

Why did the british
government decide to
evacuate children
from major british
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In 1939 Britain evacuated millions of children from its major cities and towns. Evacuation began on 1st September, roughly two days before Britain went to war. The Government wanted its children out of the way before the war started. Evacuation was voluntary, the Government expected over 3.5 million people to leave for the safety of the countryside. In fact, only 1.5 million did and, of those, 735,000 were children travelling alone. So, why did the Government undertake an extremely hard task to evacuate 3.5 million children in 1939? The first causes were long term starting at World War 1.

In the beginning, the first ever reason for evacuation was at the end of World War 1. At the early stages of WW1 most important aircrafts were airships that were huge bags of lighter-than-air hydrogen gas. The British mainly used these for escorting ships and for hunting German U-Boats. However, the German airships were much more advanced and widely used than ours, called Zeppelins that were able to fly much higher and faster. The Germans realised the potential of Zeppelins as bombers and the first raids hit British towns in early 1915.

During the course of that war, 1400 civilians were killed in just over 100 raids. Even though this was a milestone. This was said that this War was the first ever 'Total war'. I think that these causes were important because they showed the Government that if a war would break out, that the people would be most in danger with air raids. I think by now it was clear that the Government was very concerned about air raids and the effects. By September 1939 evacuation began in Britain, two days before they went to war. In 1944

a third evacuation took place because of the development of V1 and V2 rockets.

Hitler becoming the Chancellor is a very important cause because he was responsible for the development of the Luftwaffe and if he had never come to power than Germany may never have started the Second World War. 5 million people to leave the cities for the safety of the countryside. The citizens of Britain, generally secure from enemy action for almost 1000 years, now found themselves vulnerable, and became more so with each advance in aviation technology. The next causes were the pressure at home and abroad and the Government attitudes.

By 1919 air technology had improved dramatically and first long-distance flights were invented. Many children from the cities got a chance of a better life and taught the wealthier families how tough life was for the poor people in Britain. It was accepted by London that they would not be just only place targeted by bombers, as other town would be to. After, the Daily Mail, keen to support the Government's evacuation scheme, tried to reassure mothers who stayed behind, " You have done a brave and self-sacrificing thing in sending your children away from the danger areas". They wanted to evacuate 3 ? million people out of London.