

Wehrmacht Units Occupy the Demilitarized Rhineland Zone: The First Troops March Into Koblenz (March 1936)

Abstract

On March 7, 1936, about 30,000 German soldiers marched into the Rhineland, which had been demilitarized after the end of the First World War. As always, Hitler's aggressive policy was accompanied by an emphasis on peace. He justified the occupation, which violated both the Versailles Treaty and the Locarno Pact, as the restitution of the German right to self-determination. He had no intention, he said, of altering the western boundaries of the Reich. It was Hitler's riskiest action thus far and could have been quickly halted had French troops been called in. But the French government overestimated the strength of the German troops and did not want to act without Great Britain's support. The British government refrained from taking countermeasures because no international boundary had been crossed. According to official data, more than 98.9% of Germans expressed support for the invasion in a referendum held on March 29, 1936. Photo by Carl Weinrother.

Source



Source: Wehrmacht units occupy the demilitarized Rhineland. Photo: Carl Weinrother. bpk-Bildagentur, image number 30024574. For rights inquiries, please contact Art Resource at requests@artres.com (North America) or bpk-Bildagentur at kontakt@bpk-bildagentur.de (for all other countries).

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