

26 America's Rise to Globalism

1927–1945

The vast war theater of the Pacific posed immense logistical problems for the United States. Here at Tarawa Atoll, troops unload thousands of tons of heavy equipment at a newly created port.



>> An American Story “OH BOY”

John Garcia, a native Hawaiian, a worker at the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard in Honolulu, planned a lazy day for December 7, 1941. By the time his grandmother rushed in to wake him that morning at eight, he had already missed the worst of the news. “The Japanese were bombing Pearl Harbor,” he recalled her yelling at him. John listened in disbelief. “I said, ‘They’re just practicing.’” “No,” his grandmother replied. It was real. He catapulted his huge frame from the bed, ran to the front porch, hopped on his motorcycle, and sped to the harbor.



^ Explosives rock the *West Virginia* during Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.

"It was a mess," Garcia remembered. The USS *Shaw* was in flames. The battleship *Pennsylvania*, a bomb nesting one deck above the powder and ammunition, was

about to blow. When ordered to put out its fires, he told the navy officer, "There ain't no way I'm gonna go down there." Instead, he spent the rest of the day pulling bodies from the water. Surveying the wreckage the next morning, he noted that the battleship *Arizona* "was a total washout." So was the *West Virginia*. The *Oklahoma* had "turned turtle, totally upside down." It took two weeks to get all the fires out.

The war that had been spreading around the world had, until December 7, spared the United States. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, panic spread up and down the West Coast. Crowds in Los Angeles turned trigger-happy. A police officer heard "sirens going off, aircraft guns firing." "Here we are in the middle of the night," he said, "there was no enemy in sight, but somebody thought they saw the enemy." In January 1942 worried officials moved the Rose Bowl from Pasadena, California, to Durham, North Carolina. Though overheated, their fears were not entirely imaginary. Japanese submarines shelled Santa Barbara and Fort Stearns in Oregon. Balloons carrying incendiary devices caused several deaths.

Although the Japanese never mounted a serious threat to the

mainland, in a world with long-range bombers and submarines, no place seemed safe. This was global war, the first of its kind. Arrayed against the Axis powers of Germany, Italy, and Japan were the Allies: Great Britain, the Soviet Union, the United States, China, and the Free French. Their armies fought from the Arctic to the southwestern Pacific, in the great cities of Europe and Asia and the small villages of North Africa and Indochina, in malarial jungles and scorching deserts, on six continents and across four oceans. Perhaps as many as 100 million people took up arms; some 40 to 50 million lost their lives.

Tragedy on such a scale taught that generation of Americans that they could no longer isolate themselves from any part of the world, no matter how remote. Manchuria, Ethiopia, and Poland had once seemed far away, yet the road to war had led from those distant places to the United States. Retreat into isolation had not cured the worldwide depression or preserved the peace. As it waged a global war, the United States began to assume far wider responsibility for managing the world's geopolitical and economic systems. <<

What's to Come

542 The United States in a Troubled World

546 A Global War

551 War Production

555 A Question of Rights

560 Winning the War and the Peace

THE UNITED STATES IN A TROUBLED WORLD

The outbreak of World War II had its roots in the aftermath of World War I. Many of the victorious as well as the defeated nations resented the peace terms adopted at Versailles. Over the next two decades Germany, the Soviet Union, Italy, Poland, and Japan all sought to achieve on their own what Allied leaders had denied them during the negotiations. War debts imposed at Versailles shackled Germany's economy. As that nation struggled to recover during the Great Depression, so did all of Europe. In central and eastern Europe rivalry among fascists, communists, and other political factions led to frequent violence and instability.

Fascists took the greatest advantage of this instability. The philosophy and movement had its roots in Italy, where nationalists under Benito Mussolini gained power in the 1920s, preaching the idea of the nation as an organic community. Individuals meant little compared with the needs of the nation, fascists believed; and war kept the nation strong and served the collective interest. Adolf Hitler and his Nazis (the National Socialist German Workers' Party) went further when they assumed control of Germany in 1933. They embraced a totalitarian government, racism (especially anti-Semitism), a policy of territorial expansion to obtain *Lebensraum* (living space), and state control of an economy dedicated to making war. Japanese fascists erected a militarist state whose leaders were also bent on armed conquest. As political movements of the right, these extreme conservatives—whether fascist, national socialist, or militarist—violently opposed communism with its abolition of private property and its ideal of a classless, collectivist society. Fascists in all three nations moved against communist and labor parties at home, and abroad they sought to destroy the Soviet Union's workers' state.

Faced with this increasingly unstable world, the United States turned away from any collective action to check the fascist powers. Although their nation possessed the resources at least to ease international tensions, Americans declined to lead in world affairs, remaining outside the League of Nations.

Pacific Interests >> The effort to avoid entanglements did not mean the United States could simply ignore events abroad. In assuming colonial control over the Philippines, Americans had created a potentially dangerous rivalry with Japan over the western Pacific. So also had the American commitment to uphold

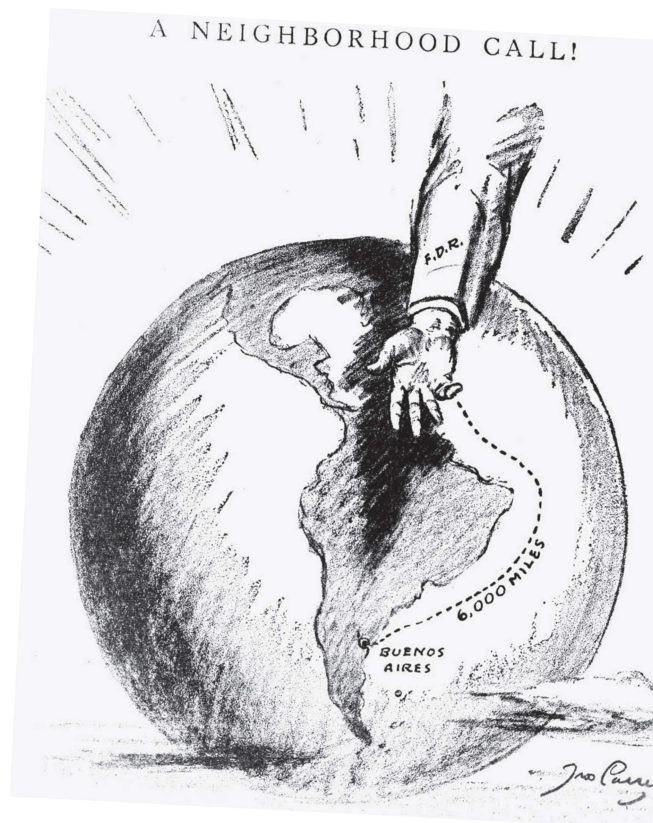
China's territorial integrity, set out in the "open door" policy of 1900 (page 439). With rival Chinese warlords fighting among themselves, Japan took the opportunity to capture overseas raw materials and markets. In 1931 Japanese agents staged an explosion on a rail line in Manchuria (meant to appear as though carried out by Chinese nationalists). That act provided an excuse for Japan to occupy the whole province. A year later Japan converted Manchuria into a puppet state called Manchukuo.

Here was a direct threat to the Versailles system. But neither the major powers in Europe nor the United States was willing to risk a war with Japan over China. President Hoover would allow Secretary of State Henry Stimson only to protest that the United States would refuse to recognize Japan's takeover of Manchuria as legal. The policy of "nonrecognition" became known as the Stimson Doctrine, even though Stimson himself doubted its worth. He was right to be skeptical. Three weeks later Japan's imperial navy shelled the port city of Shanghai, seeking to expand its influence in China.

Becoming a Good Neighbor >> Growing tensions in Asia and Europe gave the United States an incentive to improve relations with nations closer to home. By the late 1920s the United States had intervened in Latin America so often that the Roosevelt Corollary (page 468) had become an embarrassment. Slowly, however, American administrations began to moderate those high-handed policies. In 1927, when Mexico confiscated American-owned properties, President Coolidge sent an ambassador, rather than the marines, to settle the dispute. In 1933, when critics compared the American position in Nicaragua to Japan's in Manchuria, Secretary Stimson ordered U.S. troops to withdraw. In such gestures lay the roots of a "Good Neighbor" policy.

Franklin Roosevelt pushed the good neighbor idea. At the seventh Pan-American Conference in 1933, his administration accepted a resolution denying any country "the right to intervene in the internal or external affairs of another." The following year he negotiated a treaty with Cuba that renounced the American right to intervene under the Platt Amendment (page 467). Henceforth the United States would replace direct military presence with indirect (but still substantial) economic influence.

As the threat of war increased during the 1930s, Latin American nations proved more willing to cooperate with the United States in matters of common defense. Roosevelt—the first American president to visit Argentina—opened the Pan-American Conference in 1936 by declaring that outside aggressors would "find a Hemisphere wholly prepared to consult together for our mutual safety and our mutual good." Given that the peace settlement ending World War I



▲ Franklin Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy improved U.S. relations with Latin America after decades of U.S. interference abroad. Roosevelt's trip to the 1936 Pan-American Conference, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, marked the first visit of an American president to South America. His diplomacy paid dividends when a largely united Western Hemisphere faced the world crisis.

closed many worldwide markets to Germany, Adolf Hitler campaigned to increase German access to South American markets and increase political influence as well. In vain: by the end of 1940 every Latin American country but Argentina had signed defense agreements with the United States.

The Diplomacy of Isolationism >> During the 1920s Benito Mussolini had appealed to Italian nationalism and fears of communism to gain power in Italy. Spinning his dreams of a new Roman empire, Mussolini embodied the rising force of fascism. His *Fasci di Combattimento*, or fascists, used terrorism and murder to create an “all-embracing” single-party state, outside which “no human or spiritual values can exist, let alone be desirable.” Italian fascists rejected the liberal belief in political parties in favor of a glorified nation-state dominated by the middle class, small businesspeople, and small farmers.

Then on March 5, 1933, one day after the inauguration of Franklin Roosevelt, the German legislature granted Adolf Hitler dictatorial powers in Germany. Riding a wave of anticommunism, fanatical patriotism,

and anti-Semitism, Hitler's Nazi Party trumpeted similar fascist ideals, looking to unite all Germans in a Greater Third Reich. A week earlier, when the League of Nations condemned Japan for its attacks on China, the Japanese simply withdrew from the League. Its militarist leaders were intent on carving out Japan's own empire, which they called the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The global rise of fascism and militarism brought the world to war.

As much as Roosevelt wanted the United States to resist aggression, he found the nation reluctant to follow. “It's a terrible thing to look over your shoulder when you are trying to lead—and to find no one there,” he commented during the mid-1930s. For every step the president took toward internationalism, the Great Depression forced him home again. Pro-grams to revive the economy gained broad support; efforts to resolve crises abroad provoked opposition. The move to noninvolvement in world affairs gained in 1935 after Senator Gerald P. Nye of North Dakota held hearings on the role

of bankers and munitions makers in World War I. These **“merchants of death,”** Nye's committee revealed, had made enormous profits during World

merchants of death term popularized in the 1930s to describe American bankers and arms makers whose support for the Allied cause, some historians charged, drew the United States into World War I.

War I. The committee report implied, but could not prove, that business interests had even steered the United States into war. “When Americans went into the fray,” declared Senator Nye, “they little thought that they were there and fighting to save the skins of American bankers who had bet too boldly on the outcome of the war and had two billions of dollars of loans to the Allies in jeopardy.”

Roused by the Nye Committee hearings, Congress debated a proposal to prohibit the sale of arms to all belligerents in time of war. Internationalists argued that an embargo should apply only to aggressor nations. Otherwise, aggressors could strike when they were better armed than their victims. The president, internationalists suggested, should use the embargo selectively. Isolationists, however, had the votes they needed. The Neutrality Act of 1935 required an impartial embargo of arms to all belligerents. The president had authority only to determine when a state of war existed.

The limitations of formal neutrality became immediately apparent. In October 1935 Mussolini ordered Italian forces into the North African country of Ethiopia. Against tanks and planes, Ethiopian troops fought back with spears and flintlock rifles. Roosevelt immediately invoked neutrality in hopes of depriving Italy of war goods. Unfortunately for Roosevelt, Italy needed not arms but oil, steel, and copper—materials

not included under the Neutrality Act. When Secretary of State Cordell Hull called for a “moral embargo” on such goods, depression-starved American businesses shipped them anyway. With no effective opposition from the League of Nations or the United States, Mussolini quickly completed his conquest. In a second Neutrality Act, Congress added a ban on loans or credits to belligerents.

American noninvolvement also benefited Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler. In March 1936, two weeks after Congress passed the second Neutrality Act, German troops thrust into the demilitarized area west of the Rhine River. This flagrant act violated the Treaty of Versailles. As Hitler shrewdly calculated, Britain and France did nothing, while the League of Nations sputtered out a worthless condemnation. Roosevelt remained aloof. The Soviet Union’s lonely call for collective action fell on deaf ears.

Then came an attack on Spain’s fledgling democracy. In July 1936 Generalissimo Francisco Franco, made bold by Hitler’s success, led a rebellion against the newly elected Popular Front government. Hitler and Mussolini sent supplies, weapons, and troops to Franco’s Fascists, while the Soviet Union and Mexico aided the left-leaning government. With Americans sharply divided over whom to support, Roosevelt refused to become involved. Lacking vital support, the Spanish Republic fell to Franco in 1939.

Congress sought a way to allow American trade to continue (and thus to promote economic recovery at home) without drawing the nation into war. Under new “cash-and-carry” provisions in the Neutrality Act of 1937, belligerents could buy supplies other than munitions. But they would have to pay beforehand and carry the supplies on their own ships. If war spread, these terms favored the British, whose navy could better ensure that supplies reached England.

But the policy of cash-and-carry hurt China in 1937 when Japanese forces pushed into its southern regions. In order to give China continued access to American goods, Roosevelt refused to invoke the Neutrality Act, which would have cut off trade with both nations. But Japan had by far the greater volume of trade with the United States. Since the president lacked the freedom to impose a selective embargo, he could only condemn Japan’s invasion.

Inching toward War >> In 1937 the three aggressor nations, Germany, Japan, and Italy, signed the Anti-Comintern Pact. On the face of it the pact pledged them only to ally against

the Soviet Union. But the agreement created a Rome–Berlin–Tokyo axis that provoked growing fear of wider war. Roosevelt groped for some way to contain the Axis powers, delivering in October his first foreign policy speech in 14 months. Seeming to favor collective action, he called for an international “quarantine” of aggressor nations. Although most newspapers applauded his remarks, the American public remained skeptical, and Roosevelt remained cautious about matching words with deeds. When Japanese planes sank the American gunboat *Panay* on China’s Yangtze River only two months later, he meekly accepted an apology for the unprovoked attack.

In Europe the Nazi menace continued to grow as German troops marched into Austria in 1938—yet another violation of the Versailles treaty. Hitler then insisted that the 3.5 million ethnic Germans in the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia be brought into the Reich. With Germany threatening to invade Czechoslovakia, the leaders of France and Britain flew to Munich in September 1938, where they struck a deal to appease Hitler. Czechoslovakia would give up the Sudetenland in return for German pledges to seek no more territory in Europe. When British prime minister Neville Chamberlain returned to England, he told cheering crowds that the Munich Pact would bring “peace in our time.” Six months later, in open contempt



▲ A company of Nazi youths parades past the Führer, Adolf Hitler (*in the balcony doorway*). Hitler’s shrewd use of patriotic symbols, mass rallies, and marches exploited the new possibilities of mass politics.

for the European democracies, Hitler took over the remainder of Czechoslovakia. **Appeasement** became synonymous with betrayal, weakness, and surrender.

appeasement policy of making concessions to an aggressor nation, as long as its demands appear reasonable, in order to avoid war.

Hitler's Invasion >> By 1939 Hitler made little secret that he intended to recapture territory Germany had lost to Poland after World War I. What then would the Soviet Union do? If Soviet leader Joseph Stalin joined the Western powers, Hitler might be blocked. But Stalin, who coveted eastern Poland, suspected that the West hoped to turn Hitler against the Soviet Union. On August 24, 1939, Russia and Germany shocked the world when they announced a nonaggression pact. Its secret protocols freed Hitler to invade Poland without fear of Soviet opposition. In turn, Stalin could extend his western borders by bringing eastern Poland, the Baltic states (Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania), and parts of Romania and Finland into the Soviet sphere.

On the hot Saturday of September 1, 1939, German tanks and troops surged into Poland. "It's come at last," Roosevelt sighed. "God help us all." Within days France and England declared war on Germany. Stalin quickly moved into eastern Poland, where German and Russian tanks took just three weeks to crush the Polish cavalry. As Hitler consolidated his hold on eastern Europe, Stalin invaded Finland.

Once spring arrived in 1940, Hitler moved to protect his sea lanes by capturing Denmark and Norway. Soon after, German panzer divisions supported by airpower knifed through Belgium and Holland in a *blitzkrieg*—a "lightning war." The Low Countries fell in 23 days, giving the Germans a route into France. By May a third of a million British and French troops had been driven back onto the Atlantic beaches of Dunkirk. Only a strenuous rescue effort, staged by the Royal Navy and a flotilla of yachts and fishing boats, managed to ferry them across the channel to England and safety. With the British and French routed, German forces marched to Paris.

On June 22, less than six weeks after the German invasion, France capitulated. Hitler insisted that the surrender come in the very railway car in which Germany had submitted in 1918. William Shirer, an American war correspondent standing 50 yards away, watched the dictator through binoculars: "He swiftly snaps his hands on his hips, arches his shoulders, plants his feet wide apart. It is a magnificent gesture of defiance, of burning contempt for this place and all that it has stood for in the twenty-two years since it witnessed the humbling of the German Empire."

Retreat from Isolationism >> With France gone only Great Britain stood between Hitler and the United States. If the Nazis defeated the British fleet, what would stop the Atlantic Ocean from becoming a gateway to the Americas? Suddenly, **isolationism** seemed dangerous. Roosevelt thus abandoned impartiality in favor of outright aid to the Allies. In May 1940 he requested funds to motorize the U.S. Army (it had only 350 tanks) and build 50,000 airplanes a year (fewer than 3,000 existed, most outmoded). Over isolationist protests Congress adopted a bill for the first peacetime draft in history.

isolationism belief that the United States should avoid foreign entanglements, alliances, and involvement in foreign wars.

That summer thousands of German fighter planes and heavy bombers struck targets in England. In the Battle of Britain, Hitler sought to soften up England for a German invasion. Radio reporters relayed graphic descriptions of London in flames and Royal Air Force pilots putting up a heroic defense. Such tales convinced a majority of Americans that the United States should help Britain win the war, though few favored military involvement.

In the fall of 1940 Roosevelt easily won a third term, defeating his Republican opponent, Wendell Willkie. In doing so, the president promised voters that rather than fight, the United States would become "the great arsenal of democracy." The beleaguered British, however, could no longer pay for arms under the strict provisions of cash-and-carry. So Roosevelt proposed a scheme to "lease, lend, or otherwise dispose of" arms and supplies to countries whose defense was vital to the United States. That meant sending supplies to Britain on the dubious premise that they would be returned when the war ended. Roosevelt likened "lend-lease" to lending a garden hose to a neighbor whose house was on fire. Isolationist senator Robert Taft thought a comparison to "chewing gum" more apt. After a neighbor used it, "you don't want it back." Still, in March 1941 Congress easily passed the Lend-Lease Act.

Step by step Roosevelt had led the United States to the verge of war with the Nazis. Then Hitler, as audacious as ever, broke his alliance with the Soviet Union by launching a surprise invasion of Russia in June 1941. The Allies expected a swift collapse, but when Russian troops mounted a heroic resistance, Roosevelt extended lend-lease to the Soviet Union.

That August Roosevelt secretly met with the new British prime minister, Winston Churchill, on warships off the coast of Newfoundland. Almost every day since England and Germany had gone to war, the two leaders had exchanged phone calls, letters, or cables. Now Roosevelt and Churchill drew up the Atlantic Charter, a statement of principles that the two nations held



<< During World War II, President Franklin Roosevelt and British prime minister Winston Churchill developed the closest relationship ever between an American president and the head of another government. These distant cousins shared a sense of the continuities of Anglo-American culture and of the global strategy for pursuing the war to a successful end.

in common. The charter condemned “Nazi tyranny” and embraced the “Four Freedoms”: freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. In effect, the Atlantic Charter was an unofficial statement of war aims. Yet despite Roosevelt’s increasing involvement, eight of ten Americans still opposed entering the hostilities. Few in the United States suspected that an attack by Japan, not Germany, would unify America and bring it into the war.

Disaster in the Pacific >> Preoccupied by the fear of German victory in Europe, Roosevelt sought to avoid a showdown with Japan. The navy, the president told his cabinet, had “not got enough ships to go round, and every little episode in the Pacific means fewer ships in the Atlantic.” But precisely because American and European attention lay elsewhere, Japan was emboldened to expand militarily into Southeast Asia. By the summer of 1941 Japanese forces controlled the Chinese coast and all major cities. When its army marched into French Indochina (present-day Vietnam) in July, Japan stood ready to conquer all of the Southeast Asian peninsula and the oil-rich Dutch East Indies.

Roosevelt was forced to act. He embargoed trade, froze Japanese assets in American banks, and barred shipments of vital scrap iron and petroleum. Japanese leaders indicated a willingness to negotiate with the United States, but diplomats from both sides were only going through the motions. Japan demanded that its conquests be recognized; the United States

insisted that Japan withdraw from China and renounce the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy. As negotiations sputtered on, the Japanese secretly prepared an attack on American positions in Guam, the Philippines, and Hawai’i.

In late November American intelligence located, and then lost, a Japanese armada as it left Japan. Observing strict radio silence, the six carriers and their escorts steamed across the North Pacific. On Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, the first wave of Japanese planes roared down on the Pacific Fleet lying at anchor in Pearl Harbor. For more than an hour

the Japanese pounded the ships and nearby airfields. “We were flabbergasted by the devastation,” a sailor wrote. Altogether 19 ships were sunk or battered. Practically all the 200 American aircraft were damaged or destroyed. Only the aircraft carriers, sent to reinforce Midway and Wake Island, escaped the worst naval defeat in American history.

In Washington, Secretary of War Henry Stimson could not believe the news relayed to his office. “My God! This can’t be true, this must mean the Philippines.” Later that day the Japanese did attack the Philippines, along with Guam, Midway, and British forces in Hong Kong and the Malay Peninsula. On December 8, Franklin Roosevelt told a stunned nation that “yesterday, December 7, 1941” was “a date which will live in infamy.” America, the “reluctant belligerent,” was in the war at last. Three days later Hitler declared war on the “half Judaized and the other half Negrified” people of the United States; Italy quickly followed suit.

✓ REVIEW

Explain why at least three major events pushed the United States to intervene in World War II.

A GLOBAL WAR

British prime minister Winston Churchill greeted the news of Pearl Harbor with shock but, even more, relief. Great Britain would no longer stand alone in the North

Atlantic and the Pacific wars. “We have won the war,” he thought, and that night he slept “the sleep of the saved and thankful.”

As Churchill recognized, only with the Americans fully committed to war could the Allies make full use of the enormous material and human resources of the United States. Beyond that, the Allies needed to secure an alliance between the Anglo–American democracies and the Soviet Communist dictatorship that could win both the war and the peace to follow.

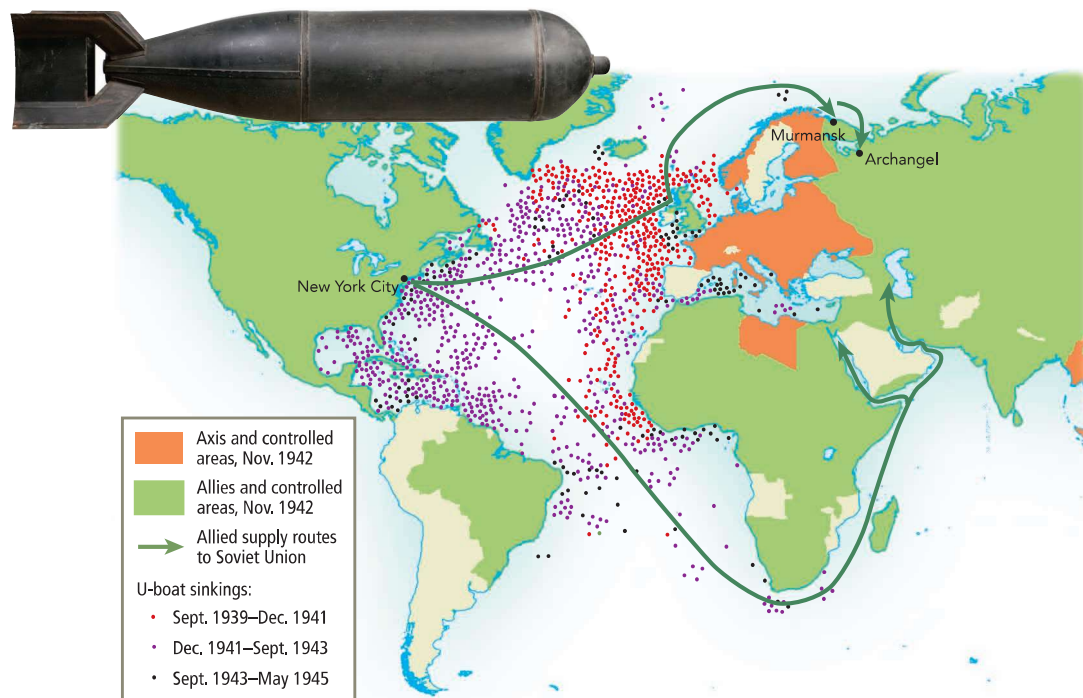
Strategies for War >> Within two weeks Churchill was in Washington, meeting with Roosevelt to coordinate production schedules for ships, planes, and armaments. The numbers they announced were so large some critics openly laughed—at first. A year later combined British, Canadian, and American production boards not only met but exceeded the schedules.

Roosevelt and Churchill also planned grand strategy. Outraged by the attack on Pearl Harbor, many Americans thought Japan should be the war’s primary target. But the two leaders agreed that Germany posed the greater threat. The Pacific war, they decided,

would be fought as a holding action, while the Allies concentrated on Europe. In a global war, arms and resources had to be allocated carefully, for the Allies faced daunting threats on every front.

Gloomy Prospects >> By summer’s end in 1942 the Allies faced defeat. The Nazis stood outside the Soviet Union’s three major cities: Leningrad, Moscow, and Stalingrad. In North Africa, General Erwin Rommel, Germany’s famed “Desert Fox,” swept into Egypt with his Afrika Korps to stand within striking distance of the Suez Canal—a lifeline to the resources of the British Empire. German U-boats (submarines) in the North Atlantic threatened to sever the ocean link between the United States and Britain. So deadly were these “Wolfpacks” that merchant sailors developed a grim humor about sleeping. Those on freighters carrying iron ore slept above decks, since the heavily laden ships could sink in less than a minute. On oil tankers, however, sailors closed their doors, undressed, and slept soundly. If a torpedo hit, no one would survive anyway.

In the Far East the Japanese navy destroyed most of the Allied fleet in the western Pacific during the



MAP 26.1: THE U-BOAT WAR

In the world’s first truly global war, the need to coordinate and supply troops and matériel became paramount. But as German U-boats took a heavy toll on Allied shipping, it became difficult to deliver American supplies to Europe. Avoiding the North Atlantic route forced an arduous 12,000-mile journey around Africa to the Persian Gulf and then across by land. The elimination of German submarines greatly eased the shipping problem and, as much as any single battle, ensured victory.

Why did so many U-boat sinkings occur off the north coast of South America?

Battle of Java Sea. General Douglas MacArthur, commander of American forces in the Philippines, escaped to Australia in April 1942. In what appeared to be an empty pledge, he vowed, “I shall return.” The ill-equipped American and Philippine troops left on Bataan and Corregidor put up a heroic but doomed struggle. By summer no significant Allied forces stood between the Japanese and India or Australia.

Endless victories disguised fatal weaknesses within the Axis alliance. Japan and Germany never coordinated strategies. Vast armies in China and Russia drained each of both troops and supplies. Brutal occupation policies made enemies of conquered populations, which forced Axis armies to use valuable forces to maintain control and move supplies. The Nazis were especially harsh. They launched a major campaign to exterminate Europe’s Jews, Slavs, and Gypsies. Resistance movements grew as the victims of Axis aggression fought back.

A Grand Alliance >> The early defeats also obscured the Allies’ strengths. Chief among these were the human resources of the Soviet Union and the productive capacity of the United States. Safe from the fighting, American farms and factories could produce enough food and munitions to supply two separate wars at once. By the end of the war American industry had turned out vast quantities of airplanes, ships, artillery pieces, tanks, and self-propelled guns, as well as 47 million tons of ammunition.

The Allies benefited, too, from exceptional leadership. The “Big Three”—Joseph Stalin, Winston Churchill, and Franklin Roosevelt—were able to maintain a unity of purpose that eluded Axis leaders. All three understood the global nature of the war. To a remarkable degree they managed to set aside their many differences in pursuit of a common goal: the defeat of Nazi Germany. At the war’s height 50 countries were among the Allies, who referred to themselves as the United Nations.

To be sure, each nation had its own needs. Russian forces faced 3.5 million Axis troops along a 1,600-mile front in eastern Europe. To ease the pressure on those troops, Stalin repeatedly called upon the Allies to open a second front in western Europe. So urgent were his demands that one Allied diplomat remarked that Stalin’s foreign minister knew only four words

in English: yes, no, and second front. But Churchill and Roosevelt felt compelled to turn Stalin down. After an initial surge of anger, Stalin accepted Churchill’s rationale for a substitute action. That was to be a British–American invasion of North Africa at the end of 1942. Code-named Operation Torch, the North African campaign would bring British and American troops into direct combat with the Germans and stood an excellent chance of succeeding. Here was an example of how personal contact among the Big Three ensured Allied cooperation. The alliance sometimes bent but never broke.

The Naval War in the Pacific >> Despite the decision to defeat Germany first, the Allies’ earliest successes came in the Pacific. At the Battle of Coral Sea in May 1942, planes from American aircraft carriers stopped a large Japanese invading force headed for Port Moresby in New Guinea. For the first time in history two fleets fought without seeing each other. The age of naval aviation had arrived.

To extend Japan’s defenses, the Japanese military ordered the capture of Midway, a small island west of Hawai’i. The Americans, having decoded secret Japanese messages, were ready. On June 3, as the Japanese main fleet bore down on Midway, American planes sank four enemy carriers, a cruiser, and three destroyers. The Battle of Midway broke Japanese naval supremacy in the Pacific and stalled Japan’s offensive. In August 1942 American forces went on the offensive, in the



▲ The violence of amphibious warfare was evident on the beaches of Tarawa in 1943.

Solomon Islands east of New Guinea. With the landing of American marines on the island of Guadalcanal, the Allies started on the bloody road to Japan and victory.

Turning Points in Europe >> By the fall of 1942 Allied fortunes brightened in the European war. In Egypt at El Alamein, British forces under General Bernard Montgomery broke through Rommel's lines. Weeks later, the Allies launched Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa. Under the command of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Allied forces

swept eastward through Morocco and Algeria. They were halted in February 1943 at the Kasserine Pass in Tunisia, but General George S. Patton regrouped them and masterminded an impressive string of victories. By May 1943 Rommel had fled from North Africa, leaving behind 300,000 German troops.

Success in North Africa provided a stirring complement to the dogged Russian stand at Stalingrad against a vast German army. Despite huge losses, Stalin's forces went on the offensive, moving south and west through the Ukraine toward Poland and Romania.



MAP 26.2: WORLD WAR II IN EUROPE AND NORTH AFRICA

Until 1944 Soviet forces carried the brunt of the war in Europe, engaging the Axis armies across a huge front. After winning North Africa the Allies turned north to knock Italy out of the war. The final key to defeating Germany was the Anglo-American invasion of western Europe (D-Day) at Normandy (see Map 26.3).

Why did the first Anglo-American ground campaigns occur in North Africa?

Those Who Fought >> “The first time I ever heard a New England accent,” recalled a midwesterner, “was at Fort Benning. The south—erner was an exotic creature to me. The people from the farms. The New York street smarts.” Mobilizing for war brought together Americans from all regions, classes, and ethnic back—grounds. More than any other social institu—tion the army acted as a melting pot. It also offered educational opportunities and job skills. “I could be a technical sergeant only I haven’t had enough school,” reported one Navajo soldier in a letter home to New Mexico. “Make my little brother go to school even if you have to lasso him.”

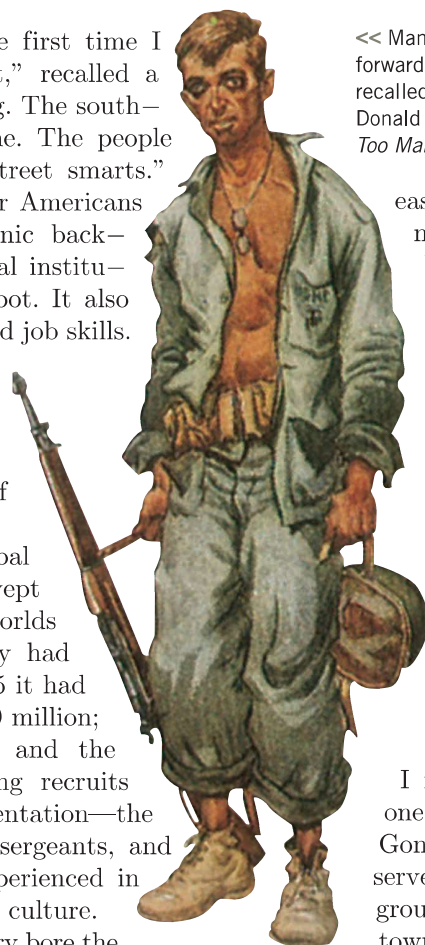
In waging the world’s first global war the U.S. armed forces swept millions of Americans into new worlds and experiences. In 1941 the army had 1.6 million men in uniform. By 1945 it had more than 7 million; the navy, 3.9 million; the army air corps, 2.3 million; and the marines, 600,000. At basic training recruits were subjected to forms of regimentation—the army haircut, foul—mouthed drill sergeants, and barracks life—they had seldom experienced in other areas of America’s democratic culture.

In this war, as in most, the infantry bore the brunt of the fighting and dying. They suffered 90 percent of the battlefield casualties. In all, almost 400,000 Americans died and more than 600,000 were wounded. But service in the military did not mean constant combat. Most battles were reasonably short, fol—lowed by long periods of waiting and preparation. The army used almost 2 million soldiers just to move supplies. Yet even during the lull in battle, the soldiers’ biggest enemy, disease, stalked them: malaria, dysentery, typhus, and even plague. In the Pacific theater, the thermometer sometimes rose to over 110 degrees Fahrenheit.

Minorities at War >> Minorities enlisted in unusually large numbers because the services offered training and opportunities unavailable in civilian life. Still, prejudice in the ranks remained high. The army was strictly segregated and generally assigned black soldiers to noncombatant roles. The navy accepted them only as cooks and servants. At first the air corps and the marines would not take them at all. The American Red Cross even kept “black” and “white” blood plasma separated, as if there were a differ—ence. (Ironically, a black physician, Charles Drew, had invented the process allowing plasma to be stored.)

Despite such prejudice more than a million black men and women served. As the war progressed, lead—ers of the black community pressured the military to

<< Many young soldiers, known as GIs, at first looked forward to combat. “I was going to gain my manhood,” recalled one soldier. But combat hardened such troops. Donald Dickson titled his portrait of one war-weary GI *Too Many, Too Close, Too Long*.



ease segregation and allow black soldiers a more active role. The army did form some black combat units, usually led by white officers, as well as a black air corps unit. By mid—1942 black officers began to graduate from integrated officer candi—date schools at the rate of 200 a month. More than 80 black pilots won the Dis—tinguished Flying Cross.

For both Mexican Americans and Asian Americans the war offered an op—portunity to enter the American main—stream. Putting on a uniform was an essential act of citizenship. Mexican Americans had a higher enlistment rate than the population in general. A California member of Congress observed, “as I read the casualty list from my state, I find that anywhere from one—fourth to one—third of these names are names such as Gonzales and Sanchez.” Chinese Americans served at the highest rate of all minority groups. As Harold Liu of New York’s China—town recalled, “for the first time Chinese were accepted as being friends. . . . All of a sudden



^ In the face of Japanese occupation, many Filipinos actively supported the American war effort. Valentine Untalan survived capture by the Japanese and went on to serve in the American army’s elite Philippine Scouts. Like a growing number of Filipinos, he moved to the United States after the war ended.

we became part of an American dream.” Korean Americans were especially valuable in the Pacific theater because many could translate Japanese.

Filipino Americans jumped at the chance to fight for the liberation of their homeland from Japanese invaders. Their loyalty had its rewards. Filipinos who volunteered became citizens. The California attorney general reinterpreted laws that had once prevented Filipinos from owning land. Now they could buy their own farms. Jobs opened in war factories. The status of Mexican Americans and other Asian Americans improved in similar ways.

Homosexuals who wished to join the military faced a dilemma. Would their sexual orientation be discovered during the screening process? And if they were rejected and word got back to their parents or communities, would they be stigmatized? Many took that chance. Charles Rowland from Arizona recalled that he and other gay friends “were not about to be deprived the privilege of serving our country in a time of great national emergency by virtue of some stupid regulation about being gay.” Those who did pass the screening test found themselves in gender-segregated bases, where life in an overwhelmingly male or female environment allowed many, for the first time in their lives, to meet like-minded gay men and women.

Women at War >> World War II brought an end to the military as a male enclave that women entered only as nurses. During the prewar mobilization, Eleanor Roosevelt and other women had campaigned for a regular military organization for women. The War Department came up with a compromise that allowed women to join the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), but only with inferior status and lower pay. By 1943 the “Auxiliary” had dropped out of the title: WAACs became WACs, with full status, equal ranks, and equal pay. (The navy had a similar force called the WAVEs.)

Women could look with a mixture of pride and resentment on their wartime military service. Thousands served close to the battlefields, working as technicians, mechanics, radio operators, postal clerks, and secretaries. Although filling a vital need, these were largely traditional female jobs that implied a separate and inferior status. Until 1944 women were prevented by law from serving in war zones, even as noncombatants. There were women pilots, but they were restricted to shuttling planes behind the lines. At many posts WAVEs and WACs lived behind barbed wire and could move about only in groups under armed escort.

✓ REVIEW

What strategy did the Big Three adopt to fight the war, and when did it begin to succeed?



▲ African Americans enlisted in huge numbers. This WAC was among the first to arrive in Europe.

WAR PRODUCTION

When the attack on Pearl Harbor brought the United States into the war, Thomas Chinn sold his publishing business and devoted all his time to war work. Like many Chinese Americans, it was the first time he had worked outside Chinatown. He served as a supervisor in the Army Quartermaster Market Center, which was responsible for supplying the armed forces with fresh food as it was harvested across California. Chinn found himself coordinating cold-storage warehouses across the entire state.

Food distribution was only one of many areas that demanded attention from the government. After Pearl Harbor, steel, aluminum, and electric power were all in short supply, creating bottlenecks in production lines. Roosevelt recognized the need for more-direct government control of the economy.

The president used a mix of compulsory and voluntary programs to guarantee an ever-increasing supply of food, munitions, and equipment. Although slow to get under way, eventually the United States worked a miracle of production that proved every bit as important to victory as any battle fought overseas. So successful was war production that civilians suffered little deprivation.

Mobilizing for War >> The demand for war materials created numerous production bottlenecks. To end them, the president in 1943 made Supreme Court justice James F. Byrnes the dictator the economy needed. His authority as director of the new Office of War Mobilization (OWM) was so great and his access to Roosevelt so direct that he became known as the “assistant president.” By assuming control over vital materials such as steel, aluminum, and copper, OWM was able to allocate them more systematically.

Americans learned to do without new cars and Sunday drives. Soon, the bottlenecks disappeared.

Equally crucial, industries large and small converted their factories to turning out war matériel. The “Big Three” automakers—Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler—generated some 20 percent of all war goods, as auto factories were retooled to make tanks and planes. But small business also played a vital role. A manufacturer of model trains, for example, made bomb fuses.

War production also created new industrial centers, especially in the West. When production peaked in 1944 the aircraft industry had 2.1 million workers producing almost 100,000 planes. Most of the new plants were located around Los Angeles, San Diego, and Seattle. The demand for workers opened opportunities for many Asian workers who had been limited to jobs within their own ethnic communities. By 1943, 15 percent of all shipyard workers around San Francisco Bay were Chinese.

The government relied on large firms such as Ford and General Motors because they had experience with large-scale production. Thus, war contracts helped large corporations increase their dominance over the economy. Workers in companies with more than 10,000 employees amounted to just 13 percent of the workforce in 1939; by 1944 they constituted more than 30 percent. In agriculture a similar move toward bigness occurred. The number of people working on farms dropped by a fifth, yet productivity increased 30 percent, as small farms were consolidated into larger ones that relied on more machinery and artificial fertilizers to increase yields.

Productivity increased for a less tangible reason: pride in work done for a common cause. Civilians volunteered for civil defense, hospitals, and countless scrap drives. Children became “Uncle Sam’s Scrappers”

and “Tin-Can Colonels” as they scoured vacant lots for valuable trash. Backyard “victory” gardens added 8 million tons of food to the harvest in 1943; car pooling conserved millions of tires. As citizens put off buying new consumer goods, they helped limit inflation. Morale ran high because people believed that every contribution, no matter how small, helped defeat the Axis.

Science Goes to War >> New technologies transformed the way the Americans fought this global war. At the Battles of the Coral Sea and Midway, the navy used radar gunnery and airplanes to spot and sink enemy ships. Applied mathematics and game theory helped the navy find and destroy the U-boats that preyed on Allied shipping. Elsewhere, improved fighter planes and long-range bombers allowed Allied air forces to take the war to the Axis homelands. As a result, the idea of a front line lost its meaning.

In their quest to preserve democratic freedoms, scientists began to explore some of the basic forces of nature. Generals and admirals understood all too well that the fortunes of battle could turn on the weather. With the navy’s support the Massachusetts Institute of Technology created a professional program in meteorology. There, scientists applied the principles of physics to better understand climate patterns. Meteorology and other fields of geophysics provided the military with information on the winds, ocean currents, tides, and weather in far-flung theaters of the war. These efforts laid the foundation for future understanding of climate science.

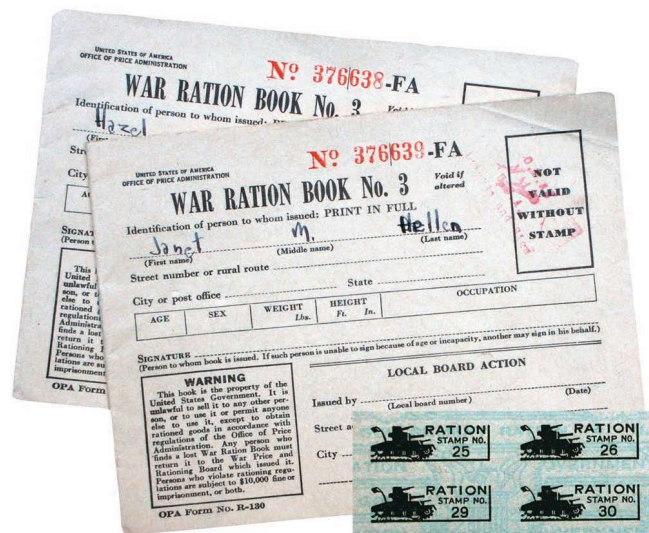
No scientific quest did more to alter the relationship between humans and the natural world than the effort to build an atomic bomb.

fission splitting of a nucleus of an atom into at least two other nuclei, accompanied by the release of energy. The splitting of the nucleus of the uranium isotope U-235 or its artificial cousin, plutonium, powered the atomic bomb.

In 1938 German scientists discovered the process of nuclear **fission**. Atoms of uranium-235 when split released enormous energy. Leading physicists, many of them refugees from European fascism, understood that a fast fission reaction might be used to build a bomb. In 1939 Albert Einstein, Enrico Fermi, and Leo Szilard warned President Roosevelt that the Germans might be well on the way to creating a weapon, the use of which might determine the outcome of the war.

Concerned, Roosevelt authorized an enormous research and development effort, code-named the Manhattan Project. More than 100,000 scientists, engineers, technicians, and support staff from Canada, England, and the United States worked at 39 installations to build an atomic bomb. Yet, even as they spent over \$2 billion in their quest, scientists feared the Germans might succeed before they did.

Applied science was not simply about destruction. Production mattered as well. With so many farmers



⤴ To fight inflation, the Office of Price Administration (OPA) imposed rationing on products in short supply. Consumers received coupons to trade for goods such as meat, shoes, and gasoline. The program was one of the most unpopular of the war.

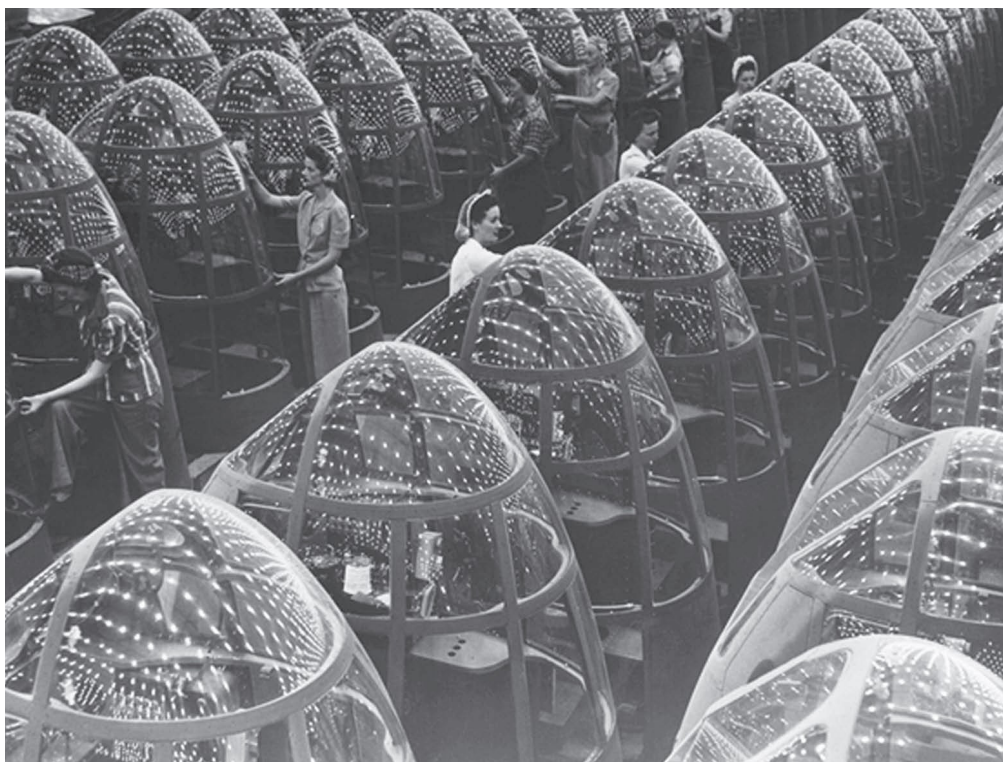
>> Douglas Aircraft's Long Beach, California, plant. By the end of 1942 war production had ramped up sharply.

off at war, increased agricultural productivity became vital. In the 1930s plant geneticists had learned to cross-pollinate corn to create new varieties. These hybrids greatly increased yields per acre. Plastics offered an alternative to natural materials such as glass, rubber, wood, steel, and copper in short supply because of the war effort; for example, commercial production of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) began modestly in 1933. Given its stability and flexibility, PVC was ideal for use in construction, plumbing, packaging, and flooring. By 1941, 120 million pounds of PVC were being manufactured annually.

Some scientific advances increased health and life expectancy. Antibiotics had their first widespread application during the war. Infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, syphilis, and pneumonia—once the scourge of armies—could now be contained. Pesticides such as DDT controlled insects that spread malaria, typhus, and other deadly and debilitating diseases. With the use of these chemicals, the health of the nation actually improved. Life expectancy increased during the 1940s an average of three years overall and by five years for African Americans. Infant mortality fell by a third overall.

The atomic bomb, DDT, PVC, and hybrid seeds came to represent for Americans humankind's ability to control nature. But those discoveries also posed dangers to the environment. Atomic bombs spewed radiation clouds into the atmosphere. DDT controlled insect pests but killed beneficial insects and proved harmful to wildlife. Polyvinyl chloride production gave off carcinogens dangerous to humans. Many such substances existed nowhere in nature, and, once discarded, took ages to degrade. The widespread use of hybrid seeds created through artificial pollination greatly reduced genetic variety. Scientists anticipated some of these dangers, but at the time they had a war to win.

War Work and Prosperity >>Not only did war production end the Depression; it revived prosperity. Unemployment, which stood at almost 7 million in 1940, virtually disappeared by 1944. Jeff Davies, president of Hoboes of America, reported in 1942 that 2 million of his members were “off the road.” Employers, eager to overcome the labor shortage, welcomed workers with disabilities. People with hearing impairments found jobs in deafening factories; dwarfs became aircraft



inspectors because they could crawl inside wings and other cramped spaces. By the summer of 1943, nearly 3 million children aged 12 to 17 were working. When the war ended, average income had jumped to nearly \$3,000, twice what it had been in 1939.



^ Propaganda poster promoting wartime employment as the way to speed a husband's return from the war.

Organized Labor >> Wartime prosperity brought substantial gains for unions. Still, the tensions between business and labor that marked the New Deal era continued. In 1941 alone more than 2 million workers walked off their jobs in protest. To end labor strife Roosevelt established the War Labor Board in 1942. Like the similar agency Woodrow Wilson had created during World War I, the new WLB had authority to impose arbitration in any labor dispute.

Despite the WLB, dissatisfied railroad workers in 1943 tied up rail lines in a wildcat strike. To break the impasse, the government seized the railroads and then granted wage increases. That same year the pugna-cious John L. Lewis allowed his United Mine Workers to go on strike. “The coal miners of America are hungry,” he charged. “They are ill-fed and under-nourished.” Roosevelt seized the mines and ran them for a time; he even considered arresting union leaders and drafting striking miners. But as Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes noted, a “jailed miner produces no more coal than a striking miner.” In the end the government negotiated a settlement that gave miners substantial new benefits.

Most Americans were less willing to forgive Lewis and his miners. A huge coal shortage along the East Coast had left homes dark and cold. “John L. Lewis—Damn your coal black soul,” wrote the military newspaper *Stars and Stripes*. In reaction, Congress easily passed the Smith–Connolly Act of 1943. It gave the president more authority to seize vital war plants shut by strikes and required union leaders to observe a 30-day “cooling-off” period before striking.

Despite these incidents most workers remained dedicated to the war effort. Stoppages actually accounted for only about one-tenth of 1 percent of total work time during the war. When workers did strike, it was usually in defiance of their union leadership, and they left their jobs for just a few days.

Women Workers >> With as many as 12 million men in uniform, women (especially married women) became the nation’s largest untapped source of labor. During the high unemployment years of the Depression, both government and business had discouraged women from competing with men for jobs. Now, magazines and government bulletins began trumpeting “the vast resource of woman–power.” Having accounted for a quarter of all workers in 1940, women amounted to more than a third by 1945. These women were not mostly young and single, as female workers of the past had been. A majority were either married or between 55 and 64 years old.

With husbands off at war, millions of women preferred the relative freedom of work and the additional income it provided. Black women in particular realized dramatic gains in the quality of jobs



^ Viola Sievers was one of many women during the war who took jobs traditionally performed by men. Here she cleaned a locomotive using a scalding hot stream of steam.

available to them. Once concentrated in low-paying domestic and farm jobs with erratic hours and tedious labor, some 300,000 rushed into factories that offered higher pay and more-regular hours. Whether black or white, workingwomen faced new stresses. The demands of a job were added to domestic responsibilities. The pressures of moving and crowded housing tore at families and communities already fearful for their men at war.

Despite the new work roles for women, the war did not create a revolution in attitudes about gender. Most Americans assumed that when the war ended, veterans would pick up their old jobs and women would return home. Surveys showed that the vast majority of Americans, male and female, continued to believe that child rearing was a woman’s primary responsibility. The birthrate, which had fallen during the Depression, began to rise by 1943 as prosperity returned.

Mobility >> War industries attracted workers from places near and far. Vine Deloria Jr., an American Indian, recalled that “the war dispersed the reservation people as nothing ever had. Every day, it seemed, we could be bidding farewell to families as they headed west to work in defense plants on the coast.” African Americans left the South in such large numbers that cotton growers began to buy mechanical harvesters to replace their labor. The Census Bureau discovered that between Pearl Harbor in 1941 and March 1945, at least 15.3 million people (not counting those in military service) had changed their county of residence.



REVIEW

How did advances in technology support the Allied war effort?

A QUESTION OF RIGHTS

President Roosevelt was determined to avoid the patriotic excesses he had witnessed during World War I: mobs menacing immigrants, appeals to spy on neighbors, harassment of pacifists. Even so, the tensions over race, ethnic background, and class differences could not be ignored. In a society in which immigration laws discriminated against Asians by race, the war with Japan made life difficult for loyal Asian Americans of all backgrounds. Black and Hispanic workers still faced discrimination in shipyards and airplane factories, much as they had in peacetime industries.

Italians and Asian Americans >> When World War II began, about 600,000 Italian aliens and 5 million Italian Americans lived in the United States. Most still lived in Italian neighborhoods that revolved around churches, fraternal organizations, and clubs. Some had been proud of Mussolini and supported fascism. “Mussolini was a hero,” recalled one Italian American, “a superhero. He made us feel special.” Those attitudes changed abruptly after Pearl Harbor. During the war Italian Americans unquestioningly pledged their loyalties to the United States.

At first the government treated Italians without citizenship (along with Japanese and Germans) as “aliens of enemy nationality.” They could not travel without permission, enter strategic areas, or possess shortwave radios, guns, or maps. By 1942 few Americans believed that German or Italian Americans posed any kind of danger. Eager to keep the support of Italian voters in the 1942 congressional elections, Roosevelt chose Columbus Day 1942 to lift restrictions on Italian aliens.

Americans showed no such tolerance toward the 127,000 Japanese living in the United States, whether aliens or citizens. Ironically, prejudice against them was lowest in Hawai‘i, where the war with Japan had begun. Newspapers there expressed confidence in the loyalty of Japanese Americans, whose labor was crucial to Hawai‘i’s economy.

On the mainland Japanese Americans remained more segregated from the mainstream of American life. State laws and local custom often threw up complex barriers. In the western states where they were concentrated around urban areas, most Japanese Americans could not vote, own land, or live in decent neighborhoods. Approximately 47,000 Japanese aliens, known as **Issei**, were ineligible for citizenship under American law. Only their children (**Nisei**) could become citizens. Despite such

Nisei American-born citizens of Japanese ancestry, contrasted with **Issei**, native-born Japanese who had moved to the United States.



▲ Rose Carrendeno, Italian American mother of six children. The three stars indicate that her three sons were in the armed forces.

restrictions, some Japanese achieved success in small businesses such as landscaping, while many others worked on or owned farms that supplied fruits and vegetables to growing cities.

West Coast politicians pressed the Roosevelt administration to evacuate the Japanese from their communities. It did not seem to matter that about 80,000 Nisei were American citizens and that not one was ever convicted of espionage. “A Jap’s a Jap,” commented General John DeWitt, commander of West Coast defenses. “It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen or not.” In response, the War Department in February 1942 drew up Executive Order 9066, which allowed the exclusion of any person from designated military areas. Under DeWitt’s authority, the order was applied only on the West Coast against Japanese Americans. By late February Roosevelt had agreed that both Issei and Nisei would be evacuated. But where would they go?

>> Racism against Japanese Americans was especially powerful in California.





“WHO DO YOU WANT TO WIN THIS WAR?”—JUSTIFYING INTERNMENT

In June 1943, Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt submitted a report on the evacuation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast, justifying his actions (Document 1). Mary Suzuki Ichino grew up in Los Angeles, California, and was interned at Camp Manzanar, about 230 miles northeast of there. Document 2 is a transcript of an interview with her, made decades later.

DOCUMENT 1

Sabotage on a Mass Scale

The Department of Justice had agreed to authorize its special field agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to undertake spot raids without warrant to determine the possession of arms, cameras and other contraband by Japanese. . . . In the Monterey area in California a Federal Bureau of Investigation spot raid made about February 12, 1942, found more than 60,000 rounds of ammunition and many rifles, shotguns and maps of all kinds. . . .

The combination of spot raids revealing hidden caches of contraband, the attacks on coastwise shipping, the interception of illicit radio transmissions, the nightly observation of visual signal lamps from constantly changing locations, and the success of the enemy offensive in the Pacific, had so aroused the public along the West Coast against the Japanese that it was ready to take matters into its own hands. . . .

Because of the ties of race, the intense feeling of filial piety and the strong bonds of common tradition, culture and customs, this population presented a tightly-knit racial group. It included in excess of 115,000 persons deployed along the Pacific Coast. Whether by design or accident, virtually always their communities were adjacent to very vital shore installations, war plants, etc. . . . It could not be established, of course, that the location of thousands of Japanese adjacent to strategic points verified the existence of some vast conspiracy to which all of them were parties. Some of them doubtless resided there through mere coincidence. It seems equally beyond doubt, however, that the presence of others was not mere coincidence. It was difficult to explain the situation in Santa Barbara County, for example, by coincidence alone.

Throughout the Santa Maria Valley in that County, including the cities of Santa

Maria and Guadalupe, every utility, air field, bridge, telephone and power line or other facility of importance was flanked by Japanese. They even surrounded the oil fields in this area. Only a few miles south, however, in the Santa Ynez Valley, lay an area equally as productive agriculturally as the Santa Maria Valley and with lands equally available for purchase and lease, but without any strategic installations whatever. There were no Japanese in the Santa Ynez Valley. . . . It was certainly evidence that the Japanese population of the Pacific Coast was, as a whole, ideally situated with reference to points of strategic importance, to carry into execution a tremendous program of sabotage on a mass scale should any considerable number of them have been inclined to do so.

*Source: Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, *Final Report Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast 1942* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1943), chap. 2.*

DOCUMENT 2

Interview with Mary Ichino

RP [Richard Potashin]: Tell us about what your attitude, where your attitude was at, or your opinions about this based on the rumors and the opinions that you were hearing. Did you form your own ideas about the injustice of this, the unconstitutionality of it? Was that something you were thinking about?

MI [Mary Ichino]: I think I was a little bit naïve that way. I didn't, I think, understand that depth of the, you know, the situation. You just kind of wonder, and then you follow on. I think as you mature, and I realized as I go—well, I told you about that letter I wrote to General DeWitt. It took me until I got in

camp for me to realize. “What was I doing in this place?” And I go, “Why didn't that hit me before this as a question?”

RP: So your attitude changed—

MI: My attitude changed because—

RP: —when you got into camp?

MI: —I thought, it's sort of like an adventure, you know, for a teenager, when you think about it. You're moving, you're going, you know. But when I started seeing that my dad is losing his business, we're losing all our property, he lost his new car that he worked so darn hard for—What for? We're not from

Japan. You know? Then when finally we want to camp is when I realized the injustice of the whole thing. And you're always taught in civics in high school that we're all equal under the law, and I said, “But how can you be equal when you haven't had a hearing as to whether you're guilty or not guilty?” And that's when I wrote that letter to General DeWitt.

RP: There was another friend that you—

MI: Yeah, Marie Hisamune. She was my classmate at Sacred Heart. And we decided to put our—well, she and I, in order to keep busy, decided to write—first we started

writing a murder mystery. And we came to a point where we couldn't figure out how to end the darn thing. And then, so then the next thing was, "You know what? We ought to write to General DeWitt." Says, "You know what, I don't know what we're doing in here." And so Maria and I put our heads together and we wrote, and we said, "We haven't gotten our constitutional hearing before we're declared guilty to be put into this place. Why is it? How is it? And how could it be?" And then we wanted an explanation. And then we're getting a little bit smarter, you know, at that age. "Okay, we better send it to General DeWitt." "Oh," somebody says, "They'll throw it out." "No they won't. We're going to make it registered directly to him." And so he must have gotten it because we never got the letter back, anything. No answer—

RP: No Reply?

MI: No, never got a letter back.

RP: How long had you been in camp before you decided to take this course of action?

MI: Not quite six months, I bet. It dawned on us real quick.

RP: You just looked around and—

MI: Says, "Oh my God, can't get out of camp, you can't do this, you can't do that. The food is lousy. The physical facility's lousy. What did I do to deserve this?" You know.

RP: Right.

MI: And then it turned out to be, at that age we were realizing that it was hysteria. We figured that out.

RP: Did you have any second thoughts about writing that letter after you'd sent it? You know, like, "Are they going to, you know, are we going to be—

MI: No.

RP: —on a blacklist or anything or—

MI: Nope.

RP: You felt—

MI: Fearless. . . . we're only sixteen. What are they going to do with us? You know? I mean, 'cause', yeah. Mhmm. I'd been told more that once, "Oh, you're probably

on the blacklist." I said, "So?" In a way, it's sort of a compliment, you know?

RP: Right. Yeah, it took a lot of courage to do that.

MI: It's either your courage, or you're so darned innocent. If you're worried about what's going to happen or what will happen to you, you're not going to do a thing. If you think you're right and you need an explanation, it's as simple as that. That was it. So there was no *gaman* [Zen Buddhist term meaning *endurance out of patience or dignity*] there. Tell it like it is.

Source: 16. Item # Acc-196 [letter to Mary Ichino] Mary Suzuki Ichino [MI], MANZ 1216A, interviewed by Richard Potashin [RP] Disc 1, Part 2 (DVD), 22:41–27:53.

THINKING CRITICALLY

What contraband items does DeWitt cite to indicate Japanese disloyalty? Do they substantiate his case? What elements that Mary Ichino cites throw doubt on DeWitt's arguments? What do you think gave Ichino the courage to write directly to General DeWitt? Why might she be proud to be on a blacklist?

>> Heart Mountain, Wyoming, was the site of 1 of 10 "relocation centers" set up to hold interned Japanese Americans. This photo of the camp was taken by Bill Manbo, an auto mechanic and amateur photographer from California who was one of the internees. Despite the drab surroundings, prisoners did bring Japanese and American traditions into the camps, holding Boy Scout parades, sumo wrestling matches, and pickup games of baseball. The child grabbing the barbed wire is Manbo's son.

The army began to ship the entire Japanese community to temporary "assembly centers." Most Nisei were forced to sell their property at far below market value. Furthermore, many army sites did not offer basic sanitation, comfort, or privacy. "We lived in a horse stable," remembered one young girl. Eventually, most Japanese were interned in 10 camps in remote areas of seven western states. No claim of humane intent could change the reality: these were concentration camps. Internees were held in wire-enclosed compounds by armed guards. Tar-papered barracks housed families or small groups in single rooms. Each room had a few cots, some blankets, and a single light-bulb. That was home.

Some Japanese Americans protested loudly when government officials asked Nisei citizens if they would be willing to serve in the armed forces. "What do they



take us for? Saps?" asked one camp prisoner. "First, they . . . run me out of town, and now they want me to volunteer for a suicide squad so I could get killed for this damn democracy." Yet thousands of Nisei did enlist, and many distinguished themselves in combat.

Concentration camps in America did not mirror the horror of Nazi death camps, but they were built on

racism and fear. Worse, they violated the traditions of civil rights and liberties for which Americans believed they were fighting.

Minorities and War Work >> Minority leaders saw the irony of fighting a war for freedom in a country in which civil rights were still limited. “A jim crow army cannot fight for a free world,” the NAACP declared. Labor leader A. Philip Randolph, long an advocate of greater black militancy, launched a campaign to gain entrance to jobs in defense industries and government agencies, unions, and the armed forces, all of them segregated. “The Administration leaders in Washington will never give the Negro justice,” Randolph argued, “until they see masses—ten, twenty, fifty thousand Negroes on the White House lawn.” In 1941 he began to organize a march on Washington.

President Roosevelt could have issued executive orders to integrate the government, as Randolph demanded. But it took the threat of the march to make him act. He issued Executive Order 8802 in June, which forbade discrimination by race in hiring either government or defense industry workers. To carry out the policy, Order 8802 established the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC). But in a society still deeply divided by racial prejudice, the new agency had only limited success in breaking down barriers against African Americans and Hispanics.

Still, the FEPC did open industrial jobs in California’s shipyards and aircraft factories, which had previously refused to hire Hispanics. Thousands migrated from Texas, where job discrimination was most severe, to California, where war work created new opportunities. Labor shortages led the southwestern states to join with the Mexican government under the *bracero* program to recruit Mexican labor under specially arranged contracts. In Texas, in contrast, antagonism to *braceros* ran so deep that the Mexican government tried to prevent workers from going there. Not until late 1943 did the FEPC investigate the situation.

Black Americans faced similar frustrations. More than half of all defense jobs were closed to minorities. For example, with 100,000 skilled and high-paying jobs in the aircraft industry, blacks held about 200 janitorial positions. Unions segregated black workers or excluded them entirely. One person wrote to the president with a telling complaint: “Hitler has not done anything to the colored people—it’s people right here in the United States who are keeping us out of work and keeping us down.”

Eventually the combination of labor shortages, pressures from black leaders, and initiative from government agencies opened the door to more skilled jobs and higher pay. Beginning in 1943 the United States Employment Service rejected requests with racial stipulations. By 1944 blacks, who accounted for almost 10 percent of the population, held 8 percent of the jobs.

Urban Unrest >> At the beginning of the war three-quarters of the 12 million black Americans lived in the South. Hispanic Americans, whose population exceeded a million, were concentrated in a belt along the U.S.–Mexican border. When jobs for minorities opened in war centers, African and Hispanic Americans became increasingly urban.

To ease crowding and reduce racial tensions, the government funded new housing. In Detroit federal authorities picked a site for minority housing along the edge of a Polish neighborhood. One project, named in honor of the black abolitionist Sojourner Truth, included 200 units for black families. When the first of them tried to move in, local officials had to send the National Guard to protect the newcomers from menacing Ku Klux Klan members. Riots broke out in the hot summer of 1943, as white mobs beat up African Americans riding public trolleys or patronizing movie theaters, and black protesters looted white stores. Six thousand soldiers from nearby bases finally imposed a troubled calm, but not before the riot had claimed the lives of 24 black and 9 white residents.

In Southern California, Anglo hostility toward Latinos focused on *pachucos*, or “zoot suiters.” These young Hispanic men had adopted the stylish fashions of Harlem hipsters: greased hair swept back into a duck-tail; broad-shouldered, long-waisted suit coats; baggy pants pegged at the ankles. The Los Angeles city council

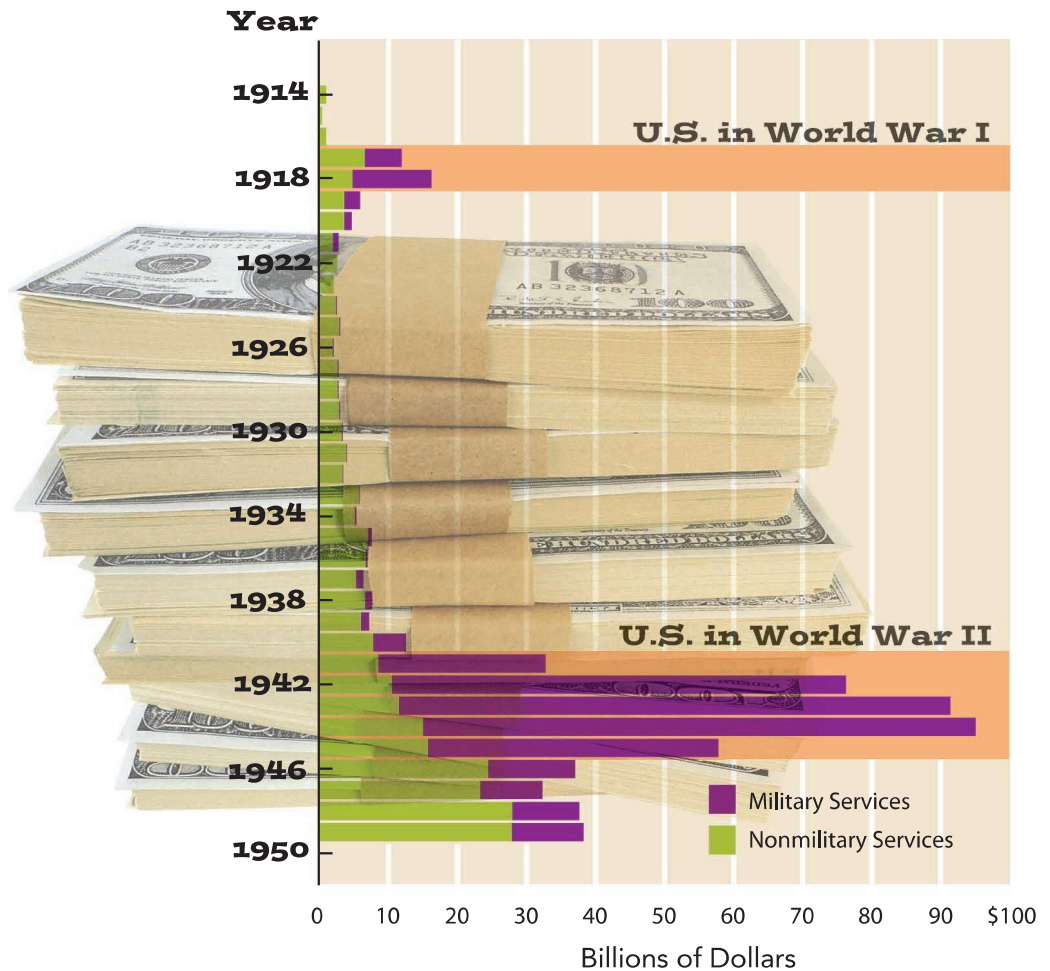


▲ A “zoot suiter” gets escorted by the police.

passed an ordinance making it a crime even to wear a zoot suit. In June 1943 sailors from the local navy base invaded Hispanic neighborhoods in search of “zooters” who had allegedly attacked servicemen. The self-appointed vigilantes grabbed innocent victims, tore their clothes, cut their hair, and beat them. When Hispanics retaliated, the police arrested them, ignoring the actions of the sailors. Irresponsible newspaper coverage made matters worse. Underlying Hispanic anger were the grim realities of poor housing, unemployment, and white racism, which added up to a level of poverty that wartime prosperity eased but in no way resolved.

Minority leaders acted on the legal as well as the economic front. The Congress of Racial Equality (**CORE**), a nonviolent civil rights group inspired by the Indian leader Mohandas K. Gandhi, used sit-ins and other peaceful tactics to desegregate some restaurants and movie theaters. In 1944 the Supreme Court outlawed the “all-white primary,” an infamous device used by southerners to exclude blacks from voting in primary elections within the Democratic Party. In *Smith v. Allwright* the Court ruled that since political parties were integral parts of public elections, they could not deny minorities the right to vote in primaries. Such new attitudes opened the door to future civil rights gains.

The New Deal in Retreat >> After Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt told reporters that “Dr. New Deal” had retired in favor of “Dr. Win-the-War.” Political debates, however, could not be eliminated, even during a global conflict. The growing anti-New Deal coalition of Republicans and rural Democrats saw in the war an opportunity to attack programs they had long resented. They quickly ended the Civilian Conservation



IMPACT OF WORLD WAR II ON GOVERNMENT SPENDING

As the chart shows, the war spurred government spending more than the New Deal, even on nonmilitary sectors. Note that after both world wars, nonmilitary spending was higher than in the prewar years.

CORE Congress on Racial Equality, an organization founded in 1942 that believed African Americans should use nonviolent civil disobedience to challenge segregation.

Corps and the National Youth Administration, reduced the powers of the Farm Security Administration, and blocked moves to extend Social Security and unemployment benefits.

By the spring of 1944 no one knew whether Franklin Roosevelt would seek an unprecedented fourth term. Pallid skin, sagging shoulders, and shaking hands seemed open signs that he had aged too much to run. In July, a week before the Democratic convention, Roosevelt announced his decision: “All that is within me cries out to go back to my home on the Hudson River....But as a good soldier... I will accept and serve.” Conservative Democrats, however, replaced FDR’s liberal vice president, Henry Wallace, with Harry S. Truman of Missouri, a loyal Democrat. The Republicans chose the moderate governor of New York, Thomas E. Dewey, to run against Roosevelt, but Dewey never had much of a chance. Still, Roosevelt’s margin of victory was

smaller than any since 1916. Like its aging leader, the New Deal coalition was showing signs of strain.

✓ REVIEW

In what ways did discrimination against minorities continue after the war started?

WINNING THE WAR AND THE PEACE

In a war that stretched from one end of the globe to the other, the Allies had to coordinate their strategies on a grand scale. Which war theaters would receive equipment in short supply? Who would administer conquered territories? Inevitably, the questions of fighting a war slid into discussions of the peace that would follow. What would happen to occupied territories? How would the Axis powers be punished? As Allied armies struggled mile by mile to defeat the Axis, Allied diplomacy concentrated just as much on winning the peace.

The Fall of the Third Reich >> After pushing the Germans out of North Africa in May 1943, Allied strategists agreed to Churchill's plan to drive Italy

from the war. Late in July, two weeks after a quarter of a million British and American troops had landed on Sicily, Mussolini fled to German-held northern Italy. Although Italy surrendered early in September, Germany continued to pour in reinforcements. It took the Allies almost a year of bloody fighting to reach Rome, and at the end of the campaign they had yet to break German lines. Along the eastern front, Soviet armies steadily pushed the Germans out of Russia and back toward Berlin.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, fresh from battle in North Africa and the Mediterranean, took command of Allied preparations for Operation Overlord, the long-awaited opening of a second front in western Europe. By June 1944 all eyes focused on the coast of France, because Hitler, of course, knew the Allies would attack across the English Channel. Allied planners did their best to focus his attention on Calais, the French port city closest to the British Isles. On the morning of June 6, 1944, the invasion began—not at Calais but on the less fortified beaches of Normandy. Almost three million men, 11,000 aircraft, and more than 2,000 vessels took part in D-Day.

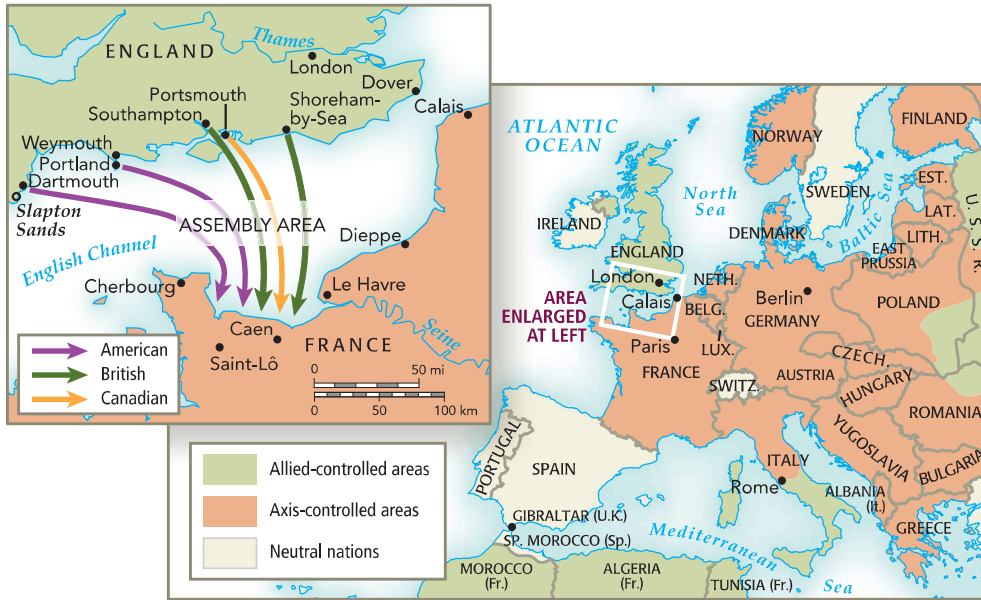
Luck and Eisenhower's meticulous planning favored the Allied cause. Convinced that Calais was the Allied target, Hitler delayed sending in two reserve divisions. His indecision allowed the Allied forces to secure a foothold. Still, the Allied advance from Normandy took almost two months, not several weeks as expected. Once Allied tanks

broke through German lines, their progress was spectacular. In August Paris was liberated, and by mid-September the Allies had driven the Germans from France and Belgium. Hitler's desperate counterthrust in the Ardennes Forest in December 1944 succeeded momentarily, pushing back the Allies along a 50-mile bulge. But the "Battle of the Bulge" cost the Germans their last reserves. After General George Patton's forces rescued trapped American units, little stood between the Allies and Berlin.

<< Landing on the coast of France under heavy Nazi machine-gun fire, these American soldiers have just left the ramp of a Coast Guard landing boat.



MAP 26.3: D-DAY, 1944



The final key to defeating the Nazis was the invasion of western Europe at Normandy. D-Day for the invasion was June 6, 1944, and the massive undertaking would not have been possible had the Allies been unable to use England as a base to gather their forces. Stalin supported D-Day with a spring offensive in eastern Europe.

Why might Hitler have assumed Calais was the Allies' likely target?

Imperial Navy as a fighting force. MacArthur and Nimitz prepared to tighten the noose around Japan's home islands.

Big Three Diplomacy >>

Cooperation over the postwar peace proved even knottier than planning

strategies for war. Churchill believed that only a stable European balance of power, not an international agency, could preserve peace. In his view the Soviet Union was the greatest threat to upset that balance of power. Premier Joseph Stalin left no doubt that an expansive notion of Russian security defined his war aims. For future protection Stalin expected to annex the Baltic states, once Russian provinces, along with bits of Finland and Romania and about half of pre-war Poland. In eastern Europe and other border areas such as Iran, Korea, and Turkey, he wanted "friendly" neighbors. It soon became apparent that "friendly" meant regimes dependent on Moscow.

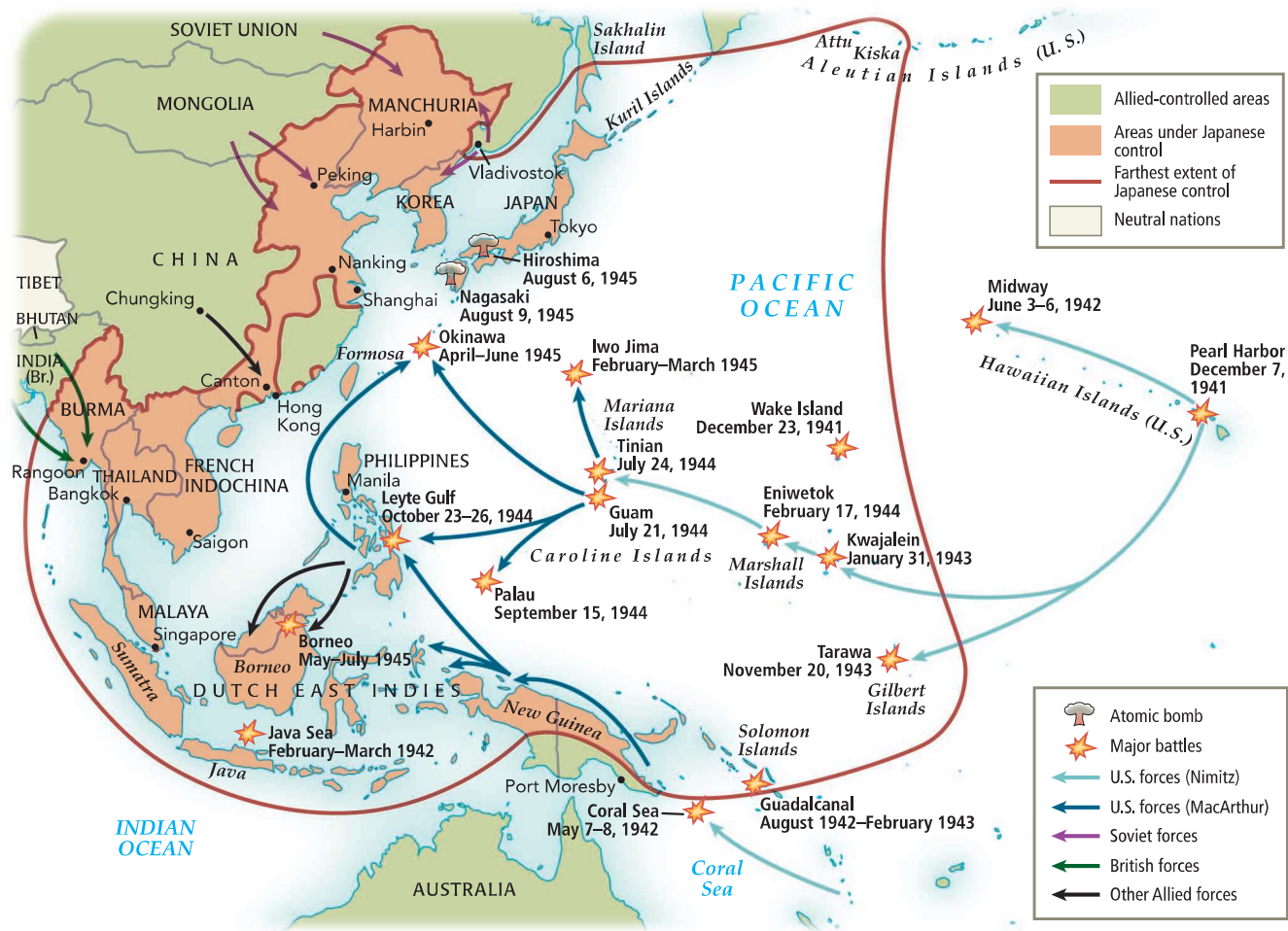
Early on, Roosevelt had promoted his own version of an international balance of power, which he called the "Four Policemen." Under its framework the Soviet Union, Great Britain, the United States, and China would guarantee peace through military cooperation. But by 1944 Roosevelt was seeking an alternative to this scheme and to Churchill's wish to return to a balance of power that hemmed in the Russians. He preferred to bring the Soviet Union into a peace keeping system based on an international organization similar to the League of Nations. But this time, all the great powers would participate, including the United States. Whether Churchill and Stalin—or the American people as a whole—would accept the idea was not yet clear.

Two Roads to Tokyo >> In the bleak days of 1942 General Douglas MacArthur—flamboyant and jaunty with his dark sunglasses and corncob pipe—had emerged as America's great military hero. MacArthur believed that the future of America lay in the Far East. The Pacific theater (and his forces), he argued, should have top priority—not Europe. In March 1943 the Combined Chiefs of Staff agreed to his plan for a westward advance along the northern coast of New Guinea toward the Philippines and Tokyo. Naval forces directed by Admiral Chester Nimitz used amphibious warfare to pursue a second line of attack, along the island chains of the central Pacific. American submarines cut Japan's supply lines.

By July 1944 the navy's leapfrogging campaign reached the Mariana Islands, east of the Philippines. From there B-29 bombers were within range of the Japanese home islands. As a result, Admiral Nimitz proposed bypassing the Philippines in favor of a direct attack on Formosa (present-day Taiwan). MacArthur insisted on fulfilling a promise he had made "to eighteen million Christian Filipinos that the Americans would return." President Roosevelt himself came to Hawai'i to resolve the impasse, giving MacArthur the green light. Backed by more than 100 ships of the Pacific Fleet, the general splashed ashore on the island of Leyte in October 1944.

The decision to invade the Philippines led to savage fighting until the war ended. As retreating Japanese armies left Manila, they tortured and slaughtered tens of thousands of Filipino civilians. The United States suffered 62,000 casualties redeeming MacArthur's pledge, but a spectacular U.S. Navy victory at the Battle of Leyte Gulf spelled the end of the Japanese

The Road to Yalta >> The outlines and the problems of a postwar settlement emerged during several summit conferences among the Allied leaders. In November 1943, with Italy's surrender in hand and the war against Germany going well, Churchill and Roosevelt agreed to make a hazardous trip to Teheran, Iran. There, the Big Three leaders met together for the



MAP 26.4: WORLD WAR II IN THE PACIFIC AND ASIA

Extraordinary distances complicated the war in the Pacific. As the map shows, American forces moved on two fronts: the naval war in the Central Pacific and General MacArthur's campaign in the Southwest Pacific. As American naval forces advanced across the Pacific, what other nations contributed to the Allied war effort on land?

first time. (“Seems very confident,” Roosevelt said of Stalin, “very sure of himself, moves slowly—altogether quite impressive.”) The president tried to charm the Soviet premier, teasing Churchill for Stalin’s benefit, keeping it up “until Stalin was laughing with me, and it was then that I called him ‘Uncle Joe.’”

Teheran proved to be the high point of cooperation among the Big Three. It was there that FDR and Churchill finally committed to the D-Day invasion Stalin had so long sought, although Churchill’s promise was halfhearted at best. The British hoped to delay D-Day as long as possible in order to minimize British casualties. Stalin, for his part, promised to launch a spring offensive to pin down German troops on the eastern front. He also reaffirmed his earlier pledge to declare war against Japan once Germany was beaten.

But thorny disagreements over the postwar peace remained. That was clear in February 1945, when the Big Three met at the Russian resort city of Yalta, on the Black Sea. By then Russian, British, and American troops were closing in on Germany. Roosevelt arrived tired, ashen. At 62, limited by his paralysis, he had visibly aged. He came to Yalta mindful that although Germany was all but beaten, Japan still held out in the Pacific. Under no circumstances did he want Stalin to withdraw his promises to enter the fight against Japan and to join a postwar international organization. Churchill remained ever mistrustful of Soviet intentions. The Russians appeared only too eager to fill the power vacuum that a defeated Japan and Germany would leave.

The Allies remained most at odds about Germany’s postwar future. Stalin was determined that the

>> Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin, Teheran, 1943

Germans would never invade Russia again. Many Americans shared his desire to have Germany punished and its war-making capacity eliminated. At the Teheran Conference, Roosevelt and Stalin had proposed that the Third Reich be split into five powerless parts. Churchill, however, was much less eager to bring low the nation that was the most natural barrier to Russian expansion. The era after World War I, he believed, demonstrated that a healthy European economy required an industrialized Germany.

The Big Three made no firm decisions. For the time being, they agreed to divide Germany into separate occupation zones (France would receive a zone carved from British and American territory). These four powers would jointly occupy the German capital, Berlin, while an Allied Control Council supervised the national government.

When the Big Three turned their attention to the Far East, Stalin held a trump card. Fierce Japanese resistance on the islands of Okinawa and Iwo Jima had convinced Roosevelt that only a bloody invasion would force Japan's surrender. He thus secured a pledge from Stalin to declare war within three months of Germany's defeat. The price was high. Stalin wanted to reclaim territories that Russia had lost in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1906, as well as control over the Chinese Eastern and South Manchurian railroads.

The agreements reached at Yalta depended on Stalin's willingness to cooperate. In public Roosevelt put the best face on matters. He argued that the new world organization (which Stalin agreed to support) would "provide the greatest opportunity in all history" to secure a lasting peace. "We shall take responsibility for world collaboration," he told Congress, "or we shall have to bear the responsibility for another world conflict." Privately the president was less optimistic. "When the chips were down," he confessed, he doubted "Stalin would be able to carry out and deliver what he had agreed to."



The Fallen Leader >> The Yalta Conference marked one of the last and most controversial chapters of Franklin Roosevelt's presidency. Critics charged that the concessions to Stalin were far too great: Poland had been betrayed; China sold out; the United Nations crippled at birth. Yet Roosevelt gave to Stalin little that Stalin had not liberated with Russian blood and could not have taken anyway. Four out of five Nazi soldiers killed in action died on the eastern front. Even Churchill, an outspoken critic of Soviet ambitions, concluded that although "our hopeful assumptions were soon to be falsified... they were the only ones possible at the time."

What peace Roosevelt might have achieved can never be known. He returned from Yalta visibly ill. On April 12, 1945, while sitting for his portrait at his vacation home in Warm Springs, Georgia, he complained of a "terrific headache," then suddenly fell unconscious. Two hours later Roosevelt was dead. Not since the assassination of Lincoln had the nation so grieved. Under Roosevelt's leadership government had become a protector, the president a father and friend, and the United States the leader in the struggle against Axis tyranny. Eleanor Roosevelt recalled how many Americans later told her that "they missed the way the President used to talk to them.... There was a real dialogue between Franklin and the people."

“Who the hell is Harry Truman?” the chief of staff had asked when Truman was nominated for the vice presidency in 1944. As vice president Truman had learned almost nothing about the president’s post-war plans. Sensing his own inadequacies, he adopted a tough pose and made his mind up quickly. People welcomed the new president’s decisiveness as a relief from Roosevelt’s evasive style. Too often, though, Truman acted before the issues were clear. But he at least knew victory in Europe was at hand as Allied troops swept into Germany from the east and west.

The Holocaust >> The horror of war in no way prepared the invading armies for their liberation of the Nazi concentration camps. **Anti-Semitism**, or prejudice against Jews and Judaism, had a long and ugly history in the Christian

anti-Semitism hatred, prejudice, oppression, or discrimination against Jews or Judaism.

Western world. It was particularly strong in Central Europe. As Allied troops discovered, Hitler had authorized the systematic

extermination of all European Jews as well as Gypsies, homosexuals, and others considered deviant. The SS, Hitler’s security force, had constructed six extermination centers in Poland. By rail from all over Europe the SS shipped Jews to die in the gas chambers.

No issue of World War II more starkly raised questions of human good and evil than what came to be known as the Holocaust. Tragically, the United States could have done more to save at least some of the 6 million Jews killed. Until the autumn of 1941 the Nazis permitted Jews to leave Europe, but few countries would accept them—including the United States. Americans haunted by unemployment feared that a tide of new immigrants would make competition for jobs even worse. After 1938 the restrictive provisions of the 1924 Immigration Act were made even tighter.

American Jews wanted to help, especially after 1942, when they learned of the death camps. But they worried that highly visible protests might only aggravate American anti-Semitism. They were also split over support for Zionists working to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Roosevelt and his advisers ultimately decided that the best way to save Jews was to win the war quickly. That strategy still does not explain why the Allies did not do more: they could have bombed the rail lines to the camps, sent commando forces, or tried to destroy the death factories.

A Lasting Peace >> Late in the summer of 1944 the Allies met at Dumbarton Oaks, a Washington estate, to lay out the structure for the proposed United Nations Organization (UNO, later known simply as the UN).

An 11-member Security Council would oversee a General Assembly composed of delegates from all member nations. By the end of the first organizational meeting, held in San Francisco in April 1945, it had become clear that the United Nations would favor the Western powers in most postwar disputes.

While the United Nations was organizing itself in San Francisco, the Axis powers were collapsing in Europe. As Mussolini attempted to escape to Germany, anti-Fascist mobs in Italy captured and slaughtered him like a pig. Adolf Hitler committed suicide in his Berlin bunker on April 30. Two weeks later General Eisenhower accepted the German surrender.

In one final summit meeting, held in July 1945 at Potsdam (just outside Berlin), President Truman met Churchill



<< In April 1945, at the concentration camp in Buchenwald, Germany, Senator Alben Barkley of Kentucky views a grisly example of the horrors of the Nazis’ “final solution.” As vice president under Harry Truman, Barkley urged the administration to support an independent homeland in Israel for Jews.

and Stalin for the first time. The three leaders agreed that Germany should be occupied and demilitarized. Stalin insisted that Russia receive a minimum of \$10 billion in reparations, regardless of how much it might hurt postwar Germany or the European economy. A complicated compromise allowed Britain and the United States to restrict reparations from their zones. But in large part Stalin had his way. For the foreseeable future, Germany would remain divided into occupation zones and without a central government of its own.



Atom Diplomacy >> The issue most likely to shape postwar relations never even reached the bargaining table in Potsdam. On July 16, 1945, Manhattan Project scientists detonated their first atomic device. Upon receiving the news in Germany, Truman seemed a changed man—firmer, more confident. He “told the Russians just where they got on and off and generally bossed the whole meeting,” observed Churchill. Several questions loomed: Should the United States now use the bomb? Should it warn Japan before dropping it? And perhaps equally vital, should Truman inform Stalin of the new weapon?

Over the spring and early summer of 1945 administration officials discussed the use of atomic weapons. A few scientists had recommended not using the bomb, or at least attempting to convince Japan to surrender by offering a demonstration of the new weapon’s power. A high-level committee of administrators, scientists, and political and military leaders dismissed that idea. Rather than tell Stalin directly about the bomb, Truman mentioned obliquely that the United States possessed a weapon of “awesome destructiveness.” Stalin showed no surprise, most likely because spies had already informed him about the bomb. Privately, Truman and Churchill decided to drop the first bomb with only a veiled threat of “inevitable and complete” destruction if Japan did not surrender unconditionally. Unaware of the warning’s full meaning, officials in Tokyo made no formal reply.



▲ At 0815 hours on August 6, 1945, the bomber *Enola Gay* dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, as recorded by this photograph taken by an observation plane. Approximately 100,000 people died from the initial bomb blast, with thousands more dying from radiation poisoning. The remains of this wristwatch were found in the decimated city.

Some historians have charged that Secretary of State James Byrnes, a staunch anti-Communist, believed that a combat demonstration of the bomb would shock Stalin into behaving less aggressively in postwar negotiations. Most evidence, however, indicates that Truman decided to drop the bomb in order to end the war quickly. The victory in the Pacific promised to be bloody. Military leaders estimated that an invasion of Japan would produce heavy Allied casualties.

Before leaving Potsdam, Truman gave the final order for B-29s to drop two atomic bombs on Japan. On August 6 the first leveled four square miles of the city of Hiroshima. Three days later a second exploded over the port of Nagasaki. About 140,000 people died instantly in the fiery blasts. A German priest came upon soldiers

Opinion



Should the United States have sought an alternative to dropping the atomic bombs on Japan without a clear warning?

who had looked up as the bomb exploded. Their eyeballs had melted from their sockets. Tens of thousands more who lived through the horror began to sicken and die from radiation poisoning.

The two explosions left the Japanese stunned. Breaking all precedents, the emperor intervened and declared openly for peace. On September 3 a somber Japanese delegation boarded the battleship *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay to sign the document of surrender. World War II had ended.

✓ REVIEW

Over what issues did Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt disagree as they planned for peace?

“World War II changed everything,” observed one admiral long after the war. The defeatism of the Depression gave way to the exhilaration of victory. Before the war Americans seldom exerted leadership in international affairs. After it, the world looked to the United States to rebuild the economies of Europe and Asia and to maintain peace. Not only had World War II shown the global interdependence of economic and political systems, but it had also increased that interdependence. Out of the war developed a truly international economy. At home the economy became more centralized and the role of the government larger.

Still, a number of fears loomed. Would the inevitable cutbacks in military spending bring on another depression? Would devastation in Europe and Asia produce conditions the Soviet Union could exploit for its own advantage? Did the Soviets have ambitions to undo the new global peace, much as fascism and economic instability had undone the peace of Versailles? And then there was the shadow of the atomic bomb, looming over the victorious as well as the defeated. The United States might control atomic technology for the present, but what if the weapon fell into unfriendly hands? After World War II launched the atomic age, no nation, not even the United States, was safe anymore.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

World War II deepened the global interdependence of nations and left the United States as the greatest economic and military power in the world.

- As fascism spread in Europe and as militarism spread in Asia, Franklin Roosevelt struggled to help America’s allies by overcoming domestic political isolation and the fervor for neutrality.

- Despite German aggression against Poland in 1939, France and the Low Countries in 1940, and the Soviet Union in 1941, the United States did not enter the war until the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941.
- The alliance forged among British prime minister Winston Churchill, Soviet premier Joseph Stalin, and President Franklin Roosevelt did not swerve from its decision to subdue Germany first, even though early defeats and America’s lack of preparation slowed the war effort until 1943.
- At home America’s factories produced enough goods to supply the domestic economy and America’s allies.
- Demands for labor created opportunities for women and minorities.
- War hysteria aggravated old prejudices and led to the internment of Japanese Americans.
- New Deal reform ended as “Dr. Win—the—War” replaced “Dr. New Deal.”
- Although the successful landings in France on D-Day and the island-hopping campaign in the Pacific made it clear that the Allies would win the war, issues over Poland, Germany, and postwar boundaries raised doubts about the peace.
- The war ended with the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but not soon enough to limit the horrors of the Holocaust.

Additional Reading

A comprehensive treatment of the war years is David Kennedy, *The American People in World War II: Freedom from Fear: Part II* (2003). Robert Divine, *The Reluctant Belligerent* (2nd ed., 1979), is still excellent on the prewar diplomacy. Perhaps the most comprehensive single volume on the war is Martin Gilbert, *The Second World War: A Complete History* (2004); although Max Hastings, *Inferno: The World at War, 1939–1945* (2011), is more gripping. Richard Lingeman, *Don’t You Know There’s a War On: The Homefront, 1941–1945* (updated ed., 2003), is a classic study. Emily Yellin, *Our Mother’s War: American Women at Home and at the Front During World War II* (2005), explores the many roles women played. Tetsuden Kashima, *Judgment without Trial: Japanese American Imprisonment during World War II* (2003), reveals that planning for internment of the Japanese began well before the war.

The decision to drop two atomic bombs on Japan remains a topic of vigorous debate. For the racial dimension of the decision, see John Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific*

War (1986). Richard Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb* (1987), re-creates the history of the Manhattan Project. Gar Alperowitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb* (1995), extends an interpretation he first advanced in *Atomic Diplomacy* (1965); that the Soviet Union was the planners' real target. Martin Sherwin, *A World Destroyed* (rev. ed., 1985), and J. Samuel Walker, *Prompt and Utter Destruction: Truman and the Use of the Atomic Bomb against Japan* (1997), view the decision more as a way to end the war quickly. David Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy 1939–1956* (1994), uses Russian sources. To consult some of the original documents, see Michael B. Stoff et al., *The Manhattan Project: A Documentary Introduction to the Atomic Age* (1991).

Significant Events

