World War II (1931-1945)

Lesson 2 Americans Debate Involvement
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Learning Objectives

• Understand the course of the early years of World War II in Europe.
• Describe Franklin Roosevelt’s foreign policy in the mid-1930s and the great debate between interventionists and isolationists.
• Explain how the United States became more involved in the conflict.

• President Franklin Roosevelt
• blitzkrieg
• Axis Powers
• Allies
• Winston Churchill
• Neutrality Act of 1939
• Charles Lindbergh
• Tripartite Pact
• Lend-Lease Act
• Atlantic Charter
Roosevelt Criticizes Acts of War

- Roosevelt warns America
  - Very difficult for America to remain neutral
    - Roosevelt – Interventionist
    - American Public - Isolationism
  - Criticizes Japanese military actions
    - Rape of Nanjing + Sinking of US gunboat *Panay*
    - “No part of the world was truly isolated from the rest of the world”

- Solution
  - Informal alliance with peace loving nations
    - Quarantine aggressive nations
    - Quarantine Speech
American Isolationism

• Isolationist
  – Desire to avoid involvement in foreign wars
    – American unwilling to join League of Nations
  – Preserve America’s Freedom
    – Choose time and place for military action
    – American’s more concerned with economy

• Neutrality Act 1935
  – Prevent US from entering War
  • No loans to warring countries
Balancing Isolationism and Intervention

- Europe or the economy
  - Roosevelt concentrated on the New Deal
    - American people worried about the economy
- Italy Invades Ethiopia 1935
  - Neutrality Act prevented America from helping
- Japan Invades China 1937
  - America’s Isolationist feelings start to fade
    - Not aiding any side clearly supported the Fascists
War Breaks Out in Europe

• Leading up to War
  – Hitler Violates Munich Pact – Invaded Czechoslovakia
  – Hitler doesn’t want to fight a two front war
    • USSR East + Great Britain and France West
    • Signs Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact
      – Stalin and Hitler agree to terms
      – Stalin – stay out of Germany’s expansion
      – Hitler – Not attack Soviet Union
      – Agree not to attack each other
      – Divide Poland

  – September 1st 1939: Germany Invades Poland – Start of WWII
    • Blitzkrieg – sudden and swift attach with overwhelming force
    • Soviets attack Poland Sept 17th, take over Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania
In the 1930s, dictators built their power on nationalism and militarism. Analyze Charts Which nations were most likely preparing for war in 1937? Why did military spending for the United States and Britain increase so much more than for the Soviet Union between 1940 and 1943?
War broke out in Europe when Germany attacked Poland. Identify Central Issues What was the reaction of other nations to the attack?
Axis Powers Overwhelm Europe

• Germany Invades
  – Demark, Norway, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxenberg

• Fall of France
  – France prepares for invasion – Maginot Line
    • Interconnected fortress along the border with Belgium
  – May 1940 – Germany invades France
    • France divided into two sections
    • Occupied France – controlled by Nazi
    • Free France – neutral, but has Nazi Influence
The Battle of Britain

• Germany vs. Great Britain
  • Britain was left alone to defeat Hitler
  • Hitler planned to invade Britain
    – Winston Churchill Prime Minister of Great Britain
  • Never negotiate with Hitler
    – British Royal Air Force (RAF)
      • Vs.
        – Luftwaffe

– USA listened to radio broadcasts of the events in Europe
Within five years, the Axis Powers dominated Europe. Analyze Maps What made Poland a difficult ally for France and Britain to protect?
American Reaction Is Divided

• **Isolationist**
  – Avoid alliances with other nations
  – Focus on issues at home
    • Economy
    • Great Depression
  – Neutrality was the way to keep America safe
  – WWI
    • Involvement was a mistake
      – False report of business provoking the Gov’t to get involved in war

• **Interventionist**
  – Work towards collective security
  – Axis aggressions were wrong
    • Threatened World peace
    • Threatened American interests
  – Aid allies – support Democracy
American Reaction Is Divided

Isolationists argued against U.S. involvement in World War II by pointing to the cost of World War I and the impact of the Great Depression. Analyze Charts What years saw unemployment rates of 20 percent or more? How would this affect attitudes toward conflict overseas?
America Divided

• USA signs three **Neutrality Acts** (1935, 1936, + 1937)
  – Imposed certain restrictions
    • EX: cannot sail on ships owned by nations at war
    • EX: prevent America from selling arms to Waring nations
    • Only allowed trade with waring nations on a cash and carry basis

  – **Cash and Carry**
    – Countries at war were allowed to buy American goods
    – Pay in cash and pick up from America
    • Buyer must send their own ships to pick up weapons
    • US still needs manufacturing jobs to get out of Great Depression

• **Tripartite Pact**
  – Germany, Italy + Japan
    • Became allies
Hitler’s Plan to Invade
Election of 1940

- Roosevelt wins Election of 1940
  - “arsenal of democracy”
- Lend and Lease Act
  - Lend and lease supplies to any country that opposed Hitler
    - Send weapons to Great Britain
- Atlantic Charter 1941
  - Roosevelt and Churchill
    - Both meet and agree to oppose Hitler and the Axis powers
      - Isolationists in America oppose the Charter
    - German U-Boats start to bomb US supply ships
America Moves Closer Toward War

Once safely reelected, President Roosevelt increased his support of Britain. When Britain began to run short on funds to purchase cash-and-carry goods in the United States,

On January 6, 1941, FDR addresses Congress “four freedoms”—freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear—that were threatened by Nazi and Japanese militarism.

Roosevelt believed that the best way to stay out of the conflict with Germany was to aid Britain.
### Lend-Lease Aid Given by the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TO BRITISH EMPIRE</th>
<th>TO SOVIET UNION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941 (March-December)</td>
<td>$1.1 billion</td>
<td>$20.0 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>$4.8 billion</td>
<td>$1.4 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>$9.0 billion</td>
<td>$2.4 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>$10.8 billion</td>
<td>$4.1 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945 (January-August)</td>
<td>$4.4 billion</td>
<td>$2.8 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$30.1 billion</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10.7 billion</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *British War Economy*, W.K. Hancock and M.M. Gowing

**Analyze Charts**

How much Lend-Lease aid did the United States give the Allies by the end of 1941? Why did the United States give more aid to the British Empire than to the Soviet Union?