Chapter 26: The World at War 1939-1945
Section 1: Again the Road to War 1933-1939

- What were Hitler’s foreign policy aims? Was he bent on conquest, or did he simply want to return Germany to its 1914 boundaries?
- Why did the League of Nations fail?
- Why did Britain and France adopt a policy of appeasement in the 1930s? Did the West buy valuable time to rearm at Munich in 1938?
- Why is the Spanish Civil War sometimes called a prelude to World War II?
Foreign Policy Tensions

- Interventionism
  - Collective security
  - “Wilsonianism”
  - Business interests
- Disarmament
  - Isolationism
  - Nativists
  - Anti-War movement
  - Conservative Republicans
Section 1: Again the Road to War 1933-1939

- Why did the U.S. lapse back into isolationism during the 1920s-1930s?
- What methods did FDR’s administration utilize to move the country from neutrality, to nonbelligerent, to belligerent despite opposition from Congress and the public that both still favored isolationism?
Japanese Attack Manchuria (1931)

League of Nations condemned the action.

Japan leaves the League.

Hoover wanted no part in an American military action in the Far East.
Important to have all nations in the Western Hemisphere united in lieu of foreign aggressions.

FDR → *The good neighbor respects himself and the rights of others.*

Policy of non-intervention and cooperation.
FDR Recognizes the Soviet Union (late 1933)

5 FDR felt that recognizing Moscow might bolster the US against Japan.

5 Maybe trade with the USSR would help the US economy during the Depression.

When the President proclaimed the existence of a foreign war, certain restrictions would automatically go into effect:

- Prohibited sales of arms to belligerent nations.
- Prohibited loans and credits to belligerent nations.
- Forbade Americans to travel on vessels of nations at war [in contrast to WW I].
- Non-military goods must be purchased on a “cash-and-carry” basis → pay when goods are picked up.
- Banned involvement in the Spanish Civil War.

This limited the options of the President in a crisis.

America in the 1930s declined to build up its forces!
U.S. Neutrality
Panay Incident (1937)

December 12, 1937.

Japan bombed *USS Panay* gunboat & three Standard Oil tankers on the Yangtze River.

The river was an international waterway.

Japan was testing US resolve!

Japan apologized, paid US an indemnity, and promised no further attacks.

Most Americans were satisfied with the apology.

Results → Japanese interpreted US tone as a license for further aggression against US interests.
Spanish Civil War (1936-1939)

The American “Lincoln Brigade”
Fascist Aggression

1935: Hitler denounced the Versailles Treaty & the League of Nations [re-arming!]
Mussolini attacks Ethiopia.

1936: German troops sent into the Rhineland.
Fascist forces sent to fight with Franco in Spain.

1938: Austrian Anschluss.
Rome-Berlin Tokyo Pact [AXIS]
Munich Agreement → APPEASEMENT!

1939: German troops march into the rest of Czechoslovakia.
Hitler-Stalin Non-Aggression Pact.

September 1, 1939: German troops march into Poland → blitzkrieg → WW II begins!!!
1939 Neutrality Act

In response to Germany’s invasion of Poland.

FDR persuades Congress in special session to allow the US to aid European democracies in a limited way:

- The US could sell weapons to the European democracies on a “cash-and-carry” basis.
- FDR was authorized to proclaim danger zones which US ships and citizens could not enter.

Results of the 1939 Neutrality Act:

- Aggressors could not send ships to buy US munitions.
- The US economy improved as European demands for war goods helped bring the country out of the 1937-38 recession.

America becomes the “Arsenal of Democracy.”
“America First” Committee

Charles Lindbergh
“Lend-Lease” Act (1941)

Great Britain .................. $31 billion
Soviet Union .................. $11 billion
France .......................... $ 3 billion
China ........................... $1.5 billion
Other European .............. $500 million
South America ............... $400 million

The amount totaled: $48,601,365,000
March, 1938: Hitler annexes Austria into the 3rd Reich.

Hitler’s demands at the Munich Conference are met, and Germany annexes the Sudetenland. Five months later Germany takes the rest of Czechoslovakia.

After Czechoslovakia is seized, Hitler & Josef Stalin, leader of the Soviet Union sign a non-aggression treaty. Hitler is now free to attack Poland, and avoid a two front war.

WWII began on September 1, 1939 when the Nazi blitzkrieg was unleashed upon Poland.
Hitler’s SS officers staged a fake invasion of Germany dressed as Polish soldiers. Hitler used this as an excuse to invade his weaker eastern neighbor.

At dawn 9/1/39, thousands of German tanks of the Wehrmacht rumbled across the Polish border, while the German airforce, the Luftwaffe struck deep into Polish territory, destroying the entire Polish airforce on the ground, along with railroads, supply stations, and telephone stations.

By 9/3/39, German forces were 50 miles into Poland, and the Polish military was in retreat.
Polish forces resisted, but were no match for the highly trained mechanized German forces. Thousands of Polish soldiers died in old fashioned charges on horseback against tanks and dive bombers.

The most devastating weapons were the Panzer Divisions, & the Stuka dive bomber.

A. Panzer Divisions were tank brigades supported by mobile artillery and infantry that could move quickly.
B. Stuka’s were terrifying dive bombers.

Polish forces were to the capital of Warsaw, where they held out for a month, but eventually surrender to Hitler.

Eastern Poland was then invaded by the Soviets.

The world is stunned by how rapidly Poland disappeared from the map.

Great Britain & France declare war on Germany.
German Reichstag salutes Hitler after he announces the invasion of Poland: 9/1/39
German soldiers march through Warsaw in victory parade 10/39
Hitler’s ‘Final Solution Begins in Poland

- With Poland defeated, the SS began mass killings of Jews, intellectuals, military officers, & anyone opposed to Hitler.

SS men execute Polish Jews while people watch.
Blitzkreig in Western Europe

- Winston Churchill becomes PM of the UK after the fall of Poland. Churchill prepares Britain for war.
- With Poland defeated and occupied, Hitler & the Nazi turned their attention on France & western Europe.
- Since the end of WWI, the Nazi’s had wanted to get revenge upon France & the Allied nations.
- German general’s had taken years to devise a plan of defeating France quickly before the Allies could bring all their might against Germany. Gen. Erwin Rommel devised a plan using a quick thrust through France.
- After WWI, France had built an impressive line of fortification on the border of Germany called the Maginot Line which was considered the 8th Wonder of the World.
There was a long pause in the war after the fall of Poland. Many in Britain & France believed Hitler would not attack.

In April, 1940: Hitler & the Wehrmacht & Luftwaffe unleashed upon Western Europe.

A. Denmark falls in 9 hours.
B. Norway falls in 15 days, even with the help of the British Royal navy.
C. The ‘Low Countries’ of Belgium, Netherlands, & Luxembourg fall in days.

Winston Churchill says, “The small countries are smashed up, one by one, like matchwood.”

Hitler is now prepared to invade France.

Britain dispatches its army to France to defend her ally.

FDR, and Congress agree to send France aircraft, and supplies, but not military help.
The Fall of France

- Most of the world believed the France would defeat Germany easily. The French army was 3Xs a large as the Wehrmacht, & backed up by the British
- Most thought the Maginot Line was impossible to breach
- **May, 1940**: German tanks pour through an undefended gap in the line in the Ardennes Forest. This was undefended because it was believed the forest was too dense for tanks to come through.
- German Panzers and planes raced through the middle of France in a thrust toward Paris
- The French army shifted south to meet the advance, when a 2nd German army under Rommel swung through Belgium from the rear.
The Maginot Line did nothing to stop the German advance, and this demoralized the French army and populace.

While the French and British armies were in retreat, Winston Churchill called upon all boats, military & civilian that could float to go to Dunkirk, France to rescue the Allied army.

A fleet of ships arrived in Dunkirk, and saved what was left of the British army and some French units. 338,000 troops were saved from the Wehrmacht.

French resistance lasted only a few more weeks. German planes bombed Paris, & on June 14, 1940, France officially surrendered to Hitler.

France is divided into the northern region occupied by Germany, & the south into Vichy France, a puppet state led by Gen. Petain
After the fall of France, Hitler seeks an offer of alliance from Britain. Winston Churchill and parliament refuse, and Churchill rallies the beleaguered nation with his famous words, “we shall fight in the street, we shall fight on the shores, we shall fight I the alleyways and mountains…and we shall never…never give up! Britain now stands alone against the Nazi war machine. The Battle of Britain begins.
A Frenchman weeps as Nazi soldiers march into Paris

Hitler tours Paris after its surrender
By summer of 1940, Hitler had control of most of Western Europe
Map 26.1 World War II in the North Atlantic, 1939–1943 (p. 752)
Map 26.3 World War II in Europe, 1941–1943 (p. 768)
Map 26.4 World War II in Europe, 1944–1945 (p. 769)
Map 26.5 World War II in the Pacific, 1941–1942 (p. 772)
Map 26.6 World War II in the Pacific, 1943–1945 (p. 773)
A B-17 Crew “Somewhere in England” (p. 748)
Pearl Harbor (p. 754)
Section 2: Organizing for Victory

- How did the United States finance the war effort for WWII?
- What sorts of roles did American women play during WWII to support the nation’s war effort?
- What roles did minority group members play in the conduct of WWII? How did the war change the lives of American minorities?
- Why do historians consider 1942 to be a pivotal year for the outcome of WWII?
IS YOUR TRIP NECESSARY?

NEEDLESS TRAVEL interferes with the War Effort
Section 2: Organizing for Victory

- African American leaders pointed out parallels between anti-Semitism in Germany and racial discrimination in America using the “Double V” campaign. Was this justified? Was it effective?

- Who were some of the civil rights leaders during WWII?

- The Supreme Court Case *Korematsu v. United States* allowed FDR to issue Executive Order 9066 authorizing the internment of Japanese-Americans. Why was this done?
Map 26.2 Japanese Relocation Camps (p. 766)
Behind Barbed Wire (p. 766)
The Living Dead (p. 770)
Hitting the Beach at Normandy (p. 771)
The Big Three at Yalta (p. 775)
Hiroshima (p. 776)