

Question 13

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a). Albert Speer was born March 1905 in Mannheim Germany. He was one of three children and was brought up into a wealthy family. His dad was an architect and wealthy, and his ~~was~~ mum was also very wealthy. He had the privilege of maids waiting on him hand and foot. He had a lonely childhood because his parents were always working they never had time to show love or affection.

Albert graduated from school with impressive results and was persuaded by his father to become an architect. He went to uni and graduated as an architect. While working at the university of technology he was persuaded by his students to attend a speech by Hitler. Speer was not interested in politics but went along anyway. He was moved by Hitler's words and the enthusiasm he spoke with. He heard him

talk of restoring national honour and Speer was put under the "hitler spell" like so many others. Speer joined the Nazi party in 1931.

Because Speer now joined the Nazi party he was starting to get work from them. He was asked to renovate the propaganda ministry for Goebbels, and he did in record time. He was getting a reputation for his work and started to get bigger tasks like organizing the Nuremberg rally. Hitler and other leaders were impressed at his work and also because he was an efficient organizer. Hitler got him to renovate the chancellery office and he did in record time.

Hitler liked Speer and related to him in ways that others couldn't. He saw Speer as the architect he dreamed of being and liked the way he spoke

his mind. Hitler liked his style of architecture and dominance in his work. Speer became one of the very few people in Hitler's "inner circle". Speer claims "If Hitler had friends, I definitely was one". Hitler got Speer to start planning for the new Berlin, called Germania.

In 1942 when Todt, minister of armaments and munitions was killed, Hitler put Speer in his position. He was now minister of armaments and ammunition. Speer was very surprised because he had no previous experience in this field. His position in the Nazi party was now more important.

During the war<sup>1944</sup> Speer increased armaments and munitions by 300% with only a 30% increase in labour. He succeeded in armaments production. Speer's role in the party and his power continued to grow when war production became his responsibility also. He was in charge

of the factories and the thousands of workers in both the armament and amunitions aswell as all war production. He was dragged into politics by ~~the~~ bormann and others that tried to take away his power and stop the things he was doing.

The reason Speer rose to power so quickly and became such an important person during the "hitler era" was because he could manipulate hitler and because of this he almost had unlimited power and "back up" from hitler.

B) Albert speer is a personality that is interpreted as both the good nazi and the bad nazi. There is controversy about if speer knew about the extermination of the jews and the concentration camps

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13b also the final solution. Speer is famously know for that reason, but he is also known for being the "second man" in Germany. He is interpreted as "accident" becoming a great power in Germany as he always wanted to be an architect and claims he has no interest in politics. He was successful in all that he did including the minister of armament and munitions and increasing production.

As said before there is controversy about if Speer knew about the final solution. At the Nuremberg trials Speer claimed he knew nothing about it, but he took responsibility for undertaking Hitler's orders and because of this he was not sentenced to death, ~~but got~~ like everybody else in Hitler's inner circle, he got 20 years in Spandau prison.

many historians have different views on Albert Speer. Gitta Sereny doesn't understand how Speer could not have known. How could he not have noticed thousands of Jews disappearing. She interviewed him and he said he had suspicions about what was going on. She believes that he "must have had evidence to base his suspicions".

Speer also got complaints that the workers were too weak and that they had to be sent back to concentration camps. He went and inspected "Dora" and he gave the materials that needed to be used to improve conditions but never took any more notice.

Another historian Erich Goldberg also believes Speer knew of the final solution. He has documents to "back up" that

Speer was at the posen meeting where Himmler informed everyone about the final solution and Speer's name was mentioned during the meeting.

How could Speer not know where all of the Jews were going when they destroyed the "Jew flats" to make room for Germania.

Speer is ~~known~~ most known for claiming he ~~doesn't~~ <sup>didn't</sup> know about the final solution, and being the second man in Germany, under Hitler. It is not a balanced interpretation of him or his life.