

A Break in the Storm can be purchased at www.barnesandnoble.com and through the book's website, www.abreakinthestorm.com. Most bookstores do not have *A Break in the Storm* in stock yet, but Barnes and Noble stores can order it from their warehouse.

AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS

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AUTHOR ANSWERS CONTROVERSIAL HISTORICAL QUESTION: COULD WORLD WAR II BEEN EASILY AVOIDED? --How could World War II have been prevented?

In March 1936, all of Europe was still mired in the devastation wrought by World War I. That war had destroyed a whole generation-in France alone, half of all men from 20-32 years old had been killed-and had devastated large portions of France and other countries, leveling towns and every field, every tree. People everywhere were so sick of war that they couldn't contemplate more fighting.

On March 7, 1936, Hitler reoccupied the Rhineland. This was the buffer zone in which Germany by treaty was forbidden to maintain any military forces. If the Germans violated that, the Allies-France, Britain, etc.-were obligated by treaty to expel them. The Allies had huge armies, and Hitler had only a small force, which the Allies could easily have thrown out. Hitler's own high command knew this, and they knew this would be the end of Hitler's regime. But the Allies, sick with fear, did nothing. Hitler's bluff had worked.

Later, Hitler began invading other countries, Austria and then Czechoslovakia, one by one. By then Germany had rearmed and the Allies had lost their superiority, so they were even less inclined to resist. That's why March 1936 turned out to be the last moment when World War II could have been prevented.

If France had chosen to act on Hitler's reoccupation, would he just be another footnote in history? Could any other means other than force have induced Hitler to back down?

Based on having lived in Europe while these events were unfolding, author and World War II veteran Arnold Simon has thought-provoking answers to all these questions and many related questions as well. Simon cleverly entwines strong, resilient, fictional characters with factual events and presents fascinating themes throughout *A Break in the Storm*, which still resonate in today's socio-political climate:

Simon can discuss:

- **What steps might have been taken to prevent World War II**
- **Whether there are parallels between inaction before World War II and the current war on terrorism**
- **The root causes of war and the unending perpetuation of hatred and fighting**
- **Why the Allies did nothing when Hitler violated the post World War II Locarno Pact and reoccupied the Rhineland**
- **Why March 7, 1936 is perhaps the most tragic of the twentieth century's many tragic dates**
- **The impact of these historic events on the characters who are caught up in them**

"The ideas and answers to these profound questions are important to me," Simon explains, "and I feel they are relevant to the rest of the world and to current events. I know I can make them interesting, both to those who are already familiar with those events and to those to whom they are new."

Arnold Simon lived in Europe at the time before World War II when the events that form the background of this novel were unfolding. Simon returned to the United States on the eve of the war, enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served during World War II. After graduating from Yale, he was an aerospace engineer and eventually entered law school at age thirty-nine. He has studied creative writing at UCLA. He and his wife live in Los Angeles.