

Chapter 27: Americans in WWII

Section 1: Early Difficulties

Question 1:

A quote from General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of US forces in the Pacific Ocean:

"It is fatal to enter any war without the will to win it."

Explain what MacArthur meant.

Strengths and Weaknesses

- Axis Advantages:
 - Germany & Japan had already claimed new territories
 - Allies would need a long and difficult war to defeat them
 - Germany & Japan were already built up for war; US was not mobilized
- Allied Advantages:
 - Axis powers were spread out over large area
 - Germans were fighting the Soviets and British on 2 fronts



Mobilizing for War

- 1940: 22,000 gov't workers made munitions
- 1943: 486,000 gov't workers made munitions
- Car production was suspended
- THOUSANDS of airplanes, ships, tanks, jeeps, subs, carriers, etc. were built
- Machines of war caused economic BOOM
- Unemployment dropped from 14.6% to 1.2% in 1944
- Salaries doubled
- American farmers sold food in large quantities to USSR & UK
- **War Production Board:** gov't agency meant to direct money and spending; organized munitions factories
- Gov't raised income taxes to pay for war supplies
- **Selective Training and Service Act:** summer of 1940; 1st peacetime draft in US history
 - 18-35 years old
 - Local boards determined health of draftees
 - Deferred men for family, religious, or health reasons
 - 2/3 of all US soldiers were draftees



War in the Pacific

- Gen. Douglas MacArthur led US war efforts in Pacific
- Dec. 8, 1941: Japanese assault on Clark AFB in Philippines
- Also attacked Burma, Borneo, East Indies, Wake Island, and Hong Kong
- Feb. 1942: Battle of the Java Sea: Japanese crushed Australian, British, Dutch, and US warships
 - Allied troops forced to withdraw; unprepared for war
 - 70,000 survivors were captured; Japanese marched them to a prison camp
 - 10,000 died on way to the camp; brutal treatment on march (**Bataan Death March**)



WORLD WAR II IN THE PACIFIC, 1941–1945



Halting the Japanese Advance

- Real threat of Japanese invasions of Australia & west coast of US
- May 1942: Battle of the Coral Sea
 - As Japanese were advancing towards Australia a UK/US force intercepted them; destroyed Japanese carrier; halted advance on Australia
- June 1942: Battle of Midway
 - Japan launched major attack on US; goal was destroy US Pacific fleet
 - Attacked Aleutian Islands in Alaska and Midway Islands north of Hawaii
 - US broke Japanese code; ready for attack
 - Crucial US victory
- August 1942: Guadalcanal
 - 1st major US offensive; attempt to take a Japanese island
 - Marines attacked Guadalcanal in Solomon Islands
 - 6 month long battle; thousands died
 - Eventually US takes over island



Early Fighting in Europe and the Mediterranean

- By Pearl Harbor, Axis Powers controlled most of European map and patrolled Atlantic ocean w/ great success
- Italian/German forces invaded North Africa
 - Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps
 - Pushed all way to Egypt
 - Wanted Suez Canal and Middle East oil
- Rommel suffered from shortage of supplies and men
- 1942: British pushed Afrika Korps west out of Egypt
- Stalingrad, Russia
 - June 1941: Germans invaded Russia
 - Winter 1941: Advancing on Moscow
 - Seige of Leningrad: months of shellfire and starvation for citizens
 - Fall 1942: Stalingrad seige; Russians fought hard
 - Winter set in; Germans low on supplies
 - January 1943: Germans surrendered
 - Lost 200,000 men



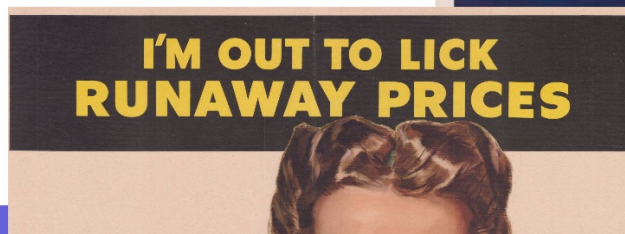
33

Section 2: The Home Front


Question 2: Why was it important to sell the war to Americans at home?

Promoting the War

- War was popular w/ US citizens
- Window banners became popular (blue star=loved one serving & gold star=death in family)
- US gov't worked to improve US morale; increase patriotic feelings
- Major push by gov't, movie industry, radio, and celebrities to "sell the war"
- Encourage Americans to buy war bonds to help pay for war
- **Office of War Information:** gov't agency that controlled what news we heard about the war



Life During Wartime

- Return to "victory gardens"
- People cut back on consumption of luxuries and necessities
- West coast cities practiced "blackouts" in case of attack from Japan
- Air-raid drills across country became common
- Pop culture was heavily impacted by the war 

Rosie the Riveter

- Women were encouraged to reenter the work force
- Rosie became the symbol for patriotic female workers
- 1940-1944: 6 million extra women joined work force
- Increased presence led to sense of pride and self-worth for many women
- Women still paid less than men
- Older women and African American women often discriminated against
- Helped lead to the women's liberation movement



Discrimination During the War

- To increase cooperation in war efforts, US gov't tried to squash racial discrimination
- Increased # of black soldiers (1 million)
- Units were **segregated** and kept out of battle; given low-level work
- Many factories would only hire blacks to do low-level work (janitors)
- **Hate strikes**: white workers sometimes led strikes meant to keep black workers out of factory
- 1941: FDR ordered end to all discrimination in factories
- Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC): investigate factories that discriminated
- **June 1943: Zoot-suit riots**: US sailors in LA; roamed cities attacking Mexican-American youth wearing zoot suits; LA police responded by arresting Mexican Americans



Japanese American Relocation

- **Internment Camps:** forced relocation centers for Japanese Americans living on west coast
- Strong anti-Japanese anger in west
- Feb. 1942: Japanese Americans ordered to camps in California, Arizona, Utah, Wyoming, etc.
- Hawaii was placed under **martial law**
- Homes and land were often confiscated by gov't
- Camps stayed open until end of war



27-3: Victory in Europe

Allied Attacks in the Mediterranean

- Late 1942: US supplies & troops start pushing Allies over top
- Allies wanted 2nd front in Europe to ease pressure on USSR against Germany
- Nov. 1942: **Operation Torch**: invaded French territory in N. Africa; wished to cut off Italian soldiers in Africa from supply lines
- Led by Dwight Eisenhower
- May 1943: 250,000 Axis troops surrendered
- Gen. George Patton led invasion of Italian island of Sicily; starting point for invasion of Italy
- Italian king picks new Prime Minister & orders Mussolini's arrest; he flees to Germany and Hitler helps him
- Allies invade Italy; slow mountain fighting
- June 1944: Allies march into Rome; ends war w/ Italy; Mussolini captured and executed by Italians



Sea and Air Assaults

- 1941 & 1942: U-Boat attacks hurting Allies badly
- 1943: **Battle of the Atlantic**: Allies refined their use of **sonar**; helped located U-Boats better; used quicker convoy ships; won battle by 1944
- Increased bombings of German factories
- Decreased German morale



Operation Overlord

- Invasion of France; led by Eisenhower
- Fed false clues to Nazis to mislead them about where invasion would happen; took Nazis by surprise
- **D-Day:** June 6, 1944: invasion of beaches at Normandy, France
- **Amphibious** attack
- 150,000 US, British, Canadian troops
- Airborne soldiers and bombers attacked German roads and bridges
- Germans heavily fortified beaches w/ concrete bunkers, tanks, and mines; (BEACHES WERE LIKE FORTRESSES)
- Aug. 1944: liberated Paris; USSR pushing back in the east against Nazis



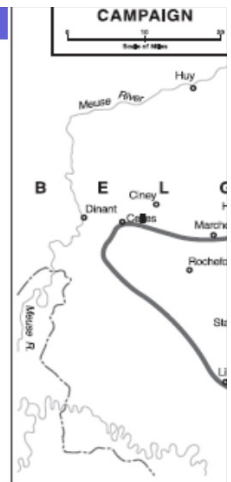
Holocaust

- **Genocide:** systematic killing of a group of people
- "Final Solution of the Jewish question."
- Dozens of death camps; worst and most were in Poland (Auschwitz)
- 6 million killed
- Jews, Gypsies, political prisoners, insane, sick
- Shipped in by railroad car
- Often worked to death, shot, tortured, gassed
- Bodies were dumped or cremated
- As Allies liberated Nazi areas, camps were discovered and survivors freed; investigations of Nazi leaders began



Defeating Germany

- Germany in bad shape after **Overlord** invasion
- Sept. 1944: after Allies crossed into Germany, Hitler launched one final counterattack as last ditch effort to win war
- **Battle of the Bulge**: 200,000 Germans attacked 80,000 Allied troops; hope was to break Allied lines
 - Lines bent but did not break; Allies pushed Germans back
- **Yalta Conference**: meetings between FDR, Churchill, and Stalin; how would the Allies punish and deal w/ Germany & Japan after war
- Race to Berlin: who would get to Berlin 1st? US or USSR...mad dash
- Allies firebombed German cities to break their will
- Bombing of Dresden: killed 30,000-40,000 people (CULTURAL CITY...not a military target)
- April 30, 1945: Hitler commits suicide in bunker under Berlin
- May 7, 1945: V-E Day: Germany surrenders




Pacific Offensives

- Goal of US: get within striking distance of Japan
- **Island-Hopping**: navy strategy to invade and conquer only key islands in Pacific; cut off Japanese soldiers from supplies
- Amphibious invasions; each island required hundreds or thousands of deaths to take; Japanese defended fiercely
- US gradually worked north towards Japan
- July 1944: Battle of Leyte Gulf; largest battle in the Pacific Ocean; Japanese disaster; lost 4 carriers; Japanese navy was crippled
- Feb. 1945: Allies spread out across Philippines and Pacific islands




Victory in the Pacific

- New islands gave US strategic bases for attacks on Japanese
- US bombed major Japanese cities to break will of people; military would not back down
- Feb. 1945: Battle of Iwo Jima; 6 week battle; 20,000 Japanese deaths; volcanic island w/ no cover; 750 miles from Tokyo
- April 1945: Battle of Okinawa; 350 miles from Tokyo; **kamikaze** attacks; 49,000 US deaths and 100,000 Japanese deaths 
- April 12, 1945: FDR dies of stroke; Harry Truman becomes POTUS
- Truman must decide how to end the war...invade Japan or use a new weapon



Atomic Bomb


- **Manhattan Project:** secret US plan to develop atomic bomb
- Dozens of US and European scientists (Albert Einstein) worked on designs
- Tested in New Mexico
- Truman demanded on last time in July for Japanese surrender; they refused
- August 6, 1945: Enola Gay drops bomb on Hiroshima
- August 8, 1945: USSR declares war on Japan and invades Manchuria
- August 9, 1945: bombing on Nagasaki 
- Estimated 200,000 deaths from blasts; unknown deaths for years to come
- Sept. 2, 1945: formal surrender on *USS Missouri* in Tokyo Bay



Costs of the War

- More deaths and property loss than any war in human history
- Hundreds of cities lay in ruins
- Millions lived w/o basic human necessities (water, food, electricity)
- 30 million civilian deaths
- USSR lost 20 million
- China lost 10 million
- Germany lost 6 million
- Japan lost 2 million
- UK, US, France, Italy lost hundreds of thousands each

What comes next?

- Nuremberg Trials and Tokyo Trials: execution of war criminals
- Cold War w/ USSR from 1945-1989
 - Korean War
 - Cuban Missile Crisis
 - Space Race
 - Arms Race...nuclear proliferation 
 - Vietnam War

