On September 30, 1938, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain flew back to London from his meeting at Munich with the German Chancellor Adolf Hitler and was greeted with a hero's welcome. As he paused on the aircraft steps, he held aloft the piece of paper, bearing both his and the Führers signatures, which contained the promise that Britain and Germany would never go to war with each other again. Later that evening, from his upstairs window at 10 Downing Street, he told the ecstatic and thankful crowd that he had returned bringing Peace with honour -- Peace for our time.

In this important reappraisal of the extraordinary events of seventy years ago, acclaimed historian David Faber traces the key incidents leading up to the meeting at Munich and its immediate aftermath. He describes Lord Halifax's ill-fated visit to Hitler; Chamberlain's secret negotiations with Mussolini, followed by the resignation of Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden; and the Berlin scandal that rocked Hitler's regime. Faber takes us to Vienna for the Nazi Anschluss; to the Sudetenland, the mountainous border region of Czechoslovakia, where Hitler's puppets attempted to provide him with a pretext for war by inciting the minority German population to rebellion; and to Prague, where the Czechoslovak government desperately tried to head off the Führer's warlike intentions. In Berlin, we witness Hitler inexorably preparing for war, even in the face of opposition from his own generals; and in London, we watch helplessly as Chamberlain seizes executive control from his own cabinet and makes one supreme effort after another to appease Hitler, culminating in his three remarkable flights to Germany.

Drawing on a wealth of original archival material, including diaries and notes taken by Hitler and Chamberlain's translator, Faber's sweeping reassessment of the events of 1938 resonates with an insider's feel for the political infighting he uncovers. Packed with narrative punch and vivid characters, Munich, 1938 transports us to the war rooms and bunkers, revealing the secret negotiations and scandals upon which the world's fate would rest. It is modern history writing at its best.
My Personal Review:
Munich has become a political synonym for appeasing an enemy nation. In "Munich 1938" David Faber, a former member of the British House of Commons and a grandson of Harold MacMillian has produced a fine addition to the study of the diplomatic disaster which led Europe into the holocaust years of World War II.

It had been only 20 years previous to 1938 that the guns of World War I had been silenced. This event was followed by the Versailles Treaty, the formation of the League of Nations and the disastrous reparations foisted on the defeated German state. After the failure of the Weimar Republic, the Great Depression and massive unemployment, Hitler and his Nazi thugs became the rulers of Germany.

Conservative Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain was an arch appeaser of Nazi Germany. He did not want to have Great Britain undergo another bloodbath as she had experienced in the horror of World War I. He viewed Czechoslovakia, a state created by the Versailles Treaty, to be unworthy of British blood and treasure. Chamberlain made his first airplane flights to Germany to meet with Chancellor Hitler. The meetings occurred in the fall of 1938 at Berchtesgaden, Hitler's mountain eyrie in Bavaria; Godesburg and most infamously in Munich.

At the Munich meeting Mr. Chamberlain represented Great Britain with Daladier the Prime Minister of France also participating as well as Duce Mussolini and Hitler of Germany. It was decided that Hitler would be given free reign to invade Czech. in defense of the Sudentenland Germans who wanted to be ruled from Berlin. Hitler later commented that he treated the democracies as if they were worms. After Munich the Fuhrer dreamed of conquering all of Europe and invading the Soviet Union. The nations of Central Europe fell like dominoes into the grasp of the Nazi juggernaut of death, persecution and unbelievable cruelty.

Despite such brave cries in the wilderness by future PM Winston Churchill. Sir Anthony Eden at the Foreign Office and Lord Halifax the Fuhrer was given Czecch. on a silver platter. He had already grabbed Austria for Germany in the Anschluss of March, 1938. War would be declared after the Nazis invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. Poland was allied with Great Britain and France who then declared war on Germany. Neither of these nations gave Poland any meaningful help during the Nazi blitzkrieg.

Diplomatic history can be a dull read but this book rivets the reader's attention knowing the consequences of the appeasement preached by Chamberlain and his allies.

Neville Chamberlain was a Victorian man whose ideas of fair play and justice were no match against the cruelty and deception of such an odious dictator as Hitler.

This book is a valuable addition to the bookshelf of anyone interested in World War II's beginnings.