

## Haggling for Colonies: Hitler Meets Franco (October 23, 1940)

### Abstract

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After the Fall of France in June 1940, Adolf Hitler traveled to Hendaye, a city on the border of Spain and the fallen French state, to meet with Francisco Franco, the Spanish fascist dictator. While Hitler and the Nazi regime had helped Franco come to power and win the Spanish Civil War in 1936, relations between the two men and their governments had been strained. When the war broke out, Spain declared its neutrality. After France's defeat, Hitler hoped to persuade Franco to aid in an offensive against Britain. Spain's proximity to Africa also provided an excellent point of entry into Britain's colonial world. While this image depicting Hitler's arrival and initial meeting with Franco appears warm, the meeting was not successful. The two fascist dictators sparred for seven hours over what was to be done with France's former colonies and Britain's territories in places like Gibraltar, a small swath of land on the tip of the Iberian Peninsula. While Hitler was looking for a fascist military alliance against Britain to finally conquer the West, Franco was looking for a partnership that would properly reward Spain for its contributions should Germany succeed. In the end, Hitler was only willing to promise Spain vague territorial concessions. The meeting showed how the legacies of colonialism—for Spain had once been a prominent colonial power in the world—came to the fore during the war. Since Germany was unwilling to concede to Spain what Franco thought it was owed, Hitler's potential fascist ally on the Mediterranean Sea remained neutral.

### Source

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Source: Photograph, October 23, 1940. Photographer: Heinrich Hoffmann. Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe

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