



VIEWING HISTORY

The government used powerful images—such as the illustration on this “Buy War Bonds” poster—to encourage Americans on the home front to make their own contributions to the war effort. **Culture** How did World War II affect American culture and America’s role in world affairs?

Army Medal
of Honor

1950

Korean War
begins

Truman

1950

1954

Brown v.
Board of
Education

1955

Montgomery
bus boycott
begins

Eisenhower

1955

1956

- Interstate Highway Act
- Supreme Court outlaws segregation on buses

1960

1954

Vietnamese win
independence

1957

USSR launches
Sputnik

1959

Castro overthrows
Cuban dictatorship

1960

USSR shoots down
U.S. spy plane



1939-1945



CHAPTER FOCUS

This chapter describes World War II, in which the United States and the other Allies battled aggression in Europe, northern Africa, and Asia. A Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor brought an end to the hope that the United States could remain neutral. Once involved, America fully committed its material and human resources to the global conflict.



The **Why Study History?** page at the end of this chapter explores the connection between the Holocaust and the continued threat of genocide today.



VIEWING HISTORY

American troops plunge into action on the French shore of Normandy in 1944.

Foreign Relations What finally caused the United States to enter into World War II?

1933
Adolf Hitler becomes
dictator of Germany

1935
Italy invades
Ethiopia

1938
Germany annexes
Austria and the
Sudetenland

1939
Germany
invades
Poland

1941
Japan attacks
Pearl Harbor

1933

1935

1937

1939

1941

1 Prelude to Global War

SECTION PREVIEW

Objectives

- 1 Explain how Fascist and Nazi aggression led to war in Europe.
- 2 List the reasons that made Japan eager to build an empire.
- 3 Describe the American response to the war in Europe and explain how the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor pulled the United States into the war.
- 4 **Key Terms** Define: totalitarian; fascism; Axis Powers; appeasement; *blitzkrieg*; Allies; Lend-Lease Act.

Main Idea

Depressed economic conditions and a desire to build powerful nations led to the rise of dictators in Germany and Italy and eventually to a second global conflict.

Reading Strategy

Organizing Information Create a concept map by drawing four large circles on a piece of paper and labeling each circle with a heading from the section. Add supporting information in smaller circles and draw lines connecting them to the large circles.

Throughout the 1930s the Depression kept a tight grip on the American economy. While Americans faced personal hardship and political upheaval at home, conditions in other countries were even worse. The United States watched warily as dictators in Europe and Asia sought to solve their nations' problems by extending their power at the expense of other nations.

Fascism and Nazism

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s brutal dictators came to power in Europe. In Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union **totalitarian** governments controlled every aspect of life. These governments used terror to suppress individual rights and to silence all forms of opposition.

Germany's Adolf Hitler and Italy's Benito Mussolini based their governments on a philosophy called **fascism**. Fascism places the importance of the nation above the value of the individual. Hitler and Mussolini focused on the need to rebuild Germany and Italy.

Unlike communism, which calls for all society to jointly own the nation's means of production, fascism allows private business. According to Communist theory, conflicts between workers and owners will not exist in a Communist society, because the workers are the owners. In a Fascist system such conflicts are resolved by the government's power. Under both systems, however, the result is the same. Individual rights and freedoms are lost as everyone works for the benefit of society and the nation.

Mussolini Controls Italy Benito Mussolini had fought and been wounded in World War I. Along with many other Italians, Mussolini felt his country had been shortchanged in the peace settlement after the war. In 1919 he joined with other dissatisfied war veterans to organize the revolutionary Fascist party.

Calling himself *Il Duce* ("the leader"), Mussolini organized Fascist groups throughout Italy. He relied on gangs of Fascist thugs,



The official Nazi emblem, the swastika, became a symbol of terror in World War II.

called Blackshirts because of the way they dressed, to terrorize and bring under control those who opposed him. By 1922 Mussolini had become such a powerful figure that when he threatened to march on Rome, the king panicked and appointed him prime minister.

Mussolini and the Fascists swiftly attempted to deal with the political and economic problems that had plagued Italy since World War I. Claiming that efficiency and order were necessary to restore the nation's greatness, they suspended elections, outlawed all other political parties, and soon established a dictatorship.

"The Country Is Nothing Without Conquest," proclaimed a Fascist slogan. In October 1935 Mussolini put those words into practice by invading Ethiopia. The Ethiopians resisted fiercely, but by March 1936 the East African nation was in Italian hands.

Hitler Rules Germany While Mussolini was gaining control in Italy, a discontented Austrian painter was rising to power in Germany. Like Mussolini, Hitler had been wounded while serving in World War I. He, too, was enraged by the outcome of the war and by the terms of the peace settlement.

In 1919 Hitler joined a small political party which soon took the name National Socialist German Workers' party, or Nazi party. His powerful public-speaking abilities quickly made him a leader. In November 1923, with some 3,000 followers, Hitler tried to overthrow the German government. Authorities easily crushed the uprising. Although Hitler was sentenced to five years in prison, he was confined for only nine months.

Most of Hitler's time in prison was devoted to writing the first volume of an autobiography titled *Mein Kampf* ("My Struggle"). In it Hitler outlined the Nazi philosophy, his views of Germany's problems, and his plans for the nation. According to *Mein Kampf*, Germany had been weakened by certain groups who lived within its borders. He was highly critical of the nation's Jewish population, which he blamed for Germany's defeat in World War I.

In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler proposed strengthening the

nation's military and expanding its borders to include Germans living in other nations. He also called for purifying the so-called Aryan "race" (blond, blue-eyed Germans) by removing from Germany those groups he considered undesirable. In time, removal came to mean the mass murder of millions of Jews and other peoples.

Saddled with huge debts because of World War I, Germany suffered high unemployment and massive inflation during the 1920s. In the early 1930s, the effects of the Great Depression further ravaged the German people. Hitler and the Nazis promised to stabilize the country, rebuild the economy, and restore the empire that had been lost.

Because of such promises, Hitler gradually won a large following. By January 1933 the Nazi party was the largest group in the *Reichstag* (the German parliament) and Hitler became head of the German state. He soon silenced his opposition, suspended civil liberties, and convinced the *Reichstag* to give him dictatorial powers. Hitler then took for himself the title *Der Führer*, or "the leader."

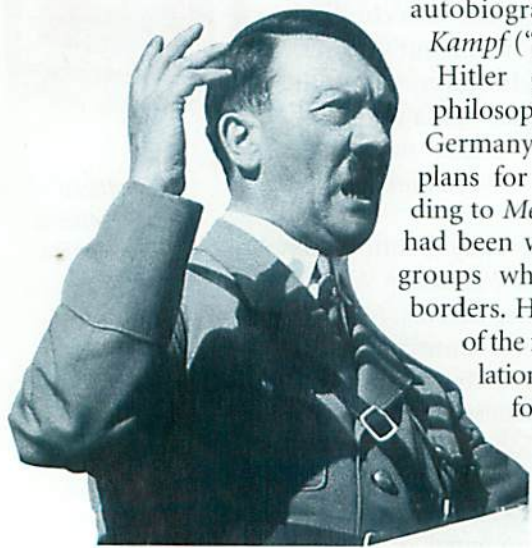
Europe Goes to War

Like Mussolini, Hitler saw expansion as a way to bolster national pride. He also longed to return Germany to a dominant position in the world. On March 9, 1936, German troops moved into the Rhineland, a region in western Germany along the borders of France and Belgium. The Treaty of Versailles, signed after World War I, had expressly excluded German military forces from the region. The invasion of the Rhineland was an enormous gamble for Hitler because it clearly violated the Versailles Treaty. In addition, the German army was not yet ready to fight. Had Britain or France threatened to attack, Hitler later admitted, he would have withdrawn his forces. However, neither nation resisted him.

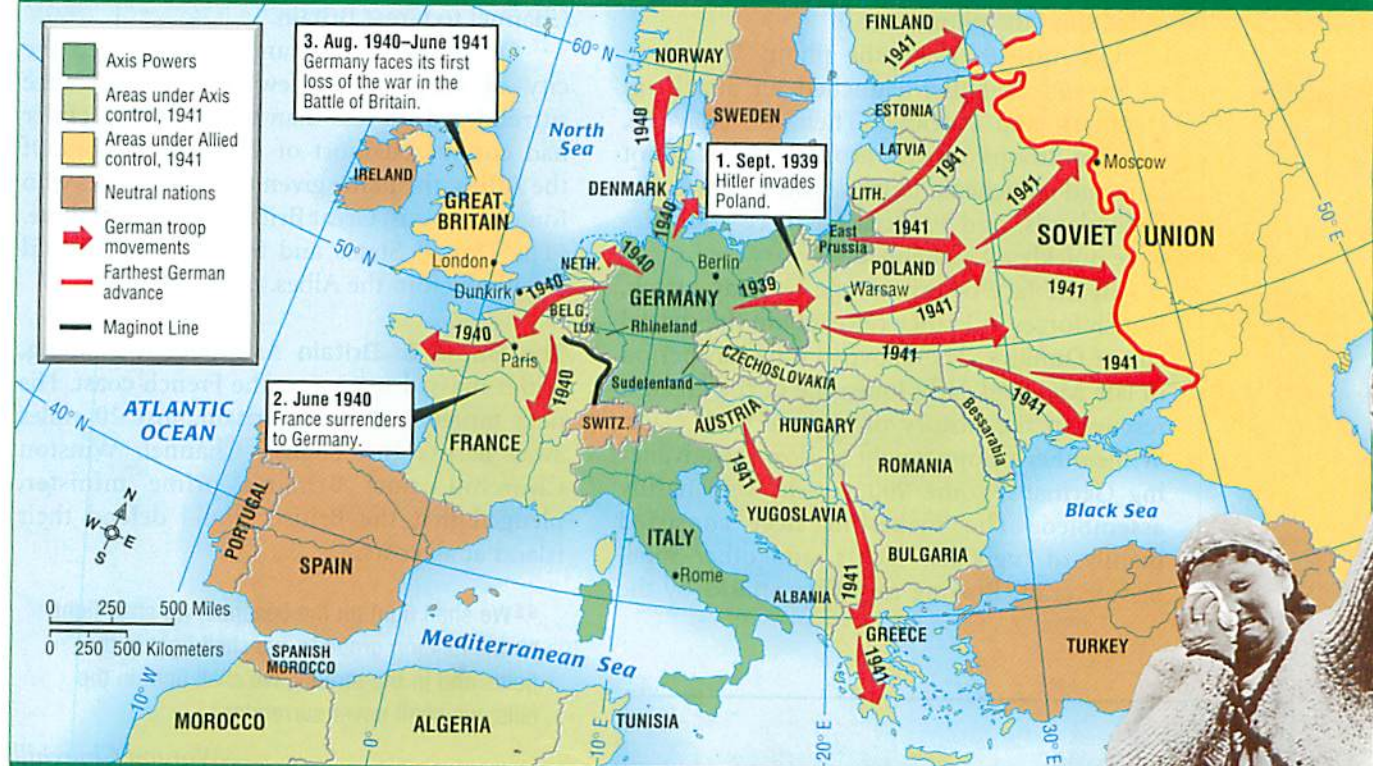
Also in 1936, Hitler signed an alliance with the Italian dictator, Mussolini. This created what Mussolini called an "axis" between Rome and Berlin, the capitals of the two nations. Germany and Italy, joined later by Japan, became known as the **Axis Powers**.

The German Empire Grows Encouraged by his success in the Rhineland, in March 1938 Hitler sent German troops into the neighboring nation of Austria and annexed it. When Britain and France protested, he was defiant. German-Austrian affairs were the concern of only the German people, he said.

Adolf Hitler spoke with a charismatic passion that electrified audiences.



German Aggression, 1939–1941



Millions of people, like this Czechoslovakian woman shown reluctantly saluting the Nazis in 1938, saw their homelands conquered by the Axis Powers. **Location** How does this map illustrate the dire situation of the Allies in 1941?



Several months later, Hitler demanded the Sudetenland, a region of eastern Czechoslovakia with a heavily German population. In an effort to avoid war, representatives from England, France, Germany, and Italy met in Munich, Germany, in September 1938. Britain and France followed a policy of **appeasement**, or giving in to someone's demands in order to keep the peace. Neither country was prepared for war, and the peoples of both countries had not forgotten the awful costs of World War I. At the Munich Conference, therefore, Britain and France agreed to let Hitler have the Sudetenland, hoping that his appetite for territory would be satisfied. "Britain and France had to choose between war and dishonor," said Winston Churchill, a member of Parliament, of this action. "They chose dishonor. They will have war."

Churchill's prophecy came true. In March 1939, only six months after occupying the Sudetenland, Hitler annexed the rest of Czechoslovakia. British and French leaders warned him that any further German expansion risked war. On March 31, 1939, they formally pledged their support to Poland, agreeing

to come to its aid if invaded by Germany. By now, however, Hitler was unconcerned about such threats. After signing a treaty with the Soviet Union so that he would face no threat from the east, Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. Two days later Britain and France declared war on Germany.

Blitzkrieg and Sitzkrieg In invading Poland, the German military unveiled a tactic called **blitzkrieg**, or "lightning war." Tanks, artillery, and soldiers, moving by truck instead of on foot, rapidly struck deep into enemy territory before the foe had time to react. Using this tactic, German troops overran Poland in less than a month. In mid-September, under the terms of his agreement with Hitler, Stalin attacked and seized eastern Poland for the Soviet Union.

After Poland fell, the war entered a quiet period. The Germans labeled the lull the **sitzkrieg**, or "sit-down war." For the next several months German troops sat and watched French forces on the Maginot Line, a massive

Main Idea CONNECTIONS

Describe Germany's strategy for overwhelming its enemies.

system of defenses that France had built along its border with Germany. The American press called this “the phony war.”

On April 9, 1940, the phony war came to an end as Hitler launched an attack on Denmark and Norway. Then, on May 10, German troops moved around the Maginot Line and launched a *blitzkrieg* on Belgium, the Netherlands, and France. All three countries were quickly overwhelmed.

In the face of this savage German attack, British forces in France retreated to the coastal city of Dunkirk. There, over a nine-day period in late May and early June, one of the greatest rescues in the history of warfare took place. While other troops fought to slow the advancing Germans, some 900 vessels were hastily assembled. The makeshift fleet consisted mainly of tugboats, yachts, and other small private craft. Braving merciless attacks by the

Luftwaffe (the German air force), they carried nearly 340,000 soldiers across the English Channel to Great Britain.

On June 14, German troops entered the city of Paris and a few days later France surrendered. In less than three months Hitler had conquered most of Western Europe. Of the **Allies**, the name given those countries who fought the Axis, Great Britain now stood alone. (The United States and Soviet Union would eventually join the Allies.)

The Battle of Britain As France was falling, Hitler massed troops on the French coast. His next target was Great Britain, just 20 miles away across the English Channel. Winston Churchill, now Britain’s prime minister, pledged that the British would defend their island at all costs:

“We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.”

—Winston Churchill

Hitler turned to the *Luftwaffe* to destroy Britain’s ability and will to resist. In what became known as the Battle of Britain, he launched the greatest air assault the world had yet seen. As many as 1,000 planes a day rained bombs on Britain. Although its Royal Air Force (RAF) was greatly outnumbered, RAF pilots sometimes flew six and seven missions a day, inflicting heavy losses on the attackers. “Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few,” said Churchill, praising the courageous resistance of the RAF.

The British people were equally brave. In December 1940, German bombing of London started some 1,500 fires, setting the center of the city ablaze. Despite the massive losses, the British people held on to their will to fight. By June 1941, when Hitler finally ended the bombing, nearly 30,000 Londoners had been killed and some 120,000 injured.

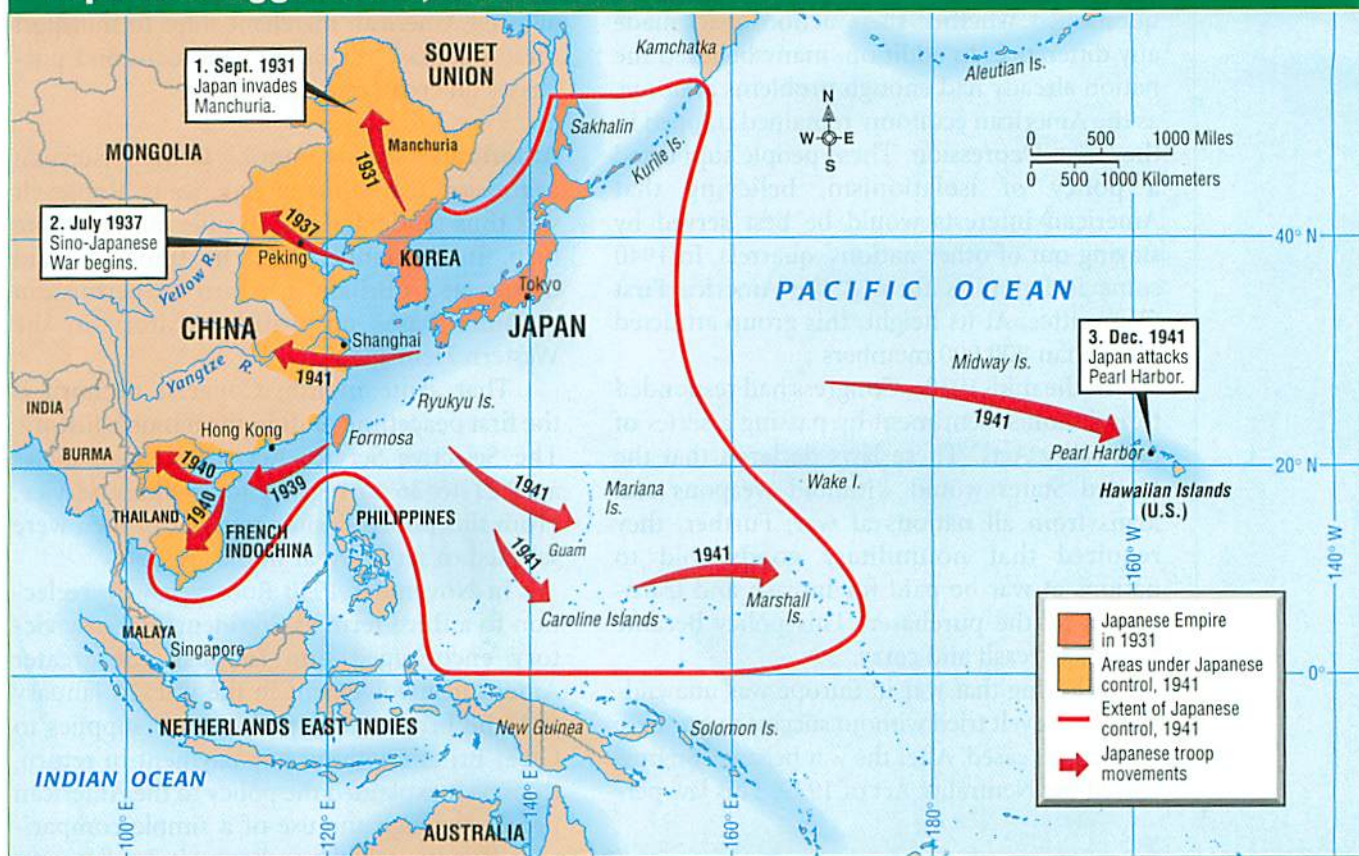
Japan Builds an Empire

Many Japanese were as unhappy with their situation in Asia in the 1920s as Italians and Germans were with their status in Europe. Located on a chain of small islands, Japan lacked sufficient raw materials and markets for its industries. It also needed land to support its



London’s St. Paul’s Cathedral (above) survived while surrounding buildings were reduced to rubble during the bombing. The cathedral became a powerful symbol of Britain’s spirit of defiance. **Culture** How did this spirit help defeat the *Luftwaffe*?

Japanese Aggression, 1931–1941



The Japanese were as eager as the Germans and Italians to build an empire.

Location Judging from this map, what regions appear to be in the greatest danger of being attacked next by Japan?

growing population. For these reasons, some Japanese were eager to establish an empire.

Discontent spread after 1930, as the Great Depression added to Japan's economic woes. Yet world leaders and most Japanese were shocked in 1931, when Japan's army seized Manchuria, a mineral-rich region in northern China. During the next five years, the deepening Depression gave Japan's military a powerful voice in its government. In 1937 Japan resumed its aggression in China. Despite American help, the Chinese army of General Jiang Jieshi (jyawng jeh SHEE) was no match for the invaders.[†] An ongoing battle between Jiang's army and the Communist guerrilla fighters led by Mao Zedong contributed to the weakness of China. By 1940 the Japanese controlled most of eastern China.

Japan next set its sights on Southeast Asia and the Dutch East Indies. First, it became an ally of Germany and Italy in the Tripartite Pact of September 1940. Then in April 1941 the Japanese signed a neutrality pact with the Soviet Union. The stage was now set for Japan to challenge the Europeans and Americans for supremacy in Asia.

The American Response

American officials watched Japan's actions in Asia with growing concern. In 1938 President Franklin D. Roosevelt began a naval buildup in the Pacific. The following year he moved the American Pacific Fleet from San Diego, California, to Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands.

America Remains Neutral Americans did not want to fight a war in Asia any more than they did in Europe. Most remained

[†] In earlier textbooks, this name is spelled Chiang Kai-shek. A newer method of spelling Chinese names with Roman letters is used today.

disillusioned by World War I. They had fought to make the world safe for democracy, but now questioned whether their actions had made any difference. In addition, many believed the nation already had enough problems at home, as the American economy remained trapped in the Great Depression. These people supported a policy of isolationism, believing that American interests would be best served by staying out of other nations' quarrels. In 1940 some isolationists formed the America First Committee. At its height, this group attracted more than 800,000 members.

In the mid-1930s, Congress had responded to isolationist sentiment by passing a series of Neutrality Acts. These laws declared that the United States would withhold weapons and loans from all nations at war. Further, they required that nonmilitary goods sold to nations at war be paid for in cash and transported by the purchaser. This policy became known as "cash and carry."

Believing that war in Europe was unavoidable, Roosevelt tried without success to get these restrictions eased. After the war began, Congress passed the Neutrality Act of 1939. This law per-

mitted Britain and France to purchase weapons on a cash-and-carry basis. A later amendment allowed American merchant ships to transport these purchases to Britain. Yet loans and purchases on credit remained illegal.

American Involvement Grows German aggression scared many Americans. Roosevelt was thus gradually able to offer Britain more help. In September 1940 he traded 50 old destroyers to Britain in return for permission to build bases on British territory in the Western Hemisphere.

That same month, Congress authorized the first peacetime draft in the nation's history. The Selective Service Act required all males ages 21 to 36 to register for military service. From this pool a limited number of men were selected to serve a year in the army.

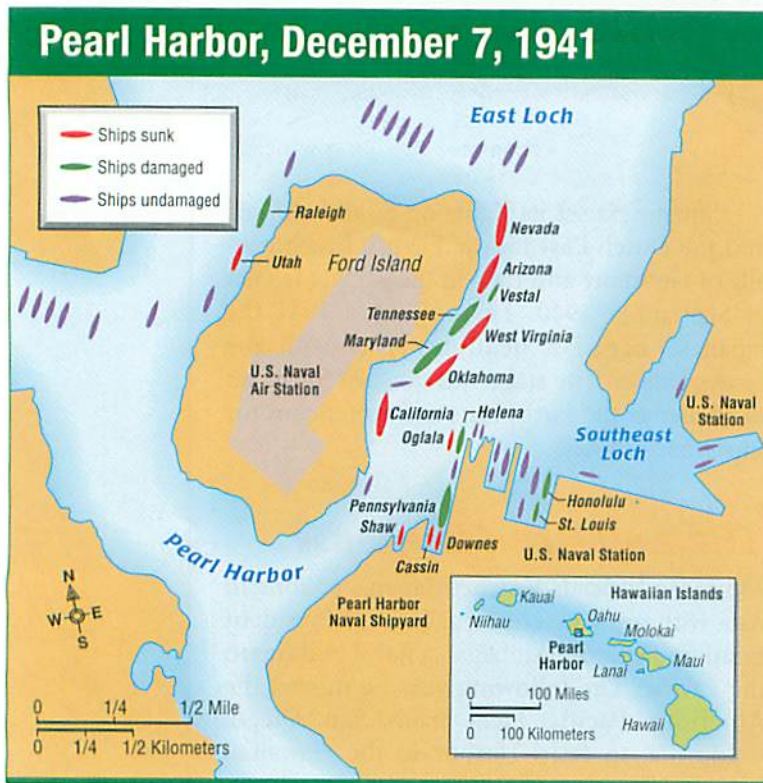
In November 1940 Roosevelt won reelection to a third term as President. His easy victory encouraged him to push for greater American involvement in the war. In January 1941 he proposed to provide war supplies to Great Britain without any payment in return. Roosevelt explained the policy to the American people through the use of a simple comparison: if your neighbor's house is on fire, you don't sell him a hose. You lend it to him and take it back after the fire is out.

Congress responded by passing the **Lend-Lease Act** in March 1941, which authorized the President to aid any nation whose defense he believed was vital to American security. Roosevelt immediately began sending aid to Britain, and the United States became, as FDR had said in a speech in 1940, "the great arsenal of democracy."

Japan Attacks Pearl Harbor

Soon after France fell to the Germans, the Japanese demanded control of French colonies in Indochina. In mid-1941 Japanese forces occupied the region. In response, Roosevelt froze Japanese financial assets in the United States and cut off all trade with Japan. For the next few months, leaders in both nations looked for ways to avoid war.

American diplomats in Tokyo, eager to avoid a confrontation, urged the President to compromise. They warned that pushing the Japanese would result in war. Some of Roosevelt's advisers at home, however, called for a tough stance. The government had cracked secret Japanese codes and had



The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was surprising and swift. **Location** Where did the Japanese inflict the most damage?

been intercepting messages. American officials knew that Japan was planning to seize more territory.

In October 1941, General Hideki Tojo, who supported war with the United States, became prime minister of Japan. Yet Roosevelt still hoped for peace. He proposed to his advisers that trade could be resumed if Japan halted any further troop movements. On November 25, the American government learned that a Japanese fleet was moving toward Southeast Asia. The United States demanded that Japan withdraw from all conquered territory and from its Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy.

Even as this tough message was being sent, a second Japanese fleet of 6 aircraft carriers and more than 20 other ships was under way. Japan's leaders had decided that their goals in Asia could not be achieved as long as the American fleet remained in Hawaii. That threat had to be destroyed.

Shortly after 7:00 A.M. on December 7, an American army radar operator on the Hawaiian island of Oahu reported to his headquarters that planes were headed toward him. The only officer on duty that Sunday morning decided they were American. "Don't worry about it," the officer told the radar operator, as he hung up the phone. Less than an hour later more than 180 Japanese warplanes streaked overhead. Most of the Pacific Fleet lay at anchor in Pearl Harbor, crowded into an area less than three miles square.

Japanese planes bombed and strafed (attacked with machine-gun fire) the fleet and

the airfields nearby. By 9:45 it was over. In less than two hours some 2,400 Americans had been killed and nearly 1,200 wounded. Nearly 300 American warplanes were damaged or destroyed; 18 warships had been sunk or heavily damaged, including 8 of the fleet's 9 battleships. Japan lost just 29 planes.[†]

The attack on Pearl Harbor stunned the American people. Calling December 7, 1941, "a date which will live in infamy," Roosevelt the next day asked Congress to declare war on Japan:

KEY DOCUMENTS

“Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger. With confidence in our armed forces—with the unbound determination of our people—we will gain the inevitable triumph—so help us God.”

—Franklin D. Roosevelt

Three days later, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States. For the second time in the century, Americans were part of a world war. Their contributions would make the difference between victory and defeat for the Allies.

[†] The Japanese did not achieve their main goal, which was to destroy the three aircraft carriers that were part of the American fleet. Two of the carriers, accompanied by the fleet's heavy cruisers, were at sea during the attack. The third was undergoing repairs in California.

SECTION 1 REVIEW

Comprehension

- 1. Key Terms** Define: (a) totalitarian; (b) fascism; (c) Axis Powers; (d) appeasement; (e) *blitzkrieg*; (f) Allies; (g) Lend-Lease Act.
- 2. Summarizing the Main Idea** What steps did Italy, Germany, and Japan take in the mid-1930s to extend their power?
- 3. Organizing Information** Create a flow map to show how German and Italian aggression led to war. Begin with *October 1935: Italy invades Ethiopia* and end with *September 1939: England and France declare war on Germany*.

Critical Thinking

- 4. Analyzing Time Lines** Review the time line at the start of the section. Which entry was responsible for bringing the United States into World War II?
- 5. Recognizing Cause and Effect** What were some of the reasons behind Japan's desire to build an empire in Asia?

Writing Activity

- 6. Writing an Persuasive Essay** Write a letter to President Roosevelt that expresses support for or opposition to the Lend-Lease Act.

**Sept.
1942**
Battle of
Stalingrad begins

**Nov.
1942**
British win decisive
victory at El
Alamein in Egypt

**July
1943**
American troops
attack Sicily

**June
1944**
D-Day invasion
of Western
Europe begins

**Dec.
1944**
Battle of the
Bulge begins

**May
1945**
Germany
surrenders

1942

1944

1946

2 The Road to Victory in Europe

SECTION PREVIEW

Objectives

- 1 Identify the various groups of Americans who mobilized to fight the war.
- 2 Understand how the Allied decision to begin fighting in North Africa and Italy affected war efforts in the Soviet Union.
- 3 Show how the Allied invasion of Western Europe led to the end of the war in Europe.
- 4 **Key Terms** Define: Atlantic Charter; GI; Battle of Stalingrad; carpet bombing; D-Day; Battle of the Bulge; Yalta Conference.

Main Idea

To secure victory in Europe, the Allies waged war in North Africa, Western Europe, and the Soviet Union between 1941 and 1945.

Reading Strategy

Formulating Questions Skim the section and write down the main headings. Then rewrite each heading as a question. As you read, note the answers to your questions.



Fatigues were standard wear for American soldiers.

In August 1941, unknown to the rest of the world, two warships quietly lay at anchor off the coast of Newfoundland. Aboard were Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Franklin Roosevelt. Both men believed the United States would soon be allied with Britain in war, and they were meeting to agree on the war's goals. The two leaders pledged

“a peace that will afford all nations the means of dwelling in safety inside their own boundaries.” Roosevelt and Churchill put this and other principles into writing in the **Atlantic Charter**. The agreements reached at this meeting would form the basis for the United Nations.

Americans Mobilize for War

As the United States prepared for war, thousands of American men received official notices to enter the army or navy. After the

bombing of Pearl Harbor, tens of thousands more volunteered to serve. Roosevelt shared his vision of what these troops would be asked to fight for:

AMERICAN VOICES

“We look forward to a world founded upon four essential freedoms. The first is freedom of speech and expression. . . . The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way. . . . The third is freedom from want [need]. . . . The fourth is freedom from fear.”

—Franklin D. Roosevelt

The GI War World War II greatly changed the lives of the men and women who were uprooted from home and sent far away to fight for freedom. The 15 million Americans who served as soldiers, sailors, and aviators made their way through distant deserts, jungles, swamps, turbulent seas, and forbidding skies. For those on the front lines, the war was often a desperate struggle just to stay alive.

American soldiers called themselves **GIs**, after the “Government Issue” stamp that