


## LIVING HISTORY

### COMPILING AN ORAL HISTORY

Interview a relative or a friend of the family who lived through the period prior to America's entry into World War II. Before the interview, prepare a list of questions to ask the person, based on specific information in this chapter. Include general questions such as the following:

- How did you feel about the cautious response of the United States to events in Europe?
- How did events between 1931 and 1941 affect your life?

 **PORTFOLIO PROJECT** Keep the records of your interview in a folder. You will use these records to create an oral history for your American history portfolio at the end of the chapter.



★ President Franklin Roosevelt is reelected.

● President Roosevelt delivers his anti-isolationist "Quarantine Speech."

★ President Franklin Roosevelt is elected to a third term.

● United States enters the war after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

● President Roosevelt signs the Lend-Lease Act, and U.S. industry begins mass production of war materiel.

1936

1937

1937

1938

1939

1940

1940

1941

- Spanish Civil War begins.
- Germany occupies the Rhineland.

- Japan invades China.

- Germany annexes Austria.
- Hitler unleashes aggression against Jews on Kristallnacht.

- Germany invades Poland, starting World War II.
- Nazis begin to convert labor camps into extermination camps for Jews and other ethnic groups.

- Britain and Germany fight the Battle of Britain.
- Japan, Germany, and Italy sign the Tripartite Pact.

- Germany invades the Soviet Union.
- Japanese attack Pearl Harbor.



# 1 Dictators Threaten World Peace

## TERMS & NAMES

- Joseph Stalin
- totalitarian
- Benito Mussolini
- fascism
- Adolf Hitler
- Nazism
- Neutrality Acts

**LEARN ABOUT** the rise of totalitarian dictatorships in Europe and Asia  
**TO UNDERSTAND** the challenge they posed to the U.S. policy of neutrality.

## ONE AMERICAN'S STORY

Martha Gellhorn arrived in Madrid, Spain, in the spring of 1937 with a knapsack, less than \$50, and a letter identifying her as a special correspondent for *Collier's Weekly*. The young American writer had come to Madrid to cover the brutal civil war that had broken out in Spain the year before. There she met the writer Ernest Hemingway, whom she later married. To Gellhorn, the Spanish Civil War was a deadly struggle between tyranny and democracy. For the people of Madrid, it was also a daily struggle for survival.

### A PERSONAL VOICE

You would be walking down a street, hearing only the city noises of streetcars and automobiles and people calling out to one another, and suddenly, crushing it all out, would be the huge stony deep booming of a falling shell, at the corner. There was no place to run, because how did you know that the next shell would not be behind you, or ahead, or to the left or right? And going indoors was fairly silly too, considering what shells can do to a house.

MARTHA GELLHORN, *The Face of War*

Less than two decades after the end of World War I—"the war to end all wars"—brutal fighting erupted again, not only in Europe but also in Asia. As Americans read about distant battles, they hoped that these deadly conflicts would remain on the other side of the world.



A French journalist escapes from Spain to France with a child he rescued from a street battle. But fighting would soon engulf not only France, but the rest of Europe and Asia.

## Nationalism Threatens Europe and Asia

The seeds of new conflicts had been sown in World War I. For many nations, peace had brought not prosperity but revolution caused by economic unrest. It also brought the rise of leaders driven by dreams of national greatness and territorial expansion.

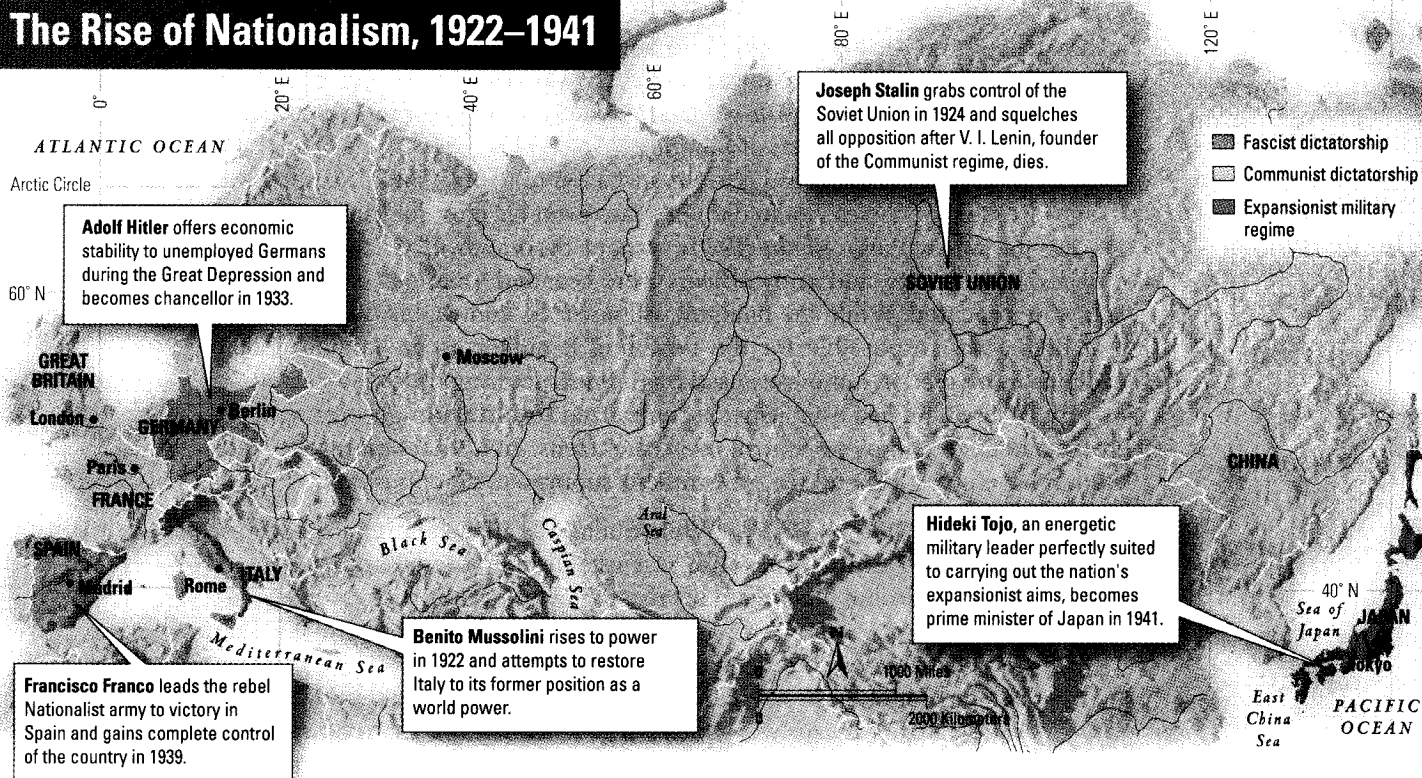
**FAILURES OF THE WORLD WAR I PEACE SETTLEMENT** Contrary to the hopes of President Woodrow Wilson, the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I did not create a "just and secure peace." Germans saw nothing fair in a treaty that blamed them for starting the war. Nor did they find much security in a settlement that stripped their country of territories they had long seen as German. Similarly, the Soviets resented the carving away of parts of Russia to create an independent Poland and the nations of Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia.

In addition, the peace settlement did not make the world "safe for democracy," as Wilson had hoped. At the end of the war, new democratic governments did emerge in many European nations, including Germany, Austria, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece. Most of these nations lacked democratic traditions, though, and their newly elected leaders needed to show that democracy could improve people's lives economically. However, the Versailles treaty did nothing to help the war-torn nations of Europe rebuild. Instead, many of the new democracies were



A German homemaker, about to cook her family's breakfast, lights a fire with money made nearly worthless by high inflation following World War I.

# The Rise of Nationalism, 1922–1941



**THINK THROUGH HISTORY**  
**A. Identifying Problems** What problems did European countries face after World War I?

expected to pay off huge war debts while trying to deal with widespread hunger, homelessness, and unemployment.

Unable to cope with these problems, several new democracies collapsed and dictators seized power. Some of these dictators were content simply to collect taxes and keep order. A few, however, had far grander ambitions.

**JOSEPH STALIN TRANSFORMS THE SOVIET UNION** In Russia, hopes for democracy gave way to civil war, resulting in the establishment of a Communist state, the Soviet Union, in 1922. When V. I. Lenin, the first leader of the Soviet Union, died in 1924, **Joseph Stalin** took control of the country. Stalin, whose last name meant “man of steel,” was as iron-willed as his name implied. Once he decided on a goal, Stalin let nothing stand in his way, no matter what the costs. In contrast to Lenin, who had seen the Russian Revolution as only part of a worldwide uprising by the working class, Stalin focused on creating a model Communist state in the Soviet Union. In doing so, he began an agricultural and industrial restructuring that trampled the rights of—and brought great suffering to—his people.

In 1927, Stalin launched his massive drive to transform the Soviet Union into a truly socialist country, which meant stamping out private enterprise—especially private farming. He began by ordering the collectivization of Soviet agriculture—that is, the organization of production under collective, or state, control. He forced Russia’s peasants to give up their small plots of land so that they could be combined into large state-owned farms. They were then expected to work on the collective farms as wage earners.

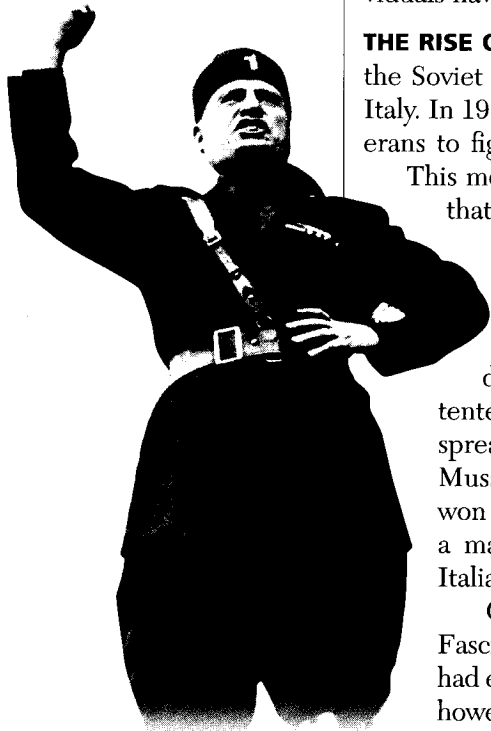
Meanwhile, Stalin turned to his second great goal, the transformation of the Soviet Union from a backward rural nation into a great industrial power. In 1928, the Soviet dictator issued his first “five-year plan,” a campaign to build massive state-owned factories, steel mills, and power plants. A second five-year plan followed in 1933 (which was completed in only four years), and a third in 1937. By 1939, the Soviet Union had become the world’s third largest industrial power, surpassed in overall production by only the United States and Germany.

The human costs of this transformation, however, were enormous. To accomplish his ambitious goals, the “man of steel” turned the Soviet Union into

**GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER**  
**REGION** In which countries did nationalistic leaders come to power? Who were the leaders?  
**LOCATION** What geographic features might have led Japan to expand?



***“Italy wants peace, work, and calm. I will give these things with love if possible, with force if necessary.”***



**BENITO MUSSOLINI**

a vast police state—a state in which no one was safe from the prying eyes and ears of government spies and secret police. Anyone even suspected of criticizing the Soviet leader or his goals was arrested and shipped off to a forced labor camp in the frozen wastelands of Siberia.

In his drive to purge, or rid, the Soviet Union of people who disagreed with the government’s policies, Stalin did not spare even his most faithful supporters. During the Great Purge of the 1930s, tens of thousands of Communist Party officials, bureaucrats, and army officers were branded “enemies of the people” and were executed. While the final toll will never be known, historians estimate that Stalin was responsible for the deaths of 8 million to 13 million people. Millions more died in famines caused by the restructuring of Soviet society.

By 1939, Stalin had established a centralized **totalitarian** government, one that maintained complete control over its citizens. In a totalitarian state, individuals have no rights, and the government suppresses all opposition.

**THE RISE OF FASCISM IN ITALY** While Stalin was consolidating his power in the Soviet Union, **Benito Mussolini** was establishing a totalitarian regime in Italy. In 1919, Mussolini had begun his rise to power by advertising for war veterans to fight the politicians, who, in Mussolini’s view, were destroying Italy.

This mobilization was the beginning of **fascism**, a new political movement that consisted of a strong, centralized government headed by a powerful dictator. Fascism was rooted in the nationalism that had reshaped Europe over the past century. Mussolini dreamed of making Italy a great power in the world.

Unlike Stalin’s Communist regime, Mussolini’s Fascist state did not attempt to control farms and factories. In fact, many discontented veterans, jobless youth, and businesspeople greatly feared the spread of communism to Italy. These people became firm supporters of Mussolini. In 1921, Mussolini established the Fascist Party, which then won 35 seats in the Italian parliament. A year later, after Mussolini staged a march on Rome with thousands of his black-shirted followers, the Italian king allowed him to form a new government.

Calling himself *Il Duce*, or “the chief,” Mussolini gradually extended Fascist control to every aspect of Italian life. Tourists marveled that *Il Duce* had even “made the trains run on time.” Mussolini achieved this efficiency, however, by crushing all opposition and by making Italy a totalitarian state.

**THE NAZIS TAKE OVER GERMANY** In Germany, **Adolf Hitler** had followed a path to power similar to Mussolini’s. At the end of World War I, Hitler had been a jobless soldier drifting around Germany. In 1919, he joined a struggling group called the National Socialist German Workers’ Party, better known as the Nazi Party. Despite the word *Socialist* in its name, this party had no ties to socialism and in fact hated it. Soon Hitler became the tiny party’s *führer*, or leader.




Hitler laid out the basic beliefs of **Nazism** in his book *Mein Kampf* (“My Struggle”), published in two volumes in 1925 and 1927. A type of fascism, Nazism was based on extreme nationalism. Hitler, who had been born in Austria, dreamed of uniting all German-speaking people in a great German empire. To this element of nationalism, Hitler added his theories about race. In his view, Germans—especially blue-eyed, blond-haired “Aryans”—formed a “master race” that was destined to rule the world. “Inferior races,” such as Jews, Slavs, and nonwhites, were fit only to serve Aryans.

A third element of Nazism was national expansion. Hitler believed that for Germany to thrive, it needed more *lebensraum*, or living space. One of the Nazis’ aims, as Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*, was “to secure for the German people the land and soil to which they are entitled on this earth,” even if this could be accomplished only by “the might of a victorious sword.”

**THINK THROUGH HISTORY**  
**B. Summarizing**  
What are the characteristics of a totalitarian state?

**THINK THROUGH HISTORY**  
**C. THEME**  
**Cultural Diversity**  
Compare and contrast the racial attitudes expressed in *Mein Kampf* with racial attitudes in the United States?

## The Faces of Totalitarianism

FASCIST ITALY	NAZI GERMANY	COMMUNIST SOVIET UNION
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extreme nationalism</li> <li>• Militaristic expansionism</li> <li>• Charismatic leader</li> <li>• Private property with strong government controls</li> <li>• Anti-Communist</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extreme nationalism and racism</li> <li>• Militaristic expansionism</li> <li>• Forceful leader</li> <li>• Private property with strong government controls</li> <li>• Anti-Communist</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a sound communist state and wait for world revolution</li> <li>• Revolution by workers</li> <li>• Eventual rule by working class</li> <li>• State ownership of property</li> </ul>

**SKILLBUILDER INTERPRETING CHARTS** *How did fascism in Italy differ from communism in the Soviet Union?*

The Great Depression helped the Nazis come to power. By 1932, some 6 million Germans were unemployed. Many of these desperate people turned to Hitler as their last hope. In elections held in March 1932, the Nazis won more votes than any other party, though not a majority. In January 1933, Hitler was appointed chancellor (prime minister).

Once in power, the Führer quickly dismantled Germany's democratic Weimar Republic. In its place he established what he called the Third Reich, or Third German Empire. Like the first German empire (the Holy Roman Empire established by Charlemagne), and unlike the short-lived second empire established by Bismarck in the 19th century, the Third Reich, according to Hitler, would be a "Thousand-Year Reich."

**MILITARISTS GAIN CONTROL IN JAPAN** Halfway around the world from Germany, nationalistic military leaders in Japan were trying to take control of their government. These leaders shared Hitler's belief in the need for more "living space" for a growing population. Ignoring the protests of more moderate Japanese officials, the militarists launched a surprise invasion of the Chinese province of Manchuria in 1931. Within several months, Japanese troops controlled the entire province, a resource-rich area nearly as large as Alaska.

As you read in Chapter 11, the League of Nations had been established after World War I to prevent such aggressive acts. In this first test of its power, the League sent representatives to Manchuria to investigate the situation. Their report condemned Japan, which simply quit the League. Meanwhile, the success of the Manchurian invasion put the militarists firmly in control of Japan's government.

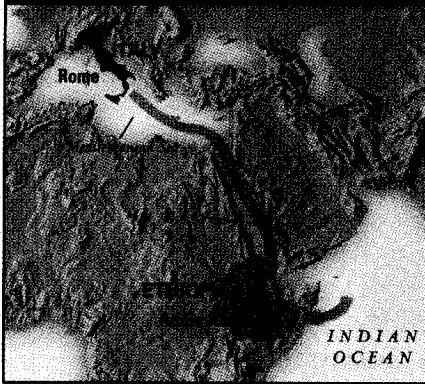
**AGGRESSION IN EUROPE** The failure of the League of Nations to take action against Japan did not escape the notice of Europe's dictators. In 1933, Hitler felt bold enough to pull Germany out of the League. In 1935, he began a military buildup in violation of the Versailles treaty. A year later, he sent troops into the Rhineland, a German region bordering France and Belgium which was demilitarized as a result of the Versailles treaty. He also signed the Rome-Berlin Axis Pact, which established a formal alliance between Germany and Italy. The League did nothing to stop Hitler.

Meanwhile, Mussolini began building his new Roman Empire. His first target was Ethiopia, Africa's only remaining independent country. By the fall of 1935, tens of thousands of Italian soldiers stood ready to advance on Ethiopia. The League of Nations reacted with brave talk of "collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression."

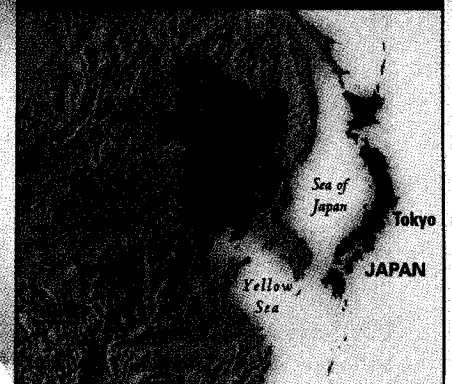
**THINK THROUGH HISTORY**  
**D. Analyzing Motives** *Why did Japan invade Manchuria?*

## Aggressive Acts, 1931–1936

### Italy Invades Ethiopia, 1935–1936



### Japan Invades Manchuria, 1931



When the invasion began, however, the League's response was an ineffective economic boycott—little more than a slap on Italy's wrist. By June 1936, Ethiopia had fallen. In desperation, Haile Selassie, the ousted Ethiopian emperor, appealed to the League for assistance. Nothing was done. "It is us today," he told them. "It will be you tomorrow."

## United States Responds Cautiously

As disturbing as these events in Europe and Asia were to Americans, most believed that the United States should not get involved. In 1928, the United States had joined 61 other nations in signing the Kellogg-Briand Pact, in which they pledged never to make war again. But this agreement still permitted defensive war and did not provide for using economic or military force against nations that broke the pact.

**CLINGING TO ISOLATIONISM** In the early 1930s, a flood of books argued that the United States had been dragged into World War I by greedy bankers and arms dealers. Public outrage led to the creation of a congressional committee, chaired by North Dakota senator Gerald Nye, that held hearings on these charges. The Nye committee fueled the controversy by documenting the large profits that banks and manufacturers made during the war.

The furor over these "merchants of death" made Americans more determined than ever to avoid war. A poll taken in 1937 revealed that fully 70 percent of Americans believed that the United States should not have entered World War I. Antiwar feeling was so strong that the Girl Scouts of America changed the color of its uniforms from khaki to green to appear less militaristic. Across the country, college students staged antiwar rallies with banners proclaiming "Scholarships, not battleships."

Americans' growing isolationism eventually had an impact on President Roosevelt's foreign policy. When he had first taken office in 1933, Roosevelt had felt comfortable reaching out to the world in several ways. He officially recognized the Soviet Union in 1933 and agreed to exchange ambassadors with Moscow. He continued the policy of nonintervention in Latin America, begun by Presidents Coolidge and Hoover, with his Good Neighbor policy and withdrew armed forces stationed there. In 1934, Roosevelt pushed the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act through Congress. This act lowered trade barriers by giving the president the power to make trade agreements with other nations and was aimed at reducing tariffs by as much as 50 percent.

Beginning in 1935, however, Congress passed a series of **Neutrality Acts** in an effort to keep the United States out of future wars. The first two acts outlawed

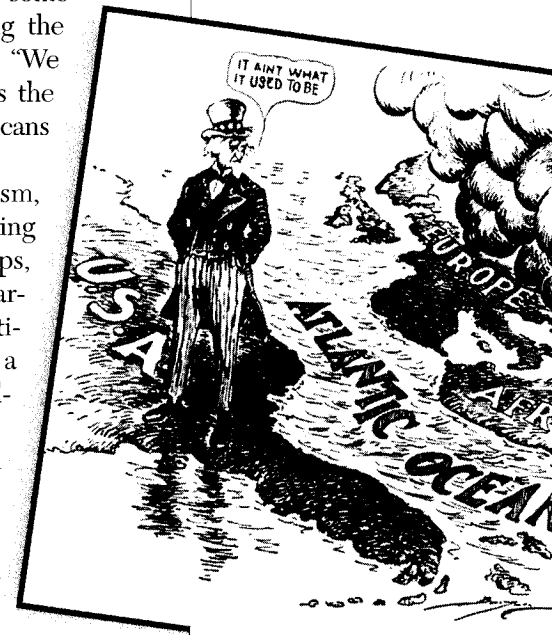
arms sales or loans to nations at war. The third act was passed in response to fighting that broke out in Spain in 1936, between the troops of the Fascist general Francisco Franco and forces loyal to the country's elected government. This act extended the ban on arms sales and loans to nations undergoing civil wars.

**NEUTRALITY BREAKS DOWN** Despite congressional efforts to legislate neutrality, many Americans found it difficult not to take sides in the Spanish Civil War. When Hitler and Mussolini came to Franco's aid early in the war, some 3,000 volunteers from the United States responded by forming the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and traveling to Spain to fight Franco. "We knew, we just *knew*," recalled Martha Gellhorn, "that Spain was the place to stop fascism." Among the volunteers were African Americans still bitter about Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia the year before.

Such limited aid was not sufficient to stop the spread of fascism, however. Hitler and Mussolini, who saw the conflict as a testing ground for their military power, supported Franco with troops, weapons, tanks, and fighter planes. The Western democracies, fearful of triggering a larger war, sent only food and clothing to the anti-Fascist forces. In early 1939, after a loss of 600,000 lives and at a cost of more than \$15 billion, the resistance to Franco had collapsed. Europe now had yet another totalitarian government.

Roosevelt himself found it impossible to remain neutral when Japan launched a new attack on China in July of 1937. Since Japan had not formally declared war against China, the president refused to enforce the Neutrality Acts. The United States continued sending arms and supplies to China.

A few months later, Roosevelt spoke out strongly against isolationism in a speech delivered in Chicago. He called on peace-loving nations to "quarantine," or isolate, aggressor nations in order to stop the spread of war.



**A PERSONAL VOICE**

The peace, the freedom, and the security of 90 percent of the population of the world is being jeopardized by the remaining 10 percent who are threatening a breakdown of all international law and order. Surely the 90 percent who want to live in peace under law and in accordance with standards that have received almost universal acceptance through the centuries, can and must find some way . . . to preserve peace.

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT, "Quarantine Speech," October 5, 1937

At last Roosevelt seemed ready to take a stand against aggression—that is, until isolationist newspapers exploded in protest and letters flooded the White House accusing the president of leading the nation into war. Roosevelt backed off. For the moment the conflicts remained "over there."

**Section 1 Assessment**

**1. TERMS & NAMES**

Identify:

- Joseph Stalin
- totalitarian
- Benito Mussolini
- fascism
- Adolf Hitler
- Nazism
- Neutrality Acts

**2. SUMMARIZING** List the main ambition of each dictator in a graphic like the one shown.

Ambitions of European Dictators

Stalin	Mussolini	Hitler

What ambitions did the dictators have in common?

**3. ANALYZING CAUSES** How did the Treaty of Versailles sow the seeds of instability in Europe?

THINK ABOUT

- effects of the treaty on Germany and the Soviet Union
- effects of the treaty on national pride
- the economic legacy of the war

**4. ANALYZING MOTIVES**

Why do you think Hitler found widespread support among the German people? Support your answer with details from the text.

THINK ABOUT

- Germans' postwar resentment and bitterness
- Germany's economic situation before Hitler's rise to power
- the appeal of Hitler's views

- Neville Chamberlain
- Winston Churchill
- appeasement
- nonaggression pact
- blitzkrieg
- Charles de Gaulle

**LEARN ABOUT** the weak response of world leaders to Germany's aggressive moves in the late 1930s

**TO UNDERSTAND** how Germany started World War II.

## ONE AMERICAN'S STORY

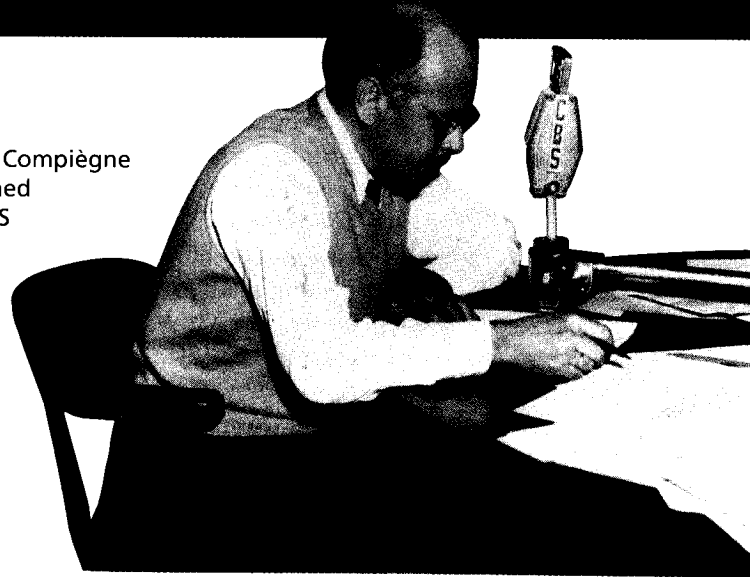
A warm June sun bathed the little clearing in the Forest of Compiègne where, 22 years earlier, defeated German generals had signed the armistice ending World War I. It was now 1940, and CBS correspondent William Shirer was standing in the clearing, waiting for Adolf Hitler to deliver *his* armistice terms to a defeated France. Shirer watched as Hitler walked up to the monument and slowly read the inscription: "Here on the eleventh of November 1918 succumbed the criminal pride of the German empire . . . vanquished by the free peoples it tried to enslave." Later that day, Shirer wrote a diary entry describing the Führer's reaction.

### A PERSONAL VOICE

I have seen that face many times at the great moments of his life. But today! It is afire with scorn, anger, hate, revenge, triumph. He steps off the monument and contrives to make even this gesture a masterpiece of contempt. . . . He glances slowly around the clearing, and now, as his eyes meet ours, you grasp the depth of his hatred. But there is triumph there too—revengeful, triumphant hate.

**WILLIAM SHIRER**, *Berlin Diary: The Journal of a Foreign Correspondent, 1934–1941*

Again and again Shirer had heard Hitler proclaim that "Germany needs peace . . . Germany wants peace." The hatred and vengefulness that drove the dictator's every action, however, drew Germany ever closer to war.



William Shirer

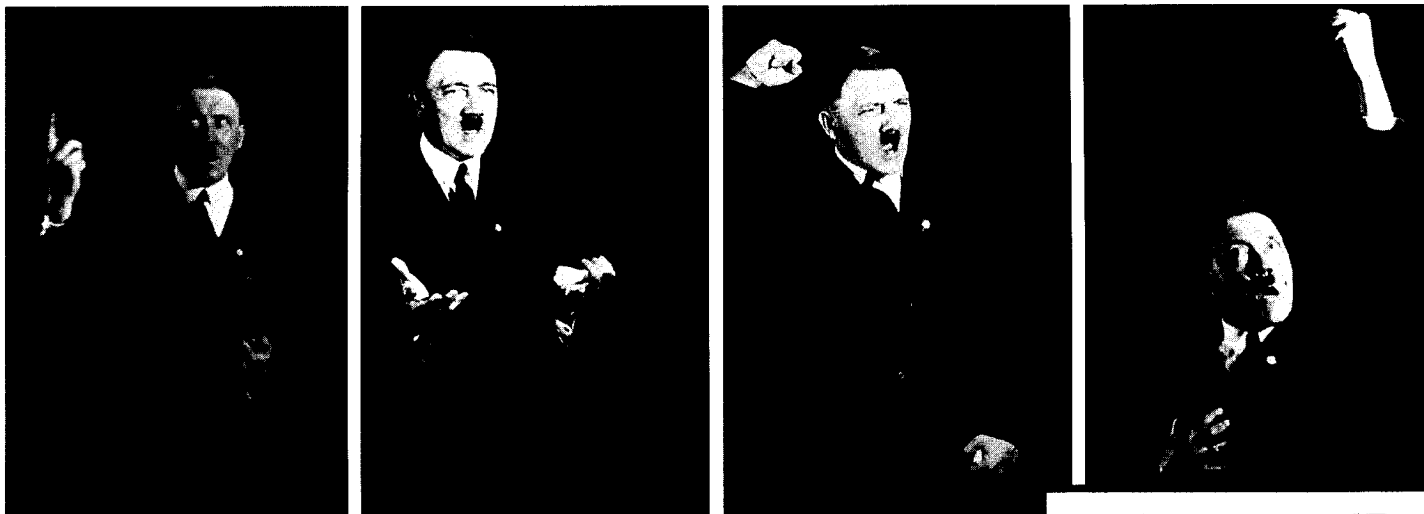
## Austria and Czechoslovakia Fall

On November 5, 1937, Hitler met with his most trusted military advisers for a top-secret briefing. The Third Reich's future, he told them, depended on solving the need for lebensraum. Where would new living space come from? Not from overseas colonies, he declared, but from those nations nearest Germany—Austria and Czechoslovakia. When someone protested that annexing those countries could provoke war, Hitler replied, "Germany's problems can be solved only by means of force, and this is never without risk."

**UNION WITH AUSTRIA** In fact, the risk turned out to be less than Hitler's advisers feared. The following February, Hitler invited Austrian chancellor Kurt von Schuschnigg to meet with him at his villa at Berchtesgaden, high in the Bavarian Alps. When the Austrian chancellor began making polite conversation about the view and the lovely day, Hitler snapped, "We did not gather here to speak of the fine view or of the weather."

For the next few hours, Hitler pounded the table and demanded that Schuschnigg appoint Austrian Nazis to key government posts. By the end of the meeting, Hitler had bullied Schuschnigg into signing an agreement to bring Austrian Nazis into his government. On returning home, Schuschnigg





had second thoughts about the agreement and informed Hitler. Hitler was furious. On March 12, 1938, German troops marched into Austria unopposed, forcing Schuschnigg to resign. Two days later, Germany announced that its Anschluss, or “union,” with Austria was complete. The United States and the rest of the world did nothing.

**BARGAINING FOR THE SUDETENLAND** Hitler then turned to Czechoslovakia. When the Austro-Hungarian Empire was broken up at the end of World War I, the Sudetenland, a mountainous region inhabited by 3 million German-speaking people, had been joined to Czechoslovakia. In the spring of 1938, Hitler charged that the Czechs were abusing the Sudeten Germans, and he began massing troops on the Czech border. The American correspondent William Shirer, then stationed in Berlin, wrote in his diary: “The Nazi press [is] full of hysterical headlines. All lies. Some examples: ‘Women and Children Mowed Down by Czech Armored Cars,’ or ‘Bloody Regime—New Czech Murders of Germans.’”

Early in the crisis, both France and Great Britain promised to protect Czechoslovakia. Then, just when war seemed inevitable, Hitler invited French premier Edouard Daladier and British prime minister **Neville Chamberlain** to meet with him in Munich. When they arrived, the Führer declared that the Sudetenland would be his “last territorial demand.” In their eagerness to avoid war, Daladier and Chamberlain chose to believe him. On September 30, 1938, they signed the Munich Pact, which turned the Sudetenland over to Germany without a shot being fired.

Chamberlain returned home to wildly cheering crowds. Waving a copy of the Munich agreement, he proclaimed: “My friends, . . . there has come back from Germany peace with honor. I believe it is peace in our time.” The crowd joyously responded by chanting “Good old Neville” and singing “For he’s a jolly good fellow.”

These sentiments were not shared by **Winston Churchill**, Chamberlain’s political rival for the leadership of Great Britain. In Churchill’s view, by signing the Munich Pact, Daladier and Chamberlain had adopted a shameful policy of **appeasement**, or giving up

most wants to hear.

Hitler whips a million supporters into a frenzy of smiles and salutes at a Harvest Day celebration in 1937.



principles to pacify an aggressor. As Churchill bluntly put it, "Britain and France had to choose between war and dishonor. They chose dishonor. They will have war." Nonetheless, the House of Commons approved Chamberlain's policy toward Germany by a vote of 366 to 144. Churchill responded with a warning.

**A PERSONAL VOICE**

We have passed an awful milestone in our history. . . . And do not suppose that this is the end. This is only the first sip, the first foretaste of a bitter cup which will be proffered to us year by year unless, by a supreme recovery of moral health and martial vigor, we arise again and take our stand for freedom as in the olden time.

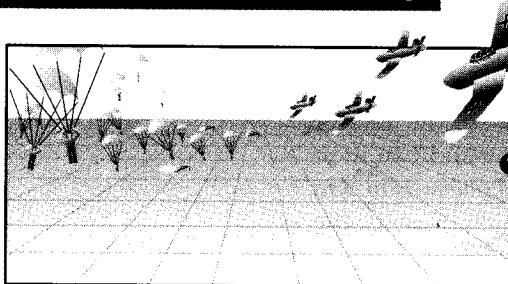
WINSTON CHURCHILL, speech to the House of Commons, quoted in *The Gathering Storm*

**The German Offensive Begins**

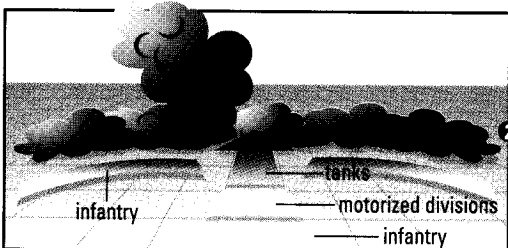
Contrary to his promise at Munich, Hitler was not finished expanding the Third Reich. As dawn broke on March 15, 1939, German troops poured into what remained of Czechoslovakia. At nightfall Hitler gloated, "Czechoslovakia has ceased to exist." After that, the German dictator turned his land-hungry gaze toward Germany's eastern neighbor, Poland.

**THE SOVIET UNION DECLARES NEUTRALITY** Like Czechoslovakia, Poland had a sizable German-speaking population. In the spring of 1939, Hitler began his familiar routine, charging that Germans in Poland were mistreated by the Poles and needed his protection. Some people thought that this time Hitler must be bluffing. After all, an attack on Poland might bring Germany into conflict with the Soviet Union, Poland's eastern neighbor. At the same time, such an attack would most likely provoke a declaration of war from France and

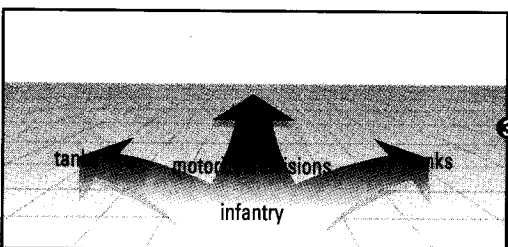
**The Tactics of the Blitzkrieg**



Heavy air and artillery bombardment—followed by paratroop landings—cleared the attack area, disrupted communications, and prevented the arrival of enemy reinforcements.



Conventional infantry attacked on both sides of the central thrust, while a smokescreen concealed tanks gathering in the main battle sector.

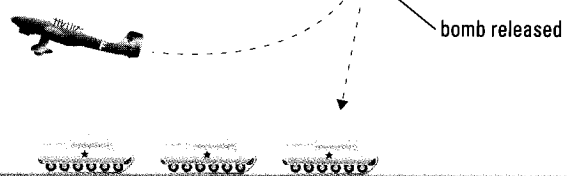


Tanks attacked with support from motorized divisions. Massive infantry forces flooded the weakened sector. Tanks fanned out, and motorized divisions and infantry then secured the area.



The Stuka

The chilling whine of the German Stuka dive-bomber instilled fear in the enemy. The dive-bomber was an essential part of the Luftwaffe's blitzkrieg because it had the ability to dive almost straight down over a target and release a bomb at the last instant, delivering it with remarkable accuracy. A single Stuka could destroy a column of tanks one by one by repeatedly diving at the rear tank.



Britain—both of whom had promised military aid to Poland. The result would be a two-front war. Fighting on two fronts had exhausted Germany in World War I. Surely, many thought, Hitler would not be foolish enough to repeat that mistake.

Hitler took the chance, though, and his luck held. As tensions rose over Poland, Stalin, despite his deep dislike and distrust of the Nazis, decided he had more to lose than to gain in a war against Germany. On August 23, 1939, the Soviet Union and Germany signed a **nonaggression pact**, in which they agreed not to fight each other. They also signed a second, secret pact, agreeing to divide Poland between them. With the danger of a two-front war eliminated, the fate of Poland was sealed.

**BLITZKRIEG IN POLAND** As day broke on September 1, 1939, German warplanes roared over Poland, raining bombs on military bases, airfields, railroads, and cities. At the same time, German tanks rumbled across the Polish countryside, spreading terror and confusion. This invasion was the first test of Germany's newest military strategy, the **blitzkrieg**, or lightning war. The new tactics enabled the Germans to take the enemy by surprise and then quickly crush all opposition with overwhelming force. Britain and France declared war on Germany on September 3.

The blitzkrieg tactics worked perfectly, however. The fighting was over in three weeks, long before France, Britain, and their allies could respond. In the last week of fighting, the Soviet Union attacked Poland from the east, grabbing some of its territory. The portion Germany annexed contained almost two-thirds of Poland's population. By the end of the month, Poland had ceased to exist—and World War II had begun.

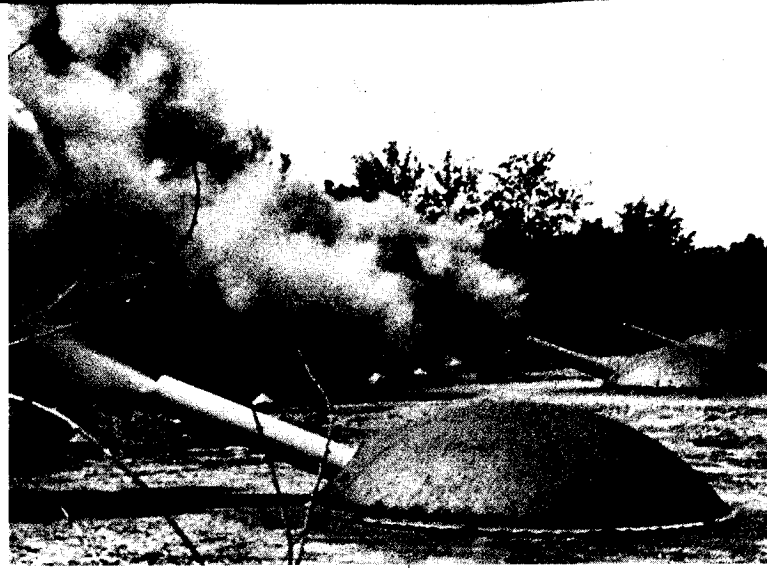
**THE PHONY WAR** Or had it? For the next few months, an eerie calm settled over Europe. Bored French and British troops on the Maginot Line, a system of fortifications along France's eastern border, sat staring into Germany, waiting for something to happen. Equally bored German troops sitting on the Siegfried Line a few miles away stared back. The blitzkrieg had given way to what the Germans called the *sitzkrieg* ("sitting war"), and the English called the phony war. To fight the tedium, French officer Denis Barlone made sure that his men were well fed.

#### A PERSONAL VOICE

Throughout the day the squeals of doomed pigs and poultry can be heard, while the men go off to thrash the walnut trees, . . . unearth the spuds, uproot the salads. My men feed sumptuously, pastry cooks make flans with the flour, found in abundance, and butter made in the dairy. This is the land of milk and honey.

DENIS BARLONE, *A French Officer's Diary*

This deceptive peace was first broken not by Germany but by the Soviet Union. After occupying eastern Poland, Stalin began annexing other regions that the Soviet Union had lost at the end of World War I. The Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania fell with little struggle. However, Finland—a country that journalist William Shirer admired as "the most decent and workable little democracy in Europe"—resisted. Late in 1939, Stalin sent his Soviet army into Finland. After three months of fierce winter fighting, the outnumbered Finns surrendered. Shirer wrote in his diary, "Stalin reveals himself of the same stamp as Hitler."





On April 7, 1940, a leading German newspaper announced, "Germany is ready. Eighty million pairs of [German] eyes are turned upon the Führer." Two days later, the rest of the world stared, unbelieving, as Hitler launched a surprise invasion of Denmark and Norway. Germany said this action was necessary in order "to protect [those countries'] freedom and independence." Next, the German blitzkrieg was turned against the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg, which were overrun by the end of May. The phony war had suddenly become painfully real.

## France and Britain Fight On

Before the war, France had built the massive fortifications of the Maginot Line on its border with Germany. With the invasion of Belgium, however, Germany threatened to bypass the line. French and British troops were sent north into Belgium. Hitler's generals had anticipated this reaction and sent their tanks slicing through the Ardennes, a region of wooded ravines in northeast France that the Allies thought was impassable.

**THE FALL OF FRANCE** Suddenly, the Allied forces in the north were cut off. Outnumbered, outgunned, and pounded from the air, they fled to the beaches of Dunkirk, on the English Channel. In less than a week, a makeshift fleet of fishing trawlers, tugboats, river barges, pleasure craft, and almost anything else that would float ferried about 340,000 Allied troops to safety across the Channel.

A few days later, Italy entered the war on the side of Germany and invaded France from the south as the Germans closed in on Paris from the north. On June 17, 1940, Marshal Henri Pétain, an aged military commander and World War I hero, told his country, "We must stop fighting." Four days later, at Compiègne, as William Shirer and the rest of the world watched, Hitler handed French officers his terms of surrender. Germans would occupy the northern part of France, and a Nazi-controlled puppet government, headed by Marshal Pétain, would be set up at Vichy, in southern France.

**GEOGRAPHY**  
**SKILLBUILDER**  
**REGION** Which European countries did Germany invade?  
**LOCATION** How was Germany's geographic location an advantage?

## World War II: German Advances, 1939–1941





After France fell, a French general named **Charles de Gaulle** fled to England, where he set up a government-in-exile. De Gaulle proclaimed defiantly, “France has lost a battle, but France has not lost the war.”

**THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN** “The final German victory over England is only a matter of time,” wrote a German general after the fall of France. In the summer of 1940, the Germans began to assemble an invasion fleet along the French coast. Because its naval power could not compete with that of Britain, however, Germany launched an air war at the same time. The Luftwaffe, or German air force, began making bombing runs over Britain. Its goal was to gain total control of the skies by destroying Britain’s Royal Air Force (RAF). Hitler had 2,600 planes at his disposal.

On a single day—August 15—1,000 of his planes ranged over Britain. Every night for two solid months, bombers pounded London.

The Battle of Britain raged on through the summer and the fall. Night after night, up to a thousand German planes pounded British targets. At first the Luftwaffe concentrated on airfields and aircraft factories. Next it targeted cities. Londoner Len Jones was just 18 years old when bombs fell on his East End neighborhood.

**A PERSONAL VOICE**

After an explosion of a nearby bomb, you could actually feel your eyeballs being sucked out. I was holding my eyes to try to stop them going. And the suction was so vast, it ripped my shirt away, and ripped my trousers. Then I couldn’t get my breath, the smoke was like acid and everything around me was black and yellow.

LEN JONES, quoted in *London at War*

The RAF fought back brilliantly. With the help of a new technological device called radar—which accurately plotted the flight paths of German planes, even in darkness—British pilots unleashed deadly air strikes against the enemy. On September 15, the RAF shot down 56 German planes. They lost only 26 aircraft. Two days later, the Führer called off the invasion of Britain indefinitely. “Never in the field of human conflict,” said Churchill in praise of the RAF pilots, “was so much owed by so many to so few.”

**Section 2 Assessment**

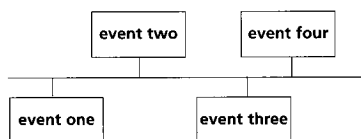
**1. TERMS & NAMES**

Identify:

- Neville Chamberlain
- Winston Churchill
- appeasement
- nonaggression pact
- blitzkrieg
- Charles de Gaulle

**2. FOLLOWING CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER**

Arrange the following events on a time line in the order that they occurred: Germany’s invasion of Poland, Germany’s annexation of Austria, signing of the nonaggression pact, signing of the Munich Pact.



**3. FORMING GENERALIZATIONS**

To what extent do you think lies and deception played a role in Hitler’s tactics? Support your answer with examples.

THINK ABOUT

- William Shirer’s diary entry about headlines in the Nazi newspapers
- Soviet-German relations
- Hitler’s justifications for military aggression

**4. MAKING DECISIONS** If you had been a member of the British House of Commons in 1938, would you have voted for or against the Munich Pact? Support your decision.

THINK ABOUT

- Hitler’s credibility
- the British public’s fear of being involved in another war
- Churchill’s opinion of the appeasement policy

# 3 The Holocaust

## TERMS & NAMES

- Holocaust
- Kristallnacht
- genocide
- concentration camp

**LEARN ABOUT** Nazi plans for the German "master race"  
**TO UNDERSTAND** the fate of Jews and other "enemies" of the Third Reich.

## ONE AMERICAN'S STORY


In September 1939, Gerda Weissmann was a carefree girl of 15 who had just returned to her home in Bielsko, Poland, after a summer vacation. A few days later, invading German troops overran Bielsko and Gerda's world was shattered. Because the Weissmanns were Jews, they were forced to give up their home to a German family. In 1942, Gerda and her parents, along with the rest of Poland's Jews, were sent to labor camps. Gerda never forgot the day when members of Hitler's elite SS (*Schutzstaffel*, or "security squadron") came for the Jews.

### A PERSONAL VOICE

We had to form a line and an SS man stood there with a little stick. I was holding hands with my mother and . . . he looked at me and said, "How old?" And I said, "eighteen," and he sort of pushed me to one side and my mother to the other side. . . . And shortly thereafter, some trucks arrived—open trucks; with sort of a gate behind it and we were loaded onto the trucks. I heard my mother's voice from very far off ask, "Where to?" and I shouted back, "I don't know."

**GERDA WEISSMANN KLEIN**, quoted in the film *One Survivor Remembers*

When the American lieutenant Kurt Klein, who would later become Gerda Weissmann's husband, liberated her from the Nazis in 1945—just one day before her 21st birthday—she weighed 68 pounds and her hair was white. Even so, Gerda could count herself fortunate. Of all her family and friends, she alone had survived the Nazi's campaign to exterminate Europe's Jews.

 **VIDEO** *ESCAPING THE FINAL SOLUTION*  
Kurt Klein and Gerda Weissmann Klein Remember the Holocaust



Gerda Weissmann Klein

## The Persecution Begins

On April 4, 1933, barely three months after Hitler took power in Germany, he ordered all "non-Aryans" to be removed from government jobs. This order was one of the first moves in a campaign for racial purity that would become the **Holocaust**—the systematic murder of 11 million people across Europe, more than half of whom were Jews.

**WHY THE JEWS?** Although Jews were not the only victims of the Holocaust, they were the center of the Nazis' target. Anti-Semitism, or hatred of Jews, had deep roots in European history. For decades, many Germans looking for a scapegoat, or someone to blame for their failures and frustrations, had targeted the Jews. As a result, when Hitler blamed the Jews for Germany's defeat in World War I and for its economic problems following the war, many Germans were more than ready to support him.

As the Nazis tightened their hold on Germany, their persecution of Jews increased. In 1935, the Nuremberg Laws stripped Jews of their civil rights and property if they tried to leave Germany. To make identification easier, Jews over the age of six had to wear a bright yellow Star of David on their clothing.





Worse was to come. On November 9, 1938, a night that came to be known as *Kristallnacht*, or “crystal night”—the night of broken glass—gangs of Nazi storm troopers attacked Jewish homes, businesses, and synagogues across Germany. An American who witnessed the violence in Leipzig wrote, “Jewish shop windows by the hundreds were systematically and wantonly smashed. . . . The main streets of the city were a positive litter of shattered plate glass.” Afterward, the Nazis blamed the Jews for the destruction. More than 20,000 Jews were arrested and sent to concentration camps. At the same time, a German official announced, “The Jews will pay a collective fine of one billion marks, 20 percent of their property.”

**THE PLIGHT OF JEWISH REFUGEES** Beginning in 1933, tens of thousands of Jews fled Germany each year. After *Kristallnacht*, the Nazis tried to speed Jewish emigration but encountered difficulty. France already had 40,000 Jewish refugees and did not want more. The British, who were already admitting about 500 Jewish refugees a week, worried about fueling anti-Semitism if that number were to increase. Late in 1938, Germany’s foreign minister observed, “We all want to get rid of our Jews. The difficulty is that no country wishes to receive them.”

About 60,000 refugees—including such distinguished people as physicist Albert Einstein, author Thomas Mann, architect Walter Gropius, and theologian Paul Tillich—fled to the United States. More could have come if the United States had been willing to relax its strict immigration quotas. This was not done, partly because of widespread anti-Semitism among Americans and partly because many Americans feared that letting in more refugees during the Great Depression would mean competition for scarce jobs.

After war broke out in Europe in 1939, Americans also feared that opening the door to refugees from Germany would allow “enemy agents” to enter the United States. President Roosevelt said that while he sympathized with the Jews, he would not “do anything which would conceivably hurt the future of present American citizens.”

Official indifference to the plight of Germany’s Jews was so strong that when the *St. Louis*—a German luxury liner filled with refugees—passed Miami in 1939, the Coast Guard followed it to prevent the passengers from attempting to leave the ship for the United States. This decision was made even though 740 of the liner’s 943 passengers had U.S. immigration papers. Passenger Liane Reif-Lehrer, who was just four years old at the time, recalled, “My mother and brother and I were among the passengers who survived, about a fourth of those on the ship. We were sent back to Europe and given haven in France, only to find the Nazis on our doorstep again a few months later.”

## The Final Solution

Unable to rid Germany of its Jews by forcing them to emigrate, the Nazis adopted a new approach following *Kristallnacht*. Jews healthy enough to work were sent to labor camps to perform slave labor. The rest would be sent to extermination camps. This horrifying plan amounted to **genocide**, or the deliberate and systematic killing of an entire people.

**THE CONDEMNED** The Nazis’ “final solution” rested on their belief that “Aryans” were a superior people and that the strength and purity of this “master race” must be preserved. To accomplish this, the Nazis condemned to slavery and death not only the Jews but other groups that they viewed as inferior or unworthy or as “enemies of the state.”



After taking power in 1933, the Nazis had concentrated on silencing their political opponents—Communists, Socialists, liberals, and anyone else who spoke out against the government. Once the Nazis had eliminated these enemies, they turned against other groups in Germany. In addition to Jews, these groups included

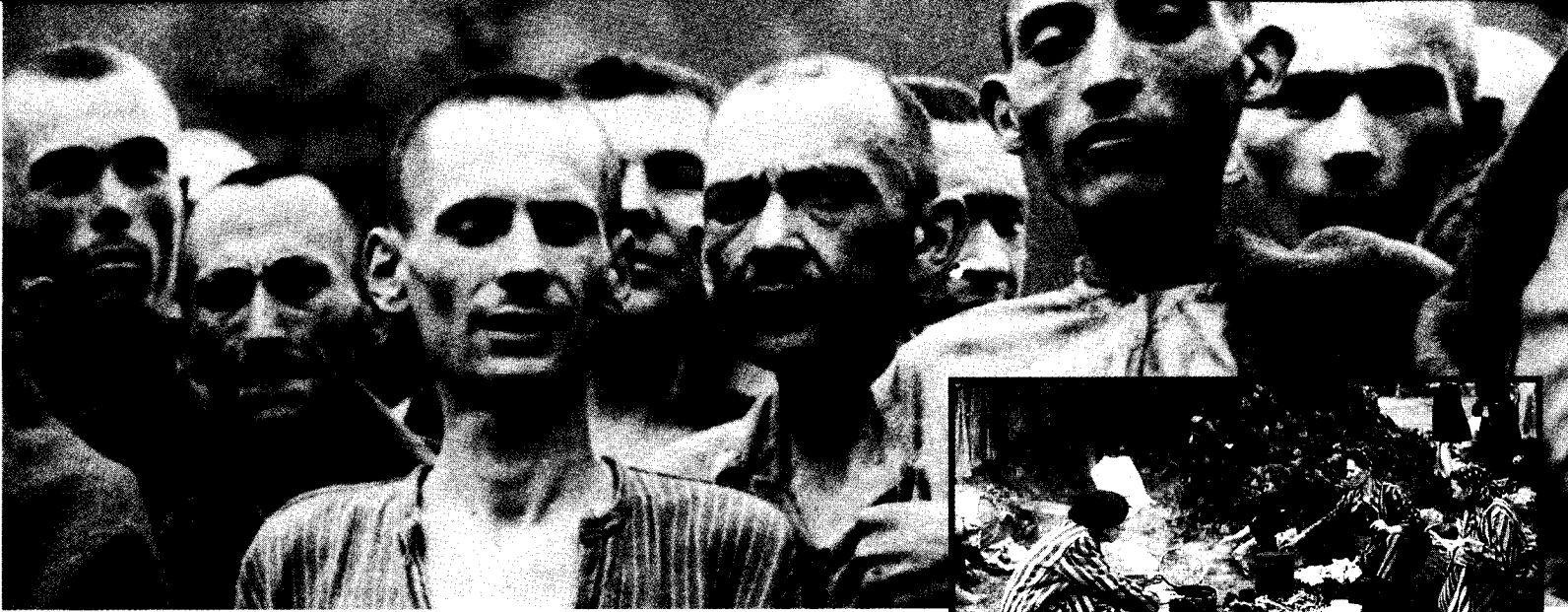
- Gypsies—whom the Nazis believed to be an “inferior race”
- Freemasons—whom the Nazis charged to be supporters of the “Jewish conspiracy” to rule the world
- Jehovah’s Witnesses—who refused to join the army or salute Hitler

The Nazis also targeted other Germans whom they found unfit to be part of the “master race,” such as homosexuals, the mentally retarded, the insane, the disabled, and the incurably ill. Beginning in 1939, the German government rounded up these individuals and shipped them off to “special treatment” centers, where they were “accorded a mercy death.” By 1941, children near one of these centers had become so used to seeing the special buses that were used to transport victims that they would call out to each other, “Look, there’s the murder box coming again.”

As the Nazis moved eastward, they added Poles, Ukrainians, and Russians to their growing list of *Untermenschen*, or “subhumans,” who were standing in the way of the expanding “master race.” After the invasion of Poland, for example, hundreds of thousands of Poles were killed or shipped to Germany to perform slave labor. The emptied Polish towns and farms were resettled with Germans seeking lebensraum.

**CONCENTRATION CAMPS** The Nazis began implementing their “final solution” in Poland. Nazi murder squads were assigned to round up Jews, strip them of their clothing, and then shoot them in cold blood. Other Jews were herded into dismal ghettos, or Jewish sections, in Polish cities and were left to starve or die from disease. Still others were dragged from their homes and herded into trains and trucks for shipment to **concentration camps**. In this process, families were often separated, sometimes—like the Weissmanns—forever.

Life in the camps was a cycle of hunger, humiliation, and work that only ended with death. The prisoners were crammed into crude wooden barracks that held up to a thousand people each. They shared their crowded quarters—as well as their meager meals of thin soup and occasional scraps of bread or potato—with hordes of rats and fleas. Hunger was so intense, recalled one survivor, “that if a bit of soup spilled over, prisoners would converge on the spot, dig their spoons into the mud and stuff the mess into their mouths.”



The prisoners worked from dawn to dusk, seven days a week, until they collapsed. Those too weak to work were killed. Some, like Rudolf Reder, endured. He was one of only two Jews to survive the camp at Belzec, Poland.



#### A PERSONAL VOICE

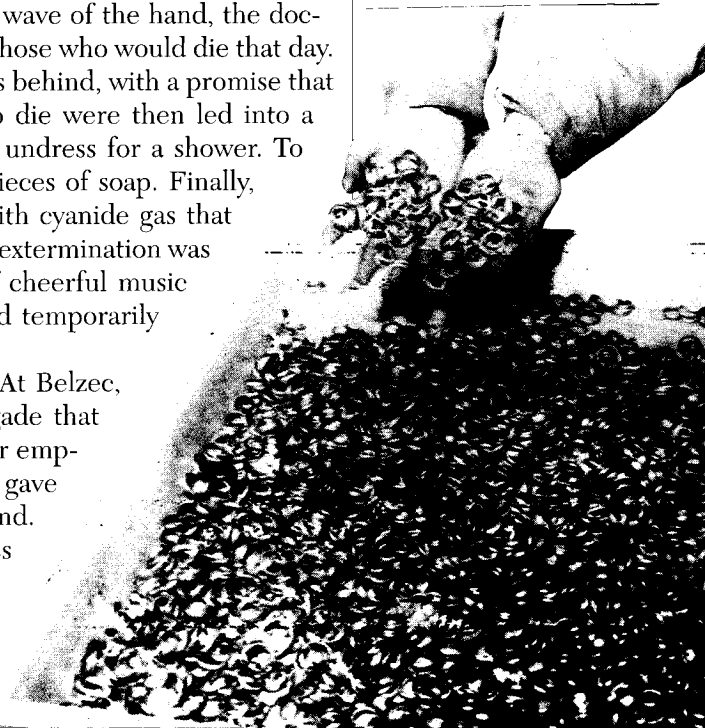
The brute Schmidt was our guard; he beat and kicked us if he thought we were not working fast enough. He ordered his victims to lie down and gave them 25 lashes with a whip, ordering them to count out loud. If the victim made a mistake, he was given 50 lashes. . . . Thirty or 40 of us were shot every day. A doctor usually prepared a daily list of the weakest men. During the lunch break they were taken to a nearby grave and shot. They were replaced the following morning by new arrivals from the transport of the day. . . . It was a miracle if anyone survived for five or six months in Belzec.

**RUDOLF REDER**, quoted in *The Holocaust*

**EXTERMINATION** As deadly as overwork, starvation, beatings, and bullets were, they did not kill fast enough to satisfy the Nazis. Late in 1941, the Germans built six death camps in Poland. Each camp had several huge gas chambers in which as many as 6,000 lives could be snuffed out daily.

When prisoners arrived at Auschwitz, the largest of the death camps, they had to parade by several SS doctors. With a wave of the hand, the doctors separated those strong enough to work from those who would die that day. Both groups were told to leave all their belongings behind, with a promise that they would be returned later. Those destined to die were then led into a room outside the gas chamber and were told to undress for a shower. To complete the deception, they were even given pieces of soap. Finally, they were led into the chamber and poisoned with cyanide gas that spewed from vents in the walls. This orderly mass extermination was sometimes carried out to the accompaniment of cheerful music played by an orchestra of camp inmates who had temporarily been spared execution.

At first the bodies were buried in huge pits. At Belzec, Rudolf Reder was part of a 500-man death brigade that labored all day, he said, "either at grave digging or emptying the gas chambers." But the decaying corpses gave off a stench that could be smelled for miles around. Worse yet, mass graves left evidence of the mass murder. At some camps, to try to cover up the evidence of their slaughter, the Nazis installed





huge crematoriums, or ovens in which to burn the dead. At other camps, the bodies were simply thrown into a pit and set on fire.

Gassing was not the only method of extermination used in the camps. Prisoners were also shot, hanged, or injected with poison. Still others died as a result of horrible medical experiments carried out by camp doctors. Some of these victims were injected with deadly germs in order to study the effect of disease on different groups of people. Others were forced to exist only on seawater in experiments to determine how long shipwrecked seamen could survive. Many more were used to test methods of sterilization, a subject of great interest to some Nazi doctors in their search for ways to improve the “master race.”

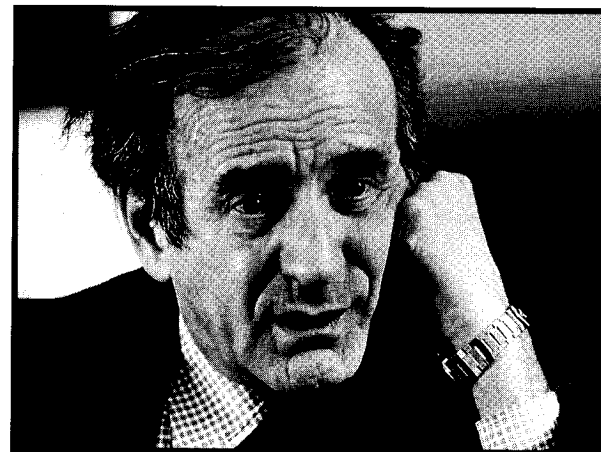
**THE SURVIVORS** Six million Jews died in the death camps and in Nazi massacres. But some miraculously escaped the worst of the Holocaust. Many had help from ordinary people who were appalled by the Nazis’ treatment of Jews. These people risked death by hiding Jews in their homes or by helping them escape to neutral countries such as Sweden and Switzerland.

Some Jews even survived the horrors of the concentration camps. In Gerda Weissmann Klein’s view, survival depended as much on one’s spirit as on getting enough to eat. “I do believe that if you were blessed with imagination, you could work through it,” she wrote. “If, unfortunately, you were a person that faced reality, I think you didn’t have a chance.” Those who did come out of the camps alive were forever changed by what they had witnessed. For survivor Elie Wiesel, who entered Auschwitz in 1944 at the age of 14, the sun had set forever.

**A PERSONAL VOICE**

Never shall I forget that night, the first night in the camp, which has turned my life into one long night. . . . Never shall I forget the little faces of the children, whose bodies I saw turned into wreaths of smoke beneath a silent blue sky. Never shall I forget those flames which consumed my faith forever. Never shall I forget that nocturnal silence which deprived me, for all eternity, of the desire to live. Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to dust. Never shall I forget these things, even if I am condemned to live as long as God Himself. Never.

ELIE WIESEL, *Night*



Elie Wiesel

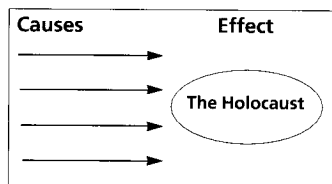
**Section 3 Assessment**

**1. TERMS & NAMES**

Identify:

- Holocaust
- *Kristallnacht*
- genocide
- concentration camp

**2. ANALYZING CAUSES** List at least four events that led to the Holocaust.



Write a paragraph summarizing one of the events that you listed.

**3. FORMING OPINIONS** Do you think that the United States was justified in not allowing more Jewish refugees to immigrate? Why or why not?

**THINK ABOUT**

- the views of isolationists in the United States
- some Americans’ prejudices and fears
- the incident on the German luxury liner *St. Louis*

**4. DEVELOPING HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE** Why do you think the Nazi program of systematic genocide was so brutally effective? Support your answer with details from the text.

**THINK ABOUT**

- the long German history of anti-Semitism
- the secrecy and lies of the Nazis
- the scope and organization of the Nazis’ genocidal plans

- Axis powers
- Lend-Lease Act
- Atlantic Charter
- Allies
- Hideki Tojo

**LEARN ABOUT** the American response to aggression in Europe and Asia  
**TO UNDERSTAND** how the United States entered World War II.

## ONE AMERICAN'S STORY

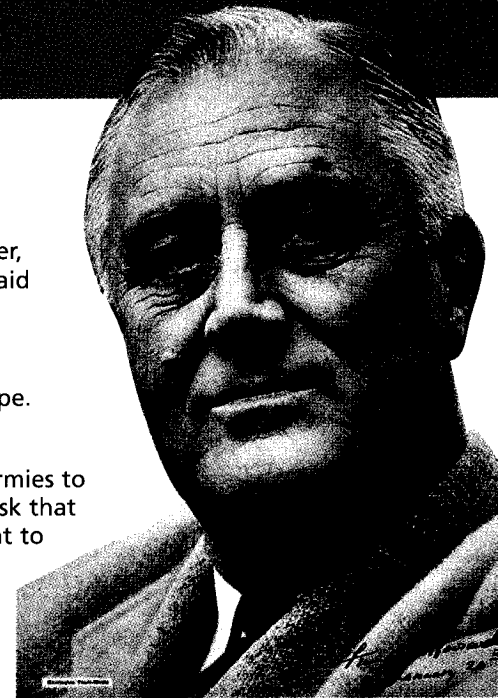
In late August 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt had sent a cable to Hitler, urging him to settle his differences with the Polish people peacefully. In answer, Hitler invaded Poland on September 1. "Hitler is a madman," Roosevelt had said after the Nazis took power in Germany, "and his counselors, some of whom I personally know, are even madder than he is." Now those same madmen had unleashed their insanity on the world. Two days after the invasion of Poland, Roosevelt spoke reassuringly to Americans about the outbreak of war in Europe.

### A PERSONAL VOICE

Let no man or woman thoughtlessly or falsely talk of America sending its armies to European fields. . . . This nation will remain a neutral nation, but I cannot ask that every American remain neutral in thought as well. Even a neutral has a right to take account of facts. Even a neutral cannot be asked to close his mind or his conscience. . . . I have said not once, but many times, that I have seen war and I hate war. . . . As long as it is in my power to prevent, there will be no blackout of peace in the United States.

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT, radio speech, September 3, 1939

At that time, Roosevelt knew that Americans were still deeply committed to staying out of war. In his heart, however, he also knew that there could be no peace in a world controlled by dictators.



Franklin D. Roosevelt

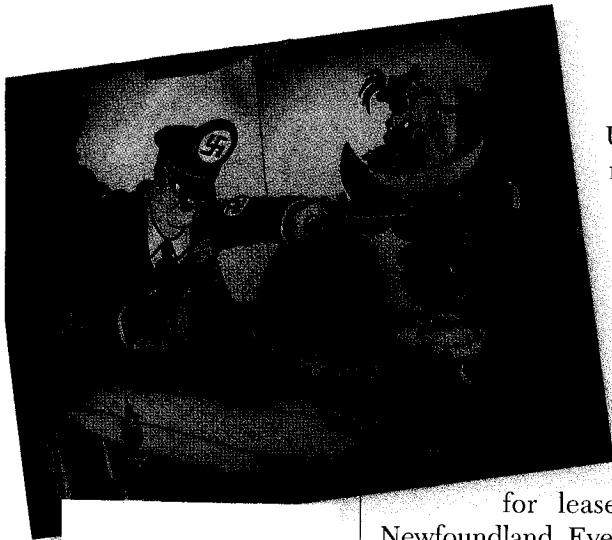
## The United States Musters Its Forces

As German tanks thundered across Poland, Roosevelt issued an official proclamation of neutrality as required by the Neutrality Acts. At the same time, he began to prepare the nation for the struggle he feared lay just ahead.

**MOVING CAUTIOUSLY AWAY FROM NEUTRALITY** On September 8, 1939, Roosevelt announced that he was calling a special session of Congress to revise the Neutrality Acts. When Congress met two weeks later, the president asked for a "cash-and-carry" provision, which would permit nations to buy American arms as long as they paid cash and carried the goods home in their own ships. Providing the arms that would help France and Britain defeat Hitler, Roosevelt argued, was the best way to keep America out of the war.

Isolationists in Congress, such as Senator Arthur Vandenberg, argued just the opposite, however. "I do not believe that we can become an arsenal for one belligerent without becoming a target for another," Vandenberg said. After six weeks of heated debate, Congress passed the Neutrality Act of 1939, and cash-and-carry went into effect.

**THE AXIS THREAT** Over the next few months, America's cash-and-carry policy began to look like too little, too late. By the summer of 1940, France had fallen and Britain was under siege by the German Luftwaffe. Then, in September, Americans were jolted by the news that Japan, Germany, and Italy had signed a mutual defense treaty, the Tripartite Pact. The three nations became known as the **Axis powers**.



The Tripartite Pact was clearly aimed at keeping the United States out of the war. Under the treaty, each Axis nation agreed to come to the defense of the others in case of attack. This meant that if the United States were to declare war on any one of the Axis powers, it would face its worst military nightmare—a two-ocean war, with fighting in both the Atlantic and the Pacific.

Hoping to avoid this situation, Roosevelt scrambled to provide the British with “all aid short of war.” In June 1940, he sent Britain 500,000 rifles and 80,000 machine guns to help replace those lost at Dunkirk. In September, the United States traded 50 old destroyers for leases on British military bases in the Caribbean and Newfoundland. Even British prime minister Winston Churchill later called this deal “a decidedly unneutral act.”

**BUILDING AMERICA'S DEFENSES** Meanwhile, Roosevelt asked Congress to increase spending for national defense. After years of isolationism, the United States was militarily weak. Critics pointed out that 18 countries had larger armies, that the navy could hardly protect the Panama Canal, and that Italy's air force had more firepower than that of the United States.

In response, Congress dramatically boosted defense spending in 1940. It also passed the nation's first peacetime military draft. Under the Selective Training and Service Act, 16 million men between the ages of 21 and 35 were registered. Of these, 1 million were to be drafted for one year. Roosevelt himself drew the first draft numbers. “This is a most solemn ceremony,” he told a national radio audience. “It is accompanied by no fanfare—no blowing of bugles or beating of drums. There should be none.”

**ROOSEVELT'S REELECTION** That same year, Roosevelt decided to break the tradition of a two-term presidency, begun by George Washington, and to run for reelection. To the great disappointment of isolationists, Roosevelt's Republican opponent, a public utilities executive named Wendell Willkie, supported Roosevelt's policy of aiding Britain. At the same time, both Willkie and Roosevelt promised to keep the nation out of war. Because there was so little difference between the candidates, the majority of voters chose the one they knew best. Roosevelt was reelected with nearly 55 percent of the votes cast.

## “The Great Arsenal of Democracy”

Not long after the election, President Roosevelt held another of his fireside chats on the radio. There was no hope of negotiating a peace with Hitler, he told the nation. “No man can tame a tiger into a kitten by stroking it.” He also warned that if Britain fell, the Axis powers would be left unchallenged to conquer the world, at which point, he said, “all of us in all the Americas would be living at the point of a gun.” To prevent such a situation, the United States had to help defeat the Axis threat by turning itself into “the great arsenal of democracy.”

**THE LEND-LEASE PLAN** By late 1940, however, Britain had no more cash to spend in the arsenal of democracy. Consequently, Roosevelt suggested replacing cash-and-carry with a new plan that he called lend-lease. Under this plan, the president would lend or lease arms and other supplies to “any country whose defense was vital to the United States.”

Even though the isolationists were losing the support of the American public, they argued bitterly against lend-lease. Congress finally passed the



**"The United States should not become involved in European wars."**

Still recovering from World War I and struggling with the Great Depression, many Americans believed their country should remain strictly neutral in the war in Europe.

Representative James F. O'Connor voiced the country's reservations when he asked, "Dare we set America up and commit her as the financial and military blood bank of the rest of the world when the proportion of want in this country is still so great that by doing this our country would become a victim of financial and military pernicious anemia?" O'Connor maintained that the United States could not "right every wrong" or "police [the] world."

The widely admired aviator Charles Lindbergh risked his reputation by stating his hope that "the future of America . . . not be tied to these eternal wars in Europe." Lindbergh asserted that "Americans [should] fight anybody and everybody who attempts to interfere with our hemisphere." However, he went on to say, "Our safety does not lie in fighting European wars. It lies in our own internal strength, in the character of the American people and American institutions." Like many isolationists, Lindbergh asserted that democracy would not be saved "by the forceful imposition of our ideals abroad, but by example of their successful operation at home."

**"The United States must protect democracies throughout the world."**

As the conflict in Europe deepened, interventionists embraced President Franklin D. Roosevelt's declaration that "when peace has been broken anywhere, peace of all countries everywhere is in danger." Roosevelt emphasized the global character of 20th-century commerce and communication by noting, "Every word that comes through the air, every ship that sails the sea, every battle that is fought does affect the American future."

Roosevelt and other political leaders also appealed to the nation's conscience. Secretary of State Cordell Hull noted that the world was "face to face . . . with an organized, ruthless, and implacable movement of steadily expanding conquest." In the same vein, Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles called Hitler "a sinister and pitiless conqueror [who] has reduced more than half of Europe to abject serfdom."

After the war expanded into the Atlantic, Roosevelt declared, "It is time for all Americans . . . to stop being deluded by the romantic notion that the Americas can go on living happily and peacefully in a Nazi-dominated world." He added, "Let us not ask ourselves whether the Americas should begin to defend themselves after the first attack . . . or the twentieth attack. The time for active defense is now."

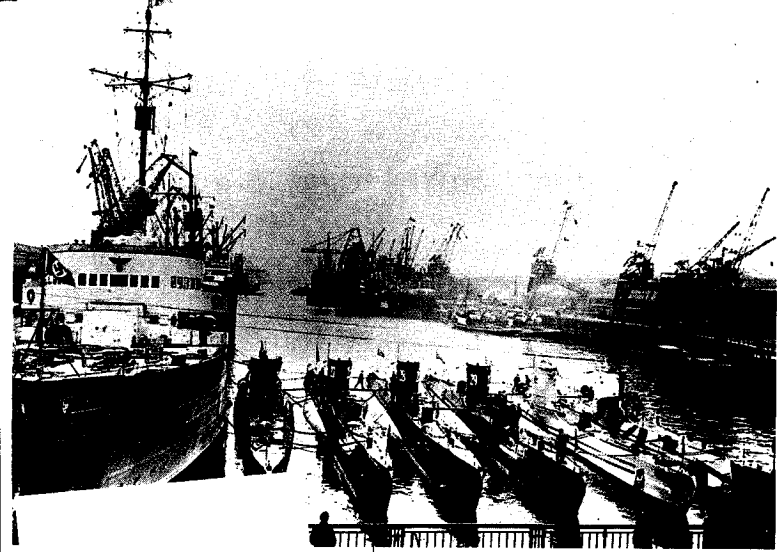
**Lend-Lease Act** in 1941 and supported it with \$7 billion. In all, the United States eventually spent \$50 billion under the act.

Britain was not the only nation to receive lend-lease aid. On June 22, 1941, Hitler ignored his peace treaty with Stalin and invaded the Soviet Union with 3 million troops. The Führer confidently predicted victory within six weeks. But the Soviets resisted fiercely. As they pulled back from the Nazi advance, they employed a scorched-earth policy, destroying everything that might be of use to the invaders. Six weeks stretched into six months. Then, as the bitter Russian winter set in, the German invasion ground to a halt.

Meanwhile, Roosevelt began sending lend-lease supplies to the Soviet Union. Some Americans opposed providing aid to Stalin. They even argued that Hitler was doing the United States a favor by attacking the Communists. But Roosevelt agreed with Winston Churchill, who once remarked that "if Hitler invaded Hell," the British would be prepared to work with the devil himself.

**GERMAN WOLF PACKS** For lend-lease aid to be of any use to Britain and the Soviet Union, supply lines had to be kept open across the Atlantic Ocean. To prevent delivery of lend-lease shipments, Hitler deployed hundreds of German submarines—or U-boats—in the North Atlantic. There, groups of 15 to 20 submarines, known as wolf packs, searched shipping lanes for cargo ships.

During five weeks in April and May 1941, the Germans sank 1.2 million tons of British shipping. They were sinking ships faster than the British could replace them. Something had to be done to protect cargo ships, supporters of



lend-lease argued. Otherwise, the United States might just as well dump its lend-lease shipments into the ocean.

In June 1941, Roosevelt ordered the U.S. Navy to protect lend-lease shipments as far east as Iceland. He also gave American warships permission to attack German U-boats in self-defense.

## Planning for War

With each step Roosevelt took against the Axis powers, the roar of the isolationists grew louder. In August 1941, they voiced their opposition to a bill that would extend the draft for another 18 months. Congress passed the draft-extension bill, but only by a razor-thin margin of 203 to 202 in the House of Representatives. Roosevelt was not discouraged by this narrow victory, however. With the army provided for, he began planning for the war he thought was certain to come.

**THE ATLANTIC CHARTER** While Congress voted on the draft extension, Roosevelt and Churchill met secretly aboard a warship off the coast of Newfoundland. Churchill had come hoping for a military commitment from the United States. Instead, he settled for a declaration of principles called the **Atlantic Charter**. In this document, the two leaders spelled out the causes for which World War II was fought—even before the United States officially entered the conflict. The charter pledged both Great Britain and the United States to (1) seek no territorial expansion, (2) pursue no territorial changes without the consent of the inhabitants, (3) respect the right of people to choose their own form of government, (4) promote free trade among nations, (5) encourage international cooperation to improve peoples' lives, (6) build a secure peace based on freedom from want and fear, (7) work for disarmament of aggressors, and (8) establish a "permanent system of general security."

Later in 1941, the Atlantic Charter became the basis of a new document called "A Declaration by the United Nations." The term "United Nations" was suggested by Roosevelt to express the common purpose of the **Allies**, those nations that had joined together to fight the Axis powers. The declaration was signed by 26 nations, including the Soviet Union and China. Together, observed Churchill, these nations represented "four-fifths of the human race."

**THE SHOOTING BEGINS** "How near is the United States to war?" That was the question Churchill asked rhetorically after his August 1941 meeting with Roosevelt. For the moment, the answer still seemed to be "not very." Then, on September 4, a German U-boat fired two torpedoes at the U.S. destroyer *Greer*. President Roosevelt responded with the announcement that the U.S. Navy had been ordered to fire on German ships on sight. "When you see a rattlesnake poised to strike," the president explained, "you do not wait until he has struck before you crush him. These Nazi submarines and raiders are the rattlesnakes of the Atlantic."

Two weeks later, the *Pink Star*, an American merchant ship, was sunk off Greenland. Its lost cargo included machine tools, evaporated milk, and enough cheddar cheese to feed more than 3.5 million British laborers for a week. In mid-October, the U.S. destroyer *Kearny* was torpedoed near Iceland and 11 lives were lost. "America has been attacked," Roosevelt announced grimly. "The shooting has started. And history has recorded who fired the first shot." A few days later, German U-boats sank the U.S. destroyer *Reuben James* in the same waters, killing at least 100 sailors.

As the death toll mounted, the Senate finally repealed the ban against arming merchant ships. The vote was so close, however, that Roosevelt knew that something far more dramatic than German attacks on U.S. ships would be needed to persuade Congress to declare war. Churchill knew this as well, advising his impatient war cabinet to “have patience and trust to the tide which is flowing our way, and to events.”

## Japan Attacks the United States

The tide pushing the United States toward war was flowing much faster than either leader knew. To almost everyone’s surprise, however, the attack that brought the United States into the war came from an unexpected country—not from Germany but from Japan.

**JAPAN’S AMBITIONS** In Japan, expansionists had long dreamed of creating a vast colonial empire that would stretch from Manchuria and China south to Thailand and Indonesia. This dream had motivated Japan’s invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and of China in 1937. South of China, though, Japan’s ambitions for expansion brought them into conflict with other colonial powers. These powers included France (in French Indochina), the Netherlands (in the Dutch East Indies), Britain (in Burma, India, and Malaya), and the United States (in Guam and the Philippines). By 1941, France and the Netherlands had fallen to Germany, and the British were too busy fighting Hitler to block Japanese expansion. Only the United States and its Pacific islands remained in Japan’s way.

The Japanese began their southward push in July of 1941 by taking over French military bases in Indochina (now Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos). The United States protested this new act of aggression by cutting off trade with Japan. The embargoed goods included the one thing Japan could not live without—oil to fuel its war machine. Japanese military leaders warned that, without oil, Japan could be defeated without its enemies ever striking a blow. The leaders declared that Japan must either persuade the United States to end its oil embargo or seize the oil fields in the Dutch East Indies.

In October, the militant Japanese general **Hideki Tojo** became the new prime minister of Japan. Shortly after taking office, Tojo met Japan’s revered emperor, Hirohito. At that meeting, Tojo promised the emperor that the government would make a final attempt to preserve peace with the Americans. If the peace talks failed, Japan would have no choice but to go to war. But on November 5, 1941, the very day that Tojo’s special “peace” envoy flew to Washington for talks, the prime minister ordered the Japanese navy to prepare for an attack on the United States.

The U.S. military had broken Japan’s secret communication codes and knew that Japan was preparing for a strike. What it didn’t know was where the attack would come. Late in November, Roosevelt sent out a “war warning” to military commanders in Hawaii, Guam, and the Philippines. If war could not be avoided, the warning said, “the United States desires that Japan commit the first overt act.” And the nation waited.

The peace talks went on for a month. Then, late on December 6, 1941, the president received a decoded message that had been intercepted. This message instructed Japan’s peace envoy to reject all American peace proposals. “This means war,” Roosevelt told his friend and adviser Harry Hopkins. “It’s too bad we can’t strike first and prevent a surprise,” Hopkins replied. “No, we can’t do that,” Roosevelt

reportedly responded. "We are a democracy of peaceful people. We have a good record. We must stand on it."

**THE ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOR** Early the next morning, a Japanese dive-bomber swooped low over the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor—the largest U.S. naval base in the Pacific. The bomber was followed by more than 180 Japanese warplanes launched from six aircraft carriers. As the first Japanese bombs found their targets, a radio operator flashed this message: "Air raid on Pearl Harbor. This is not a drill."

For an hour and a half, the Japanese planes were barely disturbed by American anti-aircraft guns and blasted target after target. By the time the last plane soared off around 9:30 A.M., the devastation was appalling. John Garcia, a pipe fitter's apprentice, was there.

**A PERSONAL VOICE**

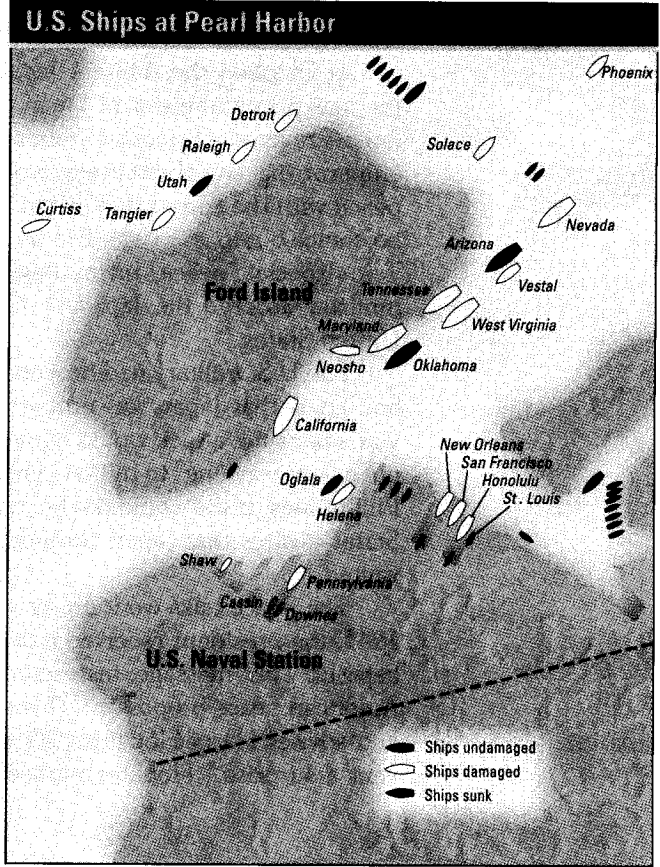
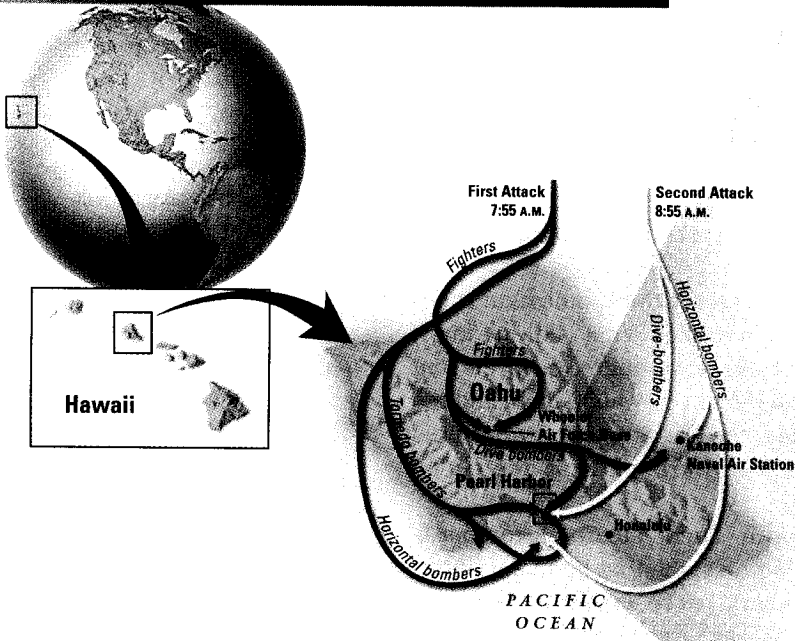
It was a mess. I was working on the U.S.S. *Shaw*. It was on a floating dry dock. It was in flames. I started to go down to the pipe fitter's shop to get my toolbox when another wave of Japanese came in. I got under a set of concrete steps at the dry dock where the battleship *Pennsylvania* was. An officer came by and asked me to go into the *Pennsylvania* and try to get the fires out. A bomb had penetrated the marine deck, and . . . three decks below. Under that was the magazines: ammunition, powder, shells. I said "There ain't no way I'm gonna go down there." It could blow up any minute. I was young and 16, not stupid.

**JOHN GARCIA**, quoted in *The Good War*

For Japan, the attack on Pearl Harbor was a stunning victory. The Japanese navy all but crippled the entire U.S. Pacific Fleet in one blow. Its own casualties numbered only 29 planes. In Tokyo, the elated Tojo visited a shrine to thank the spirits of his ancestors for this favorable opening of Japan's campaign to rule East Asia.

In Washington, the mood ranged from outrage to panic. At the White House, Eleanor Roosevelt watched closely as her husband, with a "deadly calm,"

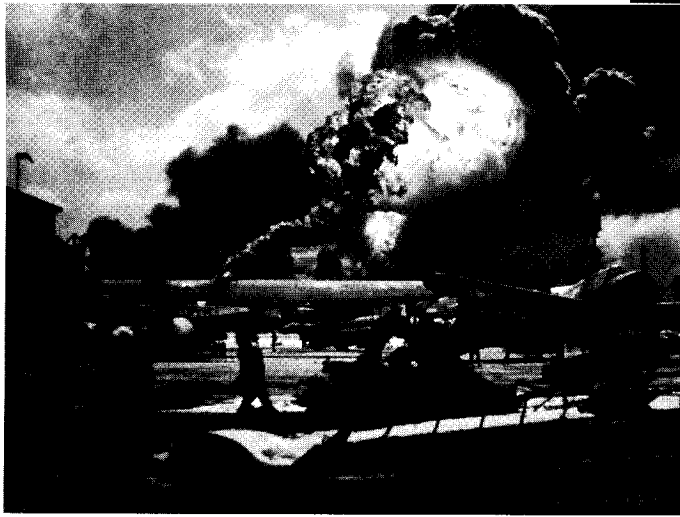
**The Attack on Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941**



**GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER MOVEMENT** Notice the placement of the U.S. ships in Pearl Harbor. What might the navy have done differently to minimize damage from a surprise attack?

*[Handwritten signature]*





absorbed the news from Hawaii, “each report more terrible than the last.” The surprise raid had sunk or badly damaged 18 ships. About 350 planes had been destroyed or severely damaged. Some 2,400 people had died, and another 1,178 had been wounded. These losses constituted more damage than the U.S. Navy had suffered in all of World War I.

Beneath the president’s calm, Eleanor could see how worried he was. “I never wanted to have to fight this war on two fronts,” Roosevelt told his wife. “We haven’t the Navy to fight in both the Atlantic and the Pacific . . . so we will have to build up the Navy and the Air Force and that will mean that we will have to take a good many defeats before we can have a victory.”

The next day, President Roosevelt addressed Congress. “Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy,” he said, “. . . the Japanese launched an unprovoked and dastardly attack on American soil.” He asked for a declaration of war against Japan, which Congress quickly approved. Three days later, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States.

For all the damage done at Pearl Harbor, perhaps the greatest was to the cause of isolationism. “The only thing now to do,” said the isolationist senator Burton Wheeler after the attack, “is to lick the hell out of them.”

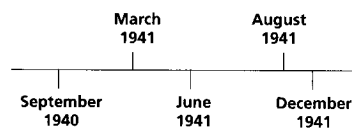
## Section 4 Assessment

### 1. TERMS & NAMES

Identify:

- Axis powers
- Lend-Lease Act
- Atlantic Charter
- Allies
- Hideki Tojo

**2. SUMMARIZING** Create a time line of key events leading to America’s entry into World War II. Use the dates already plotted on the time line below as a guide.



Which of the events that you listed was most influential in bringing the United States into the war? Why?

**3. FORMING OPINIONS** Do you think that the United States should have waited to be attacked before declaring war?

**THINK ABOUT**

- the reputation of the United States
- the influence of the isolationists
- the destruction of Pearl Harbor

**4. CLARIFYING** Although the U.S. Congress was still unwilling to declare war early in 1941, Churchill told his war cabinet, “We must have patience and trust to the tide which is flowing our way, and to events.” What do you think Churchill meant by this remark? Support your answer.

**THINK ABOUT**

- Roosevelt’s series of “unneutral” steps to assist Great Britain in its war efforts
- the Atlantic Charter
- Churchill’s view of Hitler

# Chapter 16 Assessment

## REVIEWING THE CHAPTER

**TERMS & NAMES** For each item below, write a sentence explaining its historical significance in the years leading up to World War II. For each person below, explain his role in the events of this period.

1. fascism
2. Adolf Hitler
3. Nazism
4. Winston Churchill
5. appeasement
6. Charles de Gaulle
7. Holocaust
8. genocide
9. Axis powers
10. Allies

## MAIN IDEAS

SECTION 1 (pages 542–547)

### Dictators Threaten World Peace

11. What were Stalin's goals and what steps did he take to achieve them?
12. What actions taken by the League of Nations revealed its inability to control the aggressive moves of Japan, Germany, and Italy?
13. How did Germany's and Italy's involvement affect the outcome of the Spanish Civil War?

SECTION 2 (pages 548–553)

### War in Europe

14. Why was the blitzkrieg an effective military strategy?
15. What terms of surrender did Hitler demand of the French after the fall of France in 1940? What was General Charles de Gaulle's reaction?

SECTION 3 (pages 554–558)

### The Holocaust

16. What groups did Nazis deem unfit to belong to the Aryan "master race"?
17. How did some Europeans show their resistance to Nazi persecution of the Jews?

SECTION 4 (pages 559–565)

### America Moves Toward War

18. Which nations formed the Axis powers? What were the military implications of the Tripartite Pact for the United States?
19. What congressional measures paved the way for the entry of the United States into World War II?
20. Why did the United States enter World War II?

## THINKING CRITICALLY

1. **WAR OR PEACE?** At what points do you think France, Great Britain, and their allies might have stopped Hitler and prevented World War II? Plot these events on a time line like the one below. Support your answers with reasons.

1933—Hitler is appointed  
chancellor of  
Germany.

1939—Great Britain and  
France declare war  
on Germany.

2. **THE POWER OF SPEECH** Compare and contrast the ways in which Hitler, Churchill, and Roosevelt used their powers as gifted speakers to accomplish their political aims during World War II. Support your answer with details from the text.
3. **TRACING THEMES AMERICA IN THE WORLD** Reread the quotation from President Roosevelt on page 540. What message do you think he was conveying to the American public? Explain.
4. **GEOGRAPHY OF EUROPE AND THE SOVIET UNION** Look at the map of German advances on page 552. How might Poland's location have influenced the secret pact that Germany and the Soviet Union signed on August 23, 1939?
5. **THE FACES OF TERROR** What similarities and differences do you see between the terrorism of Stalin's Great Purge of the 1930s and Hitler's policy of genocide? Support your answer with details from the text.
6. **ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES** Read the following excerpt from the British writer Jessica Mitford's autobiography, in which she comments on Germany's attack on the Netherlands and other European countries in 1940. Then answer the question below.

On the 9th of May [1940], a month after Chamberlain had looked into his clouded crystal ball, there to find that Hitler had "missed the bus" and was no longer capable of waging aggressive war, the Germans struck. . . . Within hours the Germans had swept through Holland . . . and the French front was reported to be in mortal danger, perhaps already lost.

Out of the wild confusion of these first few days of the attack . . . the real nature of the danger confronting Europe had exposed for all to see and understand the criminal stupidity of the years of shabby deals and accommodation to Hitler's ambitions. Overnight, the appeasement policy was buried forever.

JESSICA MITFORD, *Hons and Rebels*

Do you agree or disagree with Mitford's view of Chamberlain's appeasement policy? Why or why not?

