***12 Military Opposition Worksheet One***

**The army officer: General Ludwig Beck (1180-1944)**

Beck described President Hindernburg’s death on 2 August 1934 as the blackest day of his life. Hitler proclaimed himself Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and made Beck the army’s chief of staff (1933-1938). In May 1938, Hitler told the generals of his unalterable aim to attack Czechoslovakia. Beck was opposed, as the army was not ready for general war. He tried to organise all the chiefs of staff to threaten resignation over Hitler’s radical approach, but the new commander in chief General Walther von Brauchitsch failed to give his support. In August 1938 Beck resigned commenting to a colleague: ‘What is that dog doing to our beautiful Germany?’ Beck conceived a plan for a march on Berlin, but called it off after Hitler gained the Sudetenland. Many other generals, aware of the plotting, had a wait and see attitude to these activities. Beck remained in contact with various opposition circles. In 1944 he was shot for his involvement in the Bomb Plot

**The army officer: Colonel Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg (1907-1944)**

Colonel Stauffenbery was an aristocratic soldier. An able and ambitious officer, he was in the army High Command by 1940. He had a monarchist distaste for Hitler and was horrified by the SS barbarities in the USSR. In September 1942, at the army High Command, one general urged that they must tell Hitler the truth about the military disaster. Stauffenberg replied, ‘it is not a question of telling him the truth, but of killing him, and I am prepared to do it.’ In 1943 Stauffenberg was wounded in North Africa and lost his right hand, half of his left hand and his left eye. In July 1944 he twice took bombs into Hitler’s headquarters, but did not use them as Himmler and Goering were not present. On 29 July he went ahead anyway, but Hitler was only wounded. At least 5,000 people said to be ‘involved’ were executed.

**The army officer: General Hans Oster (1887-1945)**

Oster was a member of the General Staff, serving in the Ministry of Defence, and then in the Abwehr. He became alienated by the 1934 killing of General Schleicher in the aftermath of the Night of the Long Knives. In 1938 he advised Britain to stand firm against Hitler and sent the British government details of Germany’s military plans. He made contact with trade unionists and Socialist who were actively encouraging resistance and was involved in the 1944 Bomb Plot. He died in Flossenburg concentration camp four days before Allied troops liberated it.

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| Name | Summary of Opposition | Success out of 5 |
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