

DIPLOMACY AND WORLD WAR II, 1929–1945

*We seek peace—enduring peace. More than an end to war,
we want an end to the beginnings of all wars.*

Franklin D. Roosevelt, April 13, 1945

President Roosevelt's fervent desire for peace was hardly new. World War I, after all, was meant to be a "war to end all wars" and, as Woodrow Wilson had said, a war "to make the world safe for democracy." In 1933, however, few people believed that the fragile peace established by the Treaty of Versailles would hold up for much longer. In Asia, Japan was threatening China. In Europe, the Nazi party under Adolf Hitler had come to power in Germany with promises of reasserting German nationalism and militarism. In the United States, worries about the depression overshadowed concerns about a second world war. Even if war did break out, most Americans were determined not to send troops abroad again.

However, a second world war did occur, and the United States played a major role in fighting it. How and why U.S. foreign policy changed from disengagement to neutrality and from neutrality to total involvement is the subject of this chapter. Moreover, the war transformed American economy and society in many ways more dramatically than the New Deal.

Herbert Hoover's Foreign Policy

Hoover concurred with the prevailing opinion of the American people that the United States should not enter into firm commitments to preserve the security of other nations. Such an opinion, in the 1930s, would be labeled "isolationism."

Japanese Aggression in Manchuria

In the early 1930s, Japan posed the greatest threat to world peace. Defying both the Open Door policy and the covenant of the League of Nations, Japanese troops marched into Manchuria in September 1931, renamed the territory Manchukuo, and established a puppet government.

JAPANESE AGGRESSION IN ASIA IN THE 1930s



Despite its commitment to taking action against blatant aggression, the League of Nations did nothing except to pass a resolution condemning Japan for its actions in Manchuria. The Japanese delegation then walked out of the League, never to return. In the Manchuria crisis, the League, through its failure to take action, showed its inability to maintain peace. Its warnings would never be taken seriously by potential aggressors.

Stimson Doctrine U.S. response to Japan’s violation of the Open Door policy was somewhat stronger than the League’s response—but no more effective in deterring further aggression. Secretary of State Henry Stimson declared in 1932 that the United States would honor its treaty obligations under the Nine-Power Treaty (1922) by refusing to recognize the legitimacy of any regime like

“Manchukuo” that had been established by force. The League of Nations readily endorsed the Stimson Doctrine and issued a similar declaration.

Latin America

Hoover actively pursued friendly relations with the countries of Latin America. In 1929, even before being inaugurated, the president-elect went on a goodwill tour of the region. As president, he ended the interventionist policies of Taft and Wilson by (1) arranging for U.S. troops to leave Nicaragua by 1933 and (2) negotiating a treaty with Haiti to remove all U.S. troops by 1934.

Franklin Roosevelt’s Policies, 1933–1938

In his first term, Roosevelt’s concentration on dealing with the economic crisis at home kept him from giving much thought to shaping foreign policy. He did, however, extend Hoover’s efforts at improving U.S. relations with Latin America by initiating a good-neighbor policy.

Good-Neighbor Policy

In his first inaugural address in 1933, Roosevelt promised a “policy of the good neighbor” toward other nations of the Western Hemisphere. First, interventionism in support of dollar diplomacy no longer made economic sense, because U.S. businesses during the depression lacked the resources to invest in foreign operations. Second, the rise of militarist regimes in Germany and Italy prompted Roosevelt to seek Latin American’s cooperation in defending the region from potential danger. FDR implemented his good-neighbor policy through several actions.

Pan-American Conferences At Roosevelt’s direction, the U.S. delegation at the Seventh Pan-American Conference in Montevideo, Uruguay, in 1933, pledged never again to intervene in the internal affairs of a Latin American country. In effect, Franklin Roosevelt repudiated the policy of his older cousin, Theodore, who had justified intervention as a corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. Another Pan-American conference was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1936. Roosevelt himself attended the conference. He personally pledged to submit future disputes to arbitration and also warned that if a European power such as Germany attempted “to commit acts of aggression against us,” it would find “a hemisphere wholly prepared to consult together for our mutual safety and our mutual good.”

Cuba Cubans had long resented the Platt Amendment, which had made their country’s foreign policy subject to U.S. approval. In 1934, President Roosevelt persuaded Congress to nullify the Platt Amendment, retaining only the U.S. right to keep its naval base at Guantanamo Bay.

Mexico Mexico tested U.S. patience and commitment to the good-neighbor policy in 1938 when its president, Lázaro Cárdenas, seized oil properties owned by U.S. corporations. Roosevelt rejected corporate demands to intervene and encouraged American companies to negotiate a settlement.

Economic Diplomacy

Helping the U.S. economy was the chief motivation for Roosevelt's policies toward other foreign policy issues in his first term.

Recognition of the Soviet Union The Republican presidents of the 1920s had refused to grant diplomatic recognition to the Communist regime that ruled the Soviet Union. Roosevelt promptly changed this policy by granting recognition in 1933. His reason for doing so, he said, was to increase U.S. trade and thereby boost the economy.

Philippines Governing the Philippines cost money. As an economy measure, Roosevelt persuaded Congress to pass the Tydings-McDuffie Act in 1934, which provided for the independence of the Philippines by 1946 and the gradual removal of U.S. military presence from the islands.

Reciprocal Trade Agreements Acting in the tradition of Progressive Democrats such as William Jennings Bryan and Woodrow Wilson, President Roosevelt favored lower tariffs as a means of increasing international trade. In 1934, Congress enacted a plan suggested by Secretary of State Cordell Hull, which gave the president power to reduce U.S. tariffs up to 50 percent for nations that reciprocated with comparable reductions for U.S. imports.

Events Abroad: Fascism and Aggressive Militarism

The worldwide depression soon proved to have alarming repercussions for world politics. Combined with nationalist resentments after World War I, economic hardships gave rise to military dictatorships in Italy in the 1920s and Japan and Germany in the 1930s. Eventually, in 1940, Japan, Italy, and Germany signed a treaty of alliance which formed the Axis Powers.

Italy A new regime seized power in Italy in 1922. Benito Mussolini led Italy's Fascist party, which attracted dissatisfied war veterans, nationalists, and those afraid of rising communism. Dressed in black shirts, the Fascists marched on Rome and installed Mussolini in power as "Il Duce" (the Leader). Fascism—the idea that people should glorify their nation and their race through an aggressive show of force—became the dominant ideology in European dictatorships in the 1930s.

Germany The Nazi party was the German equivalent of Italy's Fascist party. It arose in the 1920s in reaction to deplorable economic conditions after the war and national resentments over the Treaty of Versailles. The Nazi leader, Adolf Hitler, used bullying tactics against Jews as well as Fascist ideology to increase his popularity with disgruntled, unemployed German workers. Hitler seized the opportunity presented by the depression to play upon anti-Semitic hatreds. With his personal army of "brown shirts," Hitler gained control of the German legislature in early 1933.

Japan Nationalists and militarists in Japan increased their power in the 1920s and 1930s. As economic conditions worsened, they persuaded Japan's

nominal ruler, the emperor, that the best way to ensure access to basic raw materials (oil, tin, and iron) was to invade China and Southeast Asia and thereby give Japan control over what their leaders proclaimed to be the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

American Isolationists

Public opinion in the United States was also nationalistic but expressed itself in an opposite way from fascism and militarism. Disillusioned with the results of World War I, American isolationists wanted to make sure that the United States would never again be drawn into a foreign war. Japanese aggression in Manchuria and the rise of fascism in Italy and Germany only increased the determination of isolationists to avoid war at all costs. Isolationist sentiment was strongest in the Midwest and among Republicans.

The Lesson of World War I In the early 1930s, Americans commonly felt that U.S. entry into World War I had been a terrible mistake. An investigating committee led by Senator Gerald Nye of North Dakota bolstered this view when it concluded in 1934 that the main reason for U.S. participation in the world war was to serve the greed of bankers and arms manufacturers. This committee's work influenced isolationist legislation in the following years.

Neutrality Acts Isolationist senators and representatives in both parties held a majority in Congress through 1938. To ensure that U.S. policy would be strictly neutral if war broke out in Europe, Congress adopted a series of neutrality acts, which Roosevelt signed with some reluctance. Each law applied to nations that the president proclaimed to be at war.

- The *Neutrality Act of 1935* authorized the president to prohibit all arms shipments and to forbid U.S. citizens to travel on the ships of belligerent nations.
- The *Neutrality Act of 1936* forbade the extension of loans and credits to belligerents.
- The *Neutrality Act of 1937* forbade the shipment of arms to the opposing sides in the civil war in Spain.

Spanish Civil War The outbreak of civil war in Spain in 1936 was viewed in Europe and the United States as an ideological struggle between the forces of fascism, led by General Francisco Franco, and the forces of republicanism, called Loyalists. Roosevelt and most Americans sympathized with the Loyalists but, because of the Neutrality Acts, could not aid them. Ultimately, in 1939, Franco's Fascists prevailed and established a military dictatorship.

America First Committee In 1940, after World War II had begun in Asia and Europe, isolationists became alarmed by Roosevelt's pro-

British policies. To mobilize American public opinion against war, they formed the America First Committee and engaged speakers such as Charles Lindbergh to travel the country warning against reengaging in Europe's troubles.

Prelude to War

In the years 1935 to 1938, a series of aggressive actions by the Fascist dictatorships made democratic governments in Britain and France extremely nervous. It was known that Hitler was creating an air force more powerful than anything they could match. Hoping to avoid open conflict with Germany, the democracies adopted a policy of appeasement—allowing Hitler to get away with relatively small acts of aggression and expansion. The United States went along with the British and French policy.

Appeasement The following events showed how unprepared the democracies were to challenge Fascist aggression.

1. Ethiopia, 1935 In a bid to prove fascism's military might, Mussolini ordered Italian troops to invade Ethiopia. The League of Nations and the United States objected but did nothing to stop the Italian aggressor, which succeeded in conquering the African country after a year of bitter fighting.

2. Rhineland, 1936 This region in western Germany was supposed to be permanently demilitarized, according to the Versailles Treaty. Hitler openly defied the treaty by ordering German troops to march into the Rhineland.

3. China, 1937 Full-scale war between Japan and China erupted in 1937 as Japan's troops invaded its weaker neighbor. A U.S. gunboat in China, the *Panay*, was bombed and sunk by Japanese planes. Japan's apology for the sinking was quickly accepted by the U.S. government.

4. Sudetenland, 1938 In Europe, Hitler insisted that Germany had a right to take over a strip of land in Czechoslovakia, the Sudetenland, where most people were German-speaking. To maintain peace, the British prime minister, Neville Chamberlain, and the French president, Édouard Daladier, with Roosevelt's support, met with Hitler and Mussolini in Munich. At this conference in September 1938, the British and French leaders agreed to allow Hitler to take the Sudetenland unopposed. The word "Munich" has since become synonymous with appeasement.

Quarantine Speech Roosevelt recognized the dangers of Fascist aggression but was limited by the isolationist feelings of the majority of Americans. When Japan invaded China in 1937, he tested public opinion by making a speech proposing that the democracies act together to "quarantine" the aggressor. Public reaction to the speech was overwhelmingly negative, and Roosevelt dropped the quarantine idea as politically unwise.

Preparedness Like Wilson in 1916, Roosevelt argued for neutrality and an arms buildup at the same time. Congress went along with his request in late 1938 by increasing the military and naval budgets by nearly two-thirds. Some isolationists accepted the increased defense spending, thinking it would be used only to protect against possible invasion of the Western Hemisphere.

AXIS AGGRESSION IN THE 1930s



From Neutrality to War, 1939–1941

In March 1939, Hitler broke the Munich agreement by sending troops to occupy all of Czechoslovakia. After this, it became clear that Hitler's ambitions had no limit and that war was probably unavoidable.

Outbreak of War in Europe

Recognizing the failure of appeasement, Britain and France pledged to fight if Poland was attacked. They had always assumed that they could count on the Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin, to oppose Hitler, since communism and fascism were ideological enemies. The democracies were therefore shocked in August 1939 when Stalin and Hitler signed a nonaggression pact. Secretly, the Soviet and German dictators agreed to divide Poland between them.

Invasion of Poland On September 1, 1939, German tanks and planes began a full-scale invasion of Poland. Keeping their pledge, Britain and France declared war against Germany—and soon afterward, they were also at war with its Axis allies, Italy and Japan. World War II in Europe had begun.

Blitzkrieg Poland was the first to fall to Germany's overwhelming use of air power and fast-moving tanks—a type of warfare called *blitzkrieg* (lightning war). After a relatively inactive winter, the war was resumed in the spring of 1940 with Germany attacking its Scandinavian neighbors to the north and its chief enemy, France, to the west. Denmark and Norway surrendered in a few days, France in only a week. By June 1940, the only ally that remained free of German troops was Great Britain.

Changing U.S. Policy

President Roosevelt countered isolationism in the United States by gradually giving aid to the Allies, especially Great Britain. Now that war had actually begun, most Americans were alarmed by news of Nazi tanks, planes, and troops conquering one country after another. They were strongly opposed to Hitler but still hoped to keep their country out of the war. President Roosevelt believed that British survival was crucial to U.S. security. The relationship that was built over the coming years between British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and FDR proved one of keys to Allied success in the war. The president chipped away at the restrictive neutrality laws until practically nothing remained to prevent him from giving massive aid to Britain. After the surrender of France to the Germans in 1940, most Americans accepted the need to strengthen U.S. defenses, but giving direct aid to Britain was controversial.

“Cash and Carry” The British navy still controlled the seas. Therefore, if the United States ended its arms embargo, it would help only Britain, not Germany. Roosevelt persuaded Congress in 1939 to adopt a less restrictive Neutrality Act, which provided that a belligerent could buy U.S. arms if it used its own ships and paid cash. Technically, “cash and carry” was neutral, but in practice, it strongly favored Britain.

Selective Service Act (1940) Without actually naming Germany as the potential enemy, Roosevelt pushed neutrality back one more step by persuading Congress to enact a law for compulsory military service. The Selective Training and Service Act of September 1940 provided for the registration of all American men between the ages of 21 and 35 and for the training of 1.2 million troops in just one year. There had been a military draft in the Civil War and World War I but only when the United States was officially at war. Isolationists strenuously opposed the peacetime draft, but they were now outnumbered as public opinion shifted away from strict neutrality.

Destroyers-for-Bases Deal In September 1940, Britain was under constant assault by German bombing raids. German submarine attacks threatened British control of the Atlantic. Roosevelt knew that selling U.S. destroyers to

the British outright would outrage the isolationists. He therefore cleverly arranged a trade. Britain received 50 older but still serviceable U.S. destroyers and gave the United States the right to build military bases on British islands in the Caribbean.

The Election of 1940

Adding to suspense over the war was uncertainty over a presidential election. Might Franklin Roosevelt be the first president to break the two-term tradition and seek election to a third term? For months, the president gave an ambiguous reply, causing frenzied speculation in the press. At last, he announced that, in those critical times, he would not turn down the Democratic nomination if it were offered. Most Democrats were delighted to renominate their most effective campaigner. During the campaign, Roosevelt made the rash pronouncement: “Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars.”

Wendell Willkie The Republicans had a number of veteran politicians who were eager to challenge the president. Instead, they chose a newcomer to public office: Wendell Willkie, a lawyer and utility executive with a magnetic personality. Although he criticized the New Deal, Willkie largely agreed with Roosevelt on preparedness and giving aid to Britain short of actually entering the war. His strongest criticism of Roosevelt was the president’s decision to break the two-term tradition established by George Washington.

Results Roosevelt won with 54 percent of the popular vote—a smaller margin than in 1932 and 1936. Important factors in the president’s reelection were (1) a strong economic recovery enhanced by defense purchases and (2) fear of war, which caused voters to stay with the more experienced leader.

Arsenal of Democracy

Roosevelt viewed Germany’s conquest of most of Europe as a direct threat both to U.S. security and to the future of democratic governments everywhere. After his reelection, he believed that he was in a stronger position to end the appearance of U.S. neutrality and give material aid to Britain. In a December 1940 fireside chat to the American people, he explained his thinking and concluded: “We must be the great arsenal of democracy.”

Four Freedoms Addressing Congress on January 6, 1941, the president delivered a speech that proposed lending money to Britain for the purchase of U.S. war materials. He justified such a policy by arguing that the United States must help others nations defend “four freedoms:” freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.

Lend-Lease Act Roosevelt proposed ending the cash-and-carry requirement of the Neutrality Act and permitting Britain to obtain all the U.S. arms it needed on credit. The president said it would be like lending a neighbor a garden hose to put out a fire. Isolationists in the America First Committee campaigned vigorously against the lend-lease bill. By now, however, majority opinion had shifted toward aiding Britain, and the Lend-Lease Act was signed into law in March 1941.

Atlantic Charter With the United States actively aiding Britain, Roosevelt knew that the United States might soon enter the war. He arranged for a secret meeting in August with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill aboard a ship off the coast of Newfoundland. The two leaders drew up a document known as the Atlantic Charter that affirmed that the general principles for a sound peace after the war would include self-determination for all people, no territorial expansion, and free trade.

Shoot-on-Sight In July 1941, the president extended U.S. support for Britain even further by protecting its ships from submarine attack. He ordered the U.S. Navy to escort British ships carrying lend-lease materials from U.S. shores as far as Iceland. On September 4, the American destroyer *Greer* was attacked by a German submarine it had been hunting. In response, Roosevelt ordered the navy to attack all German ships on sight. In effect, this meant that the United States was now fighting an undeclared naval war against Germany.

Disputes With Japan

Meanwhile, through 1940 and 1941, U.S. relations with Japan were becoming increasingly strained as a result of Japan's invasion of China and ambitions to extend its conquests to Southeast Asia. Beginning in 1940, Japan was allied with Germany and Italy as one of the Axis powers. Hitler's success in Europe enabled Japanese expansion into the Dutch East Indies, British Burma, and French Indochina—territories still held as European colonies.

U.S. Economic Action When Japan joined the Axis in September 1940, Roosevelt responded by prohibiting the export of steel and scrap iron to all countries except Britain and the nations of the Western Hemisphere. His action was aimed at Japan, which protested that it was an “unfriendly act.” In July 1941, Japanese troops occupied French Indochina. Roosevelt then froze all Japanese credits in the United States and also cut off Japanese access to vital materials, including U.S. oil.

Negotiations Both sides realized that Japan needed oil to fuel its navy and air force. If the U.S. embargo on oil did not end, Japan would likely seize the oil resources in the Dutch East Indies. At the same time, Japan's invasion of China was a blatant violation of the Open Door policy, to which the United States was still committed. Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull insisted that Japan pull its troops out of China, which Japan refused to do. The Japanese ambassador to the United States tried to negotiate a change in U.S. policy regarding oil. Agreement, however, seemed most unlikely. In October, a new Japanese government headed by General Hideki Tojo made a final attempt at negotiating an agreement. Neither side, however, changed its position.

U.S. military leaders hoped to delay armed confrontation with Japan until U.S. armed forces in the Pacific were strengthened. Japan, on the other hand, believed that quick action was necessary because of its limited oil supplies.

Pearl Harbor

The U.S. fleet in the Pacific was anchored at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. On Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, while most American sailors were still asleep in their bunks, Japanese planes from aircraft carriers flew over Pearl Harbor bombing every ship in sight. The surprise attack lasted less than two hours. In that time, 2,400 Americans were killed (including over 1,100 when the battleship *Arizona* sank), almost 1,200 were wounded, 20 warships were sunk or severely damaged, and approximately 150 airplanes were destroyed.

Partial Surprise The American people were stunned by the attack on Pearl Harbor. High government officials, however, knew that an attack somewhere in the Pacific was imminent because they had broken the Japanese codes. They did not know the exact target and date for the attack, which many felt would be in the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, or Malaya.

Declaration of War Addressing Congress on the day after Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt described December 7th as “a date which will live in infamy.” He asked Congress to declare “that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on December 7, 1941, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.” On December 8, Congress acted immediately by declaring war, with only one dissenting vote. Three days later, Germany and Italy honored their treaty with Japan by declaring war on the United States.

Soviet Union Invaded By December 1941, the battlefield in Europe had shifted from the west to the east. Breaking his nonaggression pact with Stalin, Hitler had ordered an invasion of the Soviet Union. Thus, the principal Allies fighting Nazi Germany from 1942 to 1945 were Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union. The three Allied leaders—Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin—agreed to concentrate on the war in Europe before shifting their resources to counter Japanese advances in the Pacific.

World War II: The Home Front

FDR compared the transition after Pearl Harbor to a patient with new problems. It was time for Dr. Win-the-War to take over from Dr. New Deal.

Mobilization

The success of U.S. and Allied armed forces depended on mobilizing America's people, industries, and creative and scientific communities. The role of federal government expanded well beyond the anything in World War I or the New Deal.

Federal Government As in World War I, the U.S. government organized a number of special agencies to mobilize U.S. economic and military resources for the wartime crisis. Early in 1942, the War Production Board (WPB) was established to manage war industries. Later the Office of War Mobilization (OWM) set production priorities and controlled raw materials. The government

used a cost-plus system, in which it paid war contractors the costs of production plus a certain percentage for profit. One federal agency, the Office of Price Administration (OPA), regulated almost every aspect of civilians' lives by freezing prices, wages, and rents and rationing such commodities as meat, sugar, gasoline, and auto tires, primarily to fight wartime inflation.

Deficit spending during the depression was dwarfed by the deficits incurred during the war. Federal spending increased 1,000 percent between 1939 and 1945. As a result the gross national product grew by 15 percent or more a year. World War II proved what the New Deal did not, that the government could spend its way out of a depression. By war's end, the national debt had reached the then staggering figure of \$250 billion, five times what it had been in 1941.

Business and Industry Stimulated by wartime demand and government contracts, U.S. industries did a booming business, far exceeding their production and profits of the 1920s. The depression was over, vanquished at last by the coming of war. By 1944, unemployment had practically disappeared.

War-related industrial output in the United States was astonishing. By 1944, it was twice that of all the Axis powers combined. Instead of automobiles, tanks and fighter planes rolled off the assembly lines. American factories produced over 300,000 planes, 100,000 tanks, and ships with a total capacity of 53 million tons. So efficient were production methods that Henry Kaiser's giant shipyard in California could turn out a new ship in just 14 days. The war concentrated production in the largest corporations, as smaller business lost out on government contracts to larger businesses with more capacity. The 100 largest corporations accounted for up to 70 percent of wartime manufacturing.

Research and Development Government worked closely not only with industries, but also universities and research labs to create and improve technologies that could be used to defeat the enemy. The Office of Research and Development was established to contract scientists and universities to help in the development of electronics, such as radar and sonar, medicines such as penicillin, jet engines, rockets, and in the top secret Manhattan Project, the atomic bomb. Ironically, many of the European scientists that had to flee Fascist persecution would contribute to its defeat working in United States.

Workers and Unions Labor unions and large corporations agreed that while the war lasted, there would be no strikes. Workers became disgruntled, however, as their wages were frozen while corporations made large profits. John L. Lewis therefore called a few strikes of coal unions. The Smith-Connally Anti-Strike Act of 1943, passed over Roosevelt's veto, empowered the government to take over war-related businesses whose operations were threatened by a strike. In 1944, Roosevelt had occasion to use this law when he ordered the army to operate the nation's railroads for a brief period.

Financing the War The government paid for its huge increase in spending (\$100 billion spent on the war in 1945 alone) by (1) increasing the income

tax and (2) selling war bonds. For the first time, most Americans were required to pay an income tax, and in 1944, the practice was begun of automatically deducting a withholding tax from paychecks. Borrowing money by selling \$135 billion in war bonds supplemented the tax increase. In addition, the shortage of consumer goods made it easier for Americans to save.

Wartime Propaganda Few people opposed the war, so the government's propaganda campaign of posters, songs, and news bulletins was primarily to maintain public morale, to encourage people to conserve resources, and to increase war production. The Office of War Information controlled news about troop movements and battles. Movies, radio, and popular music all supported and reflected a cheerful, patriotic view of the war. For example, Norman Rockwell's popular illustrations of the "Four Freedoms" captured the liberties and values at stake in the war. The unity of Americans behind the war's democratic ideals helped that generation remember it as "the Good War."

The War's Impact on Society

Every group in the U.S. population adjusted to the unique circumstances of wartime. The increase in factory jobs caused millions to leave rural areas for industrial jobs in the Midwest and on the Pacific Coast, especially California. Entirely new communities arose around the construction of new factories and military bases. Many of the new defense installations were located in the South because of that region's warm climate and low labor costs. The wartime expansion set the stage for a post-war migration to the Sunbelt.

African Americans Attracted by jobs in the North and West, over 1.5 million African Americans left the South. In addition, a million young men left home to serve in the armed forces. Whether as soldiers or civilians, all faced continued discrimination and segregation. White resentment in urban areas led to dozens dying in race riots in New York and Detroit during the summer of 1943. Civil rights leaders encouraged African Americans to adopt the "Double V" slogan—one for victory over fascism abroad and one for equality at home.

Membership in the NAACP increased during the war. Another civil rights organization, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), was formed in 1942 to work more militantly for African American interests. After black leaders threatened a protest march on Washington, the Roosevelt administration issued an executive order to prohibit discrimination in government and in businesses that received federal contracts. One judicial victory was achieved in the Supreme Court case of *Smith v. Allwright* (1944), which ruled that it was unconstitutional to deny membership in political parties to African Americans as a way of excluding them from voting in primaries.

Mexican Americans Many Mexican Americans worked in defense industries, and over 300,000 served in the military. A 1942 agreement with Mexico allowed Mexican farmworkers, known as *braceros*, to enter the United States

in the harvest season without going through formal immigration procedures. The sudden influx of Mexican immigrants into Los Angeles stirred white resentment and led to the so-called zoot suit riots in the summer of 1943, in which whites and Mexican Americans battled on the streets.

American Indians American Indians also contributed to the war effort. Approximately 25,000 served in the military, and thousands more worked in defense industries. Having discovered the opportunities off their reservations, more than half never returned.

Japanese Americans More than any other ethnic group, Japanese Americans suffered from their association with a wartime enemy. Almost 20,000 native-born Japanese Americans served loyally in the military. Nevertheless, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese Americans were suspected of being potential spies and saboteurs, and a Japanese invasion of the West Coast was considered imminent by many. In 1942, these irrational fears as well as racism prompted the U.S. government to order over 100,000 Japanese Americans on the West Coast to leave their homes and reside in the barracks of internment camps. Japanese Americans living in other parts of the U.S., including Hawaii, did not come under this order. In the case of *Korematsu v. U.S.* (1944), the Supreme Court upheld the U.S. government's internment policy as justified in wartime. Years later, in 1988, the federal government agreed the ruling was unjust and awarded financial compensation to those still alive who had been interned.

Women The war also changed the lives of women. Over 200,000 women served in uniform in the army, navy and marines, but in noncombat roles. As in World War I, an acute labor shortage caused women to take jobs vacated by men in uniform. Almost 5 million women entered the workforce, many of them working in industrial jobs in the shipyards and defense plants. The number of married women in the workforce increased to 24 percent. A song about “Rosie the Riveter” was used to encourage women to take defense jobs. However, they received pay well below that of male factory workers.

Wartime Solidarity The New Deal helped immigrant groups feel more included, and serving together as “bands of brothers” in combat or working together for a common cause in defense plants helped to reduce prejudices based on nationality, ethnicity and religion. The wartime migrations also helped to soften regional differences, and open the eyes of many Americans to the injustice of racial discrimination.

The Election of 1944

With the war consuming most of people's attention, the presidential election of 1944 had less interest than usual.

Again, FDR Many felt that, in the war emergency, there should be no change in leadership. The president therefore sought and received the Democratic nomination for the fourth time. There was a change, however, in the Democrats' choice of a vice presidential running mate. Party leaders felt that Roosevelt's third-term vice president, Henry Wallace, was too radical and

unmanageable. With Roosevelt's agreement, they replaced Wallace with Harry S. Truman, a Missouri senator with a national reputation for having conducted a much-publicized investigation of war spending. Although Roosevelt publicly denied medical problems, those near him recognized his uncertain health.

Thomas Dewey The Republicans nominated the 42-year-old governor of New York, Thomas Dewey, who had a strong record of prosecuting corruption and racketeering. The Republican candidate was unable to offer any real alternative to Roosevelt's leadership or generate enthusiasm for change.

Results Winning 53 percent of the popular vote and an overwhelming 432–99 victory in the electoral college, the president was elected to an unprecedented fourth term. As it proved, however, FDR would live for less than three months after his inauguration. Most of his term would be served by Truman.

World War II: The Battlefronts

The fighting of World War II was waged on two fronts, or “theaters of operation.” In the Pacific, Japanese forces reached the height of their power in 1942, occupying islands throughout the western Pacific Ocean. In Europe, much of the fighting in the first year of war was between the Germans and the Soviets, as the latter fought desperately to prevent the conquest of Russia.

Fighting Germany

The high tide of the German advance ended in 1942, partly as a result of U.S. entry into the war but mainly because of a Soviet victory at Stalingrad in the winter of that year.

Defense at Sea, Attacks by Air Coordinating their military strategy, the British and Americans concentrated on two objectives in 1942: (1) overcoming the menace of German submarines in the Atlantic and (2) beginning bombing raids on German cities. The protracted naval war to control the shipping lanes was known as the Battle of the Atlantic. German submarines sank over 500 Allied ships in 1942. Gradually, however, the Allies developed ways of containing the submarine menace through the use of radar, sonar, and the bombing of German naval bases. The U.S. bombers carried out daylight “strategic bombing” raids on military targets in Europe, but the lines between military and civilian targets became blurred as the war carried on, especially in Japan,

From North Africa to Italy The Allies had the daunting task of driving German occupying forces out of their advance positions in North Africa and the Mediterranean. They began their North Africa campaign, Operation Torch, in November 1942. Led by U.S. General Dwight Eisenhower and British General Bernard Montgomery, Allied forces succeeded in taking North Africa from the Germans by May 1943.

The next U.S.–British target was the Mediterranean island of Sicily, which they occupied in the summer of 1943, preparatory to an invasion of

Italy. Mussolini fell from power during the summer, but Hitler's forces rescued him and gave him nominal control of northern Italy. In fact, German troops controlled much of Italy at the time that the Allies invaded the peninsula in September 1943. The Germans put up a determined resistance to the Allied offensive, holding much of northern Italy until their final surrender in May 1945.

From D-Day to Victory in Europe The Allied drive to liberate France began on June 6, 1944, with the largest invasion by sea in history. On D-Day, as the invasion date was called, British, Canadian, and U.S. forces under the command of General Eisenhower secured several beachheads on the Normandy coast. After this bloody but successful attack, the Allied offensive moved rapidly to roll back German occupying forces. By the end of August, Paris was liberated. By September, Allied troops had crossed the German border for a final push toward Berlin. The Germans launched a desperate counterattack in Belgium in December 1944 in the Battle of the Bulge. After this setback, however, Americans reorganized and resumed their advance.

German Surrender and Discovery of the Holocaust Since 1942, Allied bombing raids over Germany had reduced that nation's industrial capacity and ability to continue fighting. Recognizing that the end was near, as the Russian army closed in on Berlin, Hitler committed suicide on April 30, 1945. The unconditional surrender of the Nazi armies took place a week later, on May 7.

As U.S. troops advanced through Germany, they came upon German concentration camps and witnessed the horrifying extent of the Nazis' program of genocide against the Jews and others. Americans and the world were shocked to learn that 6 million Jewish civilians and several million non-Jews had been systematically murdered by Nazi Germany.

Fighting Japan

In Europe, British, Soviet, and U.S. forces were jointly responsible for defeating Germany, but in the Pacific, it was largely the U.S. armed forces that challenged the Japanese. After the Pearl Harbor attack, Japan seized control of much of East Asia and Southeast Asia. By early 1942, Japanese troops occupied Korea, eastern China, the Philippines, British Burma and Malaya, French Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos), the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia), and most of the Pacific islands west of Midway Island.

Turning Point, 1942 The war in the Pacific was dominated by naval forces battling over a vast area. Intercepting and decoding Japanese messages enabled U.S. forces to destroy four Japanese carriers and 300 planes in the decisive Battle of Midway on June 4–7. This battle ended Japanese expansion.

Island-Hopping After the victory at Midway, the United States began a long campaign to get within striking distance of Japan's home islands by seizing strategic locations in the Pacific. Using a strategy called "island-hopping,"

commanders bypassed strongly held Japanese posts and isolated them with naval and air power. Allied forces moved steadily toward Japan.

Major Battles Early in 1942, the Japanese had conquered the Philippines. When General Douglas MacArthur, the commander of army units in the Southern Pacific, was driven from the islands, he famously vowed, “I shall return.” The conflict that prepared the way for U.S. reoccupation of the Philippines was the largest naval battle in history. At the Battle of Leyte Gulf in October 1944, the Japanese navy was virtually destroyed. For the first time in the war, the Japanese used *kamikaze* pilots to make suicide attacks on U.S. ships. Kamikazes also inflicted major damage in the colossal Battle of Okinawa (April to June 1945). Before finally succeeding in taking this island near Japan, U.S. forces suffered 50,000 casualties and killed 100,000 Japanese.

Atomic Bombs After Okinawa, a huge invasion force stood ready to attack Japan. Extremely heavy casualties were feared. By this time, however, the United States had developed a frightfully destructive new weapon. The top-secret Manhattan Project had begun in 1942. Directed by the physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer, the project employed over 100,000 people and spent \$2 billion to develop a weapon whose power came from the splitting of the atom. The atomic bomb, or A-bomb, was successfully tested on July 16, 1945, at Alamogordo, New Mexico. The new president, Harry Truman, and his wartime allies called on Japan to surrender unconditionally or face “utter destruction.” When Japan gave an unsatisfactory reply, Truman consulted with his advisers and decided to use the new weapon on two Japanese cities. On August 6, an A-bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, and on August 9, a second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. About 250,000 Japanese died, either immediately or after a prolonged period of suffering, as a result of the two bombs.

Japan Surrenders Within a week after the second bomb fell, Japan agreed to surrender if the Allies would allow the emperor to remain as a titular (powerless) head of state. General MacArthur received Japan’s formal surrender on September 2, 1945, in Tokyo harbor aboard the battleship *Missouri*.

Wartime Conferences

During the war, the Big Three (leaders of the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain) arranged to confer secretly to coordinate their military strategies and to lay the foundation for peace terms and postwar involvement.

Casablanca The first conference involved only two of the Big Three. In January 1943, Roosevelt and Churchill agreed on the grand strategy to win the war, including to invade Sicily and Italy and to demand “unconditional surrender” from the Axis powers.

Teheran The Big Three—Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin—met for the first time in the Iranian city of Teheran in November 1943. They agreed that the British and Americans would begin their drive to liberate France in the spring

of 1944 and that the Soviets would invade Germany and eventually join the war against Japan.

Yalta In February 1945, the Big Three conferred again at Yalta, a resort town on the Black Sea coast of the Soviet Union. Their agreement at Yalta would prove the most historic of the three meetings. After victory in Europe was achieved, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin agreed that

- Germany would be divided into occupation zones
- there would be free elections in the liberated countries of Eastern Europe (even though Soviet troops controlled this territory)
- the Soviets would enter the war against Japan, which they did on August 8, 1945—just as Japan was about to surrender
- the Soviets would control the southern half of Sakhalin Island and the Kurile Islands in the Pacific and would have special concessions in Manchuria
- a new world peace organization (the future United Nations) would be formed at a conference in San Francisco

Death of President Roosevelt When the president returned from Yalta and informed Congress of his agreement with Churchill and Stalin, it was apparent that his health had deteriorated. On April 12, 1945, while resting in a vacation home in Georgia, an exhausted Franklin Roosevelt died suddenly. News of his death shocked the nation almost as much as Pearl Harbor. Harry S. Truman entered the presidency unexpectedly to assume enormous responsibilities as commander in chief of a war effort that had not yet been won.

Potsdam In late July, after Germany's surrender, only Stalin remained as one of the Big Three. Truman was the U.S. president, and Clement Attlee had just been elected the new British prime minister. The three leaders met in Potsdam, Germany (July 17–August 2, 1945) and agreed (1) to demand that Japan surrender unconditionally, and (2) to hold war-crime trials of Nazi leaders.

The War's Legacy

The most destructive war in the history of the world had profound effects on all nations, including the United States.

Costs

The deadliest war in human history resulted in the deaths of some 50 million military personnel and civilians worldwide. Fifteen million Americans served in uniform and approximately 300,000 Americans lost their lives either in Europe or the Pacific, and 800,000 were wounded. Excluding the Civil War, more

Americans died in World War II than in all other U.S. wars combined. The war left the country with a huge national debt, but domestically the United States had suffered little compared to others.

The United Nations

Unlike the rejection of the League of Nations following World War I, Congress readily accepted the peacekeeping organization that was conceived during World War II and put in place immediately after the war. Meeting in 1944 at Dumbarton Oaks near Washington, D.C., Allied representatives from the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and China proposed an international organization to be called the United Nations. Then in April 1945, delegates from 50 nations assembled in San Francisco, where they took only eight weeks to draft a charter for the United Nations. The Senate quickly voted to accept U.S. involvement in the U.N. On October 24, 1945, the U.N. came into existence when the majority of member-nations ratified its charter.

Expectations

In a final speech, which he never delivered, Franklin Roosevelt wrote: “The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be the doubts of today.” There were doubts, to be sure, about the new world order to emerge from World War II. Initially at least, there were also widely shared hopes that life would be better and more prosperous after the war than before. While other combatants, such as China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, and the Soviet Union, had suffered extensive damage from the war, the cities of the United States had remained unscarred. Without a doubt, the United States in 1945 was at once the most prosperous and the most powerful nation in the world. It had played a major role in defeating the Fascist dictators. Now people looked forward with some optimism to both a more peaceful and more democratic world. Unfortunately, the specters of the Soviet Union and the A-bomb would soon dim these expectations of a brighter tomorrow.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: WAS PEARL HARBOR AVOIDABLE?

At first it seemed that U.S. entry into World War II was simply a reaction to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. Probing more deeply, some historians placed part of the blame for the outbreak of World War II on U.S. policies in the late 1930s. They argued that U.S. isolationism emboldened the Fascist dictators and also left U.S. territories vulnerable to attack through military unpreparedness.

In the late 1940s, revisionists wrote that the Pearl Harbor attack could have been avoided if the diplomacy of Roosevelt and Secretary of State Hull had been more flexible. Charles A. Beard took the extreme view that Roosevelt intended the embargo on raw materials to force Japan into war. Many of the revisionists believed that Roosevelt wanted the United States in the war because of his anti-Fascist beliefs and pro-British sympathies.

Later revisionist criticisms of the 1950s and 1960s asked why naval authorities at Pearl Harbor were unprepared for an attack since the United States had broken the Japanese code. Presumably, officials knew that a Japanese attack was coming but could not determine precisely when and where it would be.

For many, the definitive study of Pearl Harbor is Gordon W. Prange's *At Dawn We Slept* (1981). While Prange believes the government could have done better predicting and preparing for an attack, he finds no evidence of a secret plot to allow Pearl Harbor to happen. His key point is that the Japanese had brilliantly planned and executed an attack that was inconceivable to most Americans at that time.

Taking the opposite position is John Toland's *Infamy: Pearl Harbor and Its Aftermath* (1982). Toland argues that Roosevelt had advance knowledge of the attack but withheld any warning so that a surprise attack would bring the United States into the war. A major problem with this argument is that the author presents no direct evidence for his conclusion.

The divergent views on the Pearl Harbor attack show the difference between historical *analysis* of how and why events occurred and historical *judgment* of a leader's underlying motives. In judging motives, historians often show their own values.

KEY TERMS BY THEME

**Hoover-FDR Policies
(WOR)**

Good Neighbor policy
Pan-American
conferences
Soviet Union recognized
Independence for
Philippines
reciprocal trade
agreements

**Militarist/Fascist
Aggression (WOR)**

Japan takes Manchuria
Stimson Doctrine
fascism
Italian Fascist party
Benito Mussolini
Ethiopia
German Nazi party
Adolf Hitler
Axis Powers
Spanish Civil War
Francisco Franco
Rhineland
Sudetenland
Munich
appeasement
Poland; blitzkrieg

**Isolationist Response
(WOR)**

isolationism
Nye Committee
Neutrality Acts
America First Committee
Charles Lindbergh

FDR's Response (WOR)

Quarantine speech
cash and carry
Selective Training and-
Service Act (1940)
destroyers-for-bases
deal
FDR, third term
Wendell Willkie
Four Freedoms speech
Lend-Lease Act (1941)
Atlantic Charter
escort convoys
oil and steel embargo
Pearl Harbor

Mobilization (WXT, POL)

War Production Board
Office of Price
Administration
government spending,
debt
role of large
corporations
research and
development
Manhattan Project
Office of War
Information
"the Good War"

Home Front (MIG, POL)

wartime migration
civil rights, "Double V"
executive order on jobs
Smith v. Allwright
Braceros program
Japanese internment
Korematsu v. U.S.
"Rosie the Riveter"
wartime solidarity
election of 1944
Harry S. Truman

**Wartime Strategies
(WOR)**

Battle of the Atlantic
strategic bombing
Dwight Eisenhower
D-Day
Holocaust
island-hopping
Battle of Midway
Douglas MacArthur
kamikaze attacks
J. Robert Oppenheimer
atomic bomb
Hiroshima; Nagasaki

**Wartime Diplomacy
(WOR)**

Big Three
Casablanca Conference
unconditional surrender
Tehran, Yalta, Potsdam
United Nations