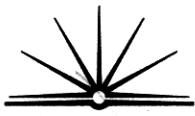




Q3.6. Albert Speer

i. Albert Speer's career up until the end of the second world war was eventful in his rise from anonymity to one of the most powerful men in the Nazi military machine. Speer's life from the time of his study at architecture school, underwent tumultuous rise as he rose to prominence and became Hitler's closest confidant and most trusted advisor. In return for Speer's work, Hitler rewarded his good friend with positions of power which Speer enjoyed until the end of the second world war when Speer experienced a difference of opinion with the Führer as the war was lost. Speer's rise began in architecture school where he led a relatively affluent and middle to upper-class lifestyle and did not make much impact on the world. This began to change when he attended a rally of Nazi/Hitler supporters and was inspired by Hitler's talk of a new world, a better world for Germany. Speer joined the Nazi Party and was a member of insignificance, not making his presence known on any grand



level. Opportunities began to arise for the young Speer to undertake design and architecture work commissioned for party members and government officials. Whilst working on renovations to the Chancellor's residence, Speer met Hitler who shared his great passion for architecture. Hitler took a liking to Speer and commissioned him for many important works. Speer worked on the Nuremberg rally and it was here, with his cathedral of light (spotlights) that epitomised Nazi power, that Speer excelled. He assumed more and more notable posts in architecture-based roles until ultimately, he became Hitler's private architect after the death of Fost. From here Speer's role expanded further as he ultimately assumed the role of Minister for War, later taking on the role of Minister for War Armaments where he revolutionised production and implemented slave labour in the form of POW and Jew exploitation in work camps. The promise "work brings freedom" did not occur however. Speer split with Hitler in the dying days of the war and refused to implement the "Scorched-earth" policy. Hitler, according to Speer, ordered him killed and subsequently the war ended and Hitler died. The significant events up until 1945 were never truly realized at the Nuremberg War Trials despite Speer's great significance to ^{this era} in German history.