabbed in the back conspiracy theory’ served the purpose and enhanced his chances of success.

## **References**

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