

# The Rise of Dictators

## READING FOCUS

- How did Stalin change the government and the economy of the Soviet Union?
- What were the origins and goals of Italy's fascist government?
- How did Hitler rise to power in Germany and Europe in the 1930s?
- What were the causes and results of the Spanish Civil War?

## MAIN IDEA

Dictators in the Soviet Union, Italy, Germany, and Spain formed brutal, repressive governments in the 1920s and 1930s. They were motivated by their political beliefs and a desire for power.

## KEY TERMS

totalitarian  
fascism  
purge  
Nazism  
Axis Powers  
appeasement

## TAKING NOTES

As you read, complete this chart listing the actions of dictators in the Soviet Union, Italy, and Germany in the 1930s.

Country	Actions Taken
Soviet Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combined farms into collectives</li> <li>• Sent millions to labor camps in Siberia</li> </ul>
Germany	
Italy	



Adolf Hitler presided over massive party rallies, including this one at Nuremberg.

**Setting the Scene** In September 1936, German dictator Adolf Hitler called hundreds of thousands of his followers to a week-long rally in the German city of Nuremberg. Included with political meetings and parades was a nighttime ceremony: the Oath under the Cathedral of Light. A Nazi Party booklet described the beginning of the ceremony.

*“180,000 people look to the heavens. 150 blue spotlights surge upward hundreds of meters, forming overhead the most powerful cathedral that mortals have ever seen.*

*There, at the entrance, we see [Hitler]. He too stands for several moments looking upward, then turns and walks, followed by his aides, past the long, long columns, 20 deep, of the fighters for his idea. An ocean of Heil-shouts and jubilation surrounds him.”*

—The Party Rally of Honor

Amid waving red banners and circling searchlights, Hitler led the audience of 180,000 in a “holy oath” to Germany.

Grand spectacles like the Nuremberg Party Rally were essential to Hitler's **totalitarian** rule. A totalitarian government exerts total control over a nation. It dominates every aspect of life, using terror to suppress individual rights and silence all forms of opposition. The pride and unity of the Nuremberg rally hid the fact that people who disagreed with Hitler were silenced, beaten, or killed. Hitler's power rested on the destruction of the individual.

Hitler and Italy's Benito Mussolini governed by a philosophy called **fascism**. Fascism emphasizes the importance of the nation or an ethnic group and the supreme authority of the leader. In the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin based his totalitarian government on a vicious form of communism. Like fascism, communism relies upon a strong, dictatorial government that does not respect individual rights and freedoms. Historically, however, Communists and Fascists have been fierce enemies.

## Stalin's Soviet Union

While Lenin led the Soviet Union, the worldwide Communist revolution he sought never materialized. Even in his own country, economic failure threatened Communist control of the government. Lenin eased up on the drive to convert all property to public ownership. His New Economic Policy (NEP) allowed some private business to continue. Stalin took over after Lenin's death in 1924. Stalin decided to abandon the NEP and take “one great leap forward” to communism. He launched the first of a series of five-year plans to modernize agriculture and build new industries from the ground up.

**Stalin's Economic Plans** To modernize agriculture, Stalin encouraged Soviet farmers to combine their small family farms into huge collective farms owned and run by the state. Facing widespread resistance, Stalin began forcing peasants off their land in the late 1920s.

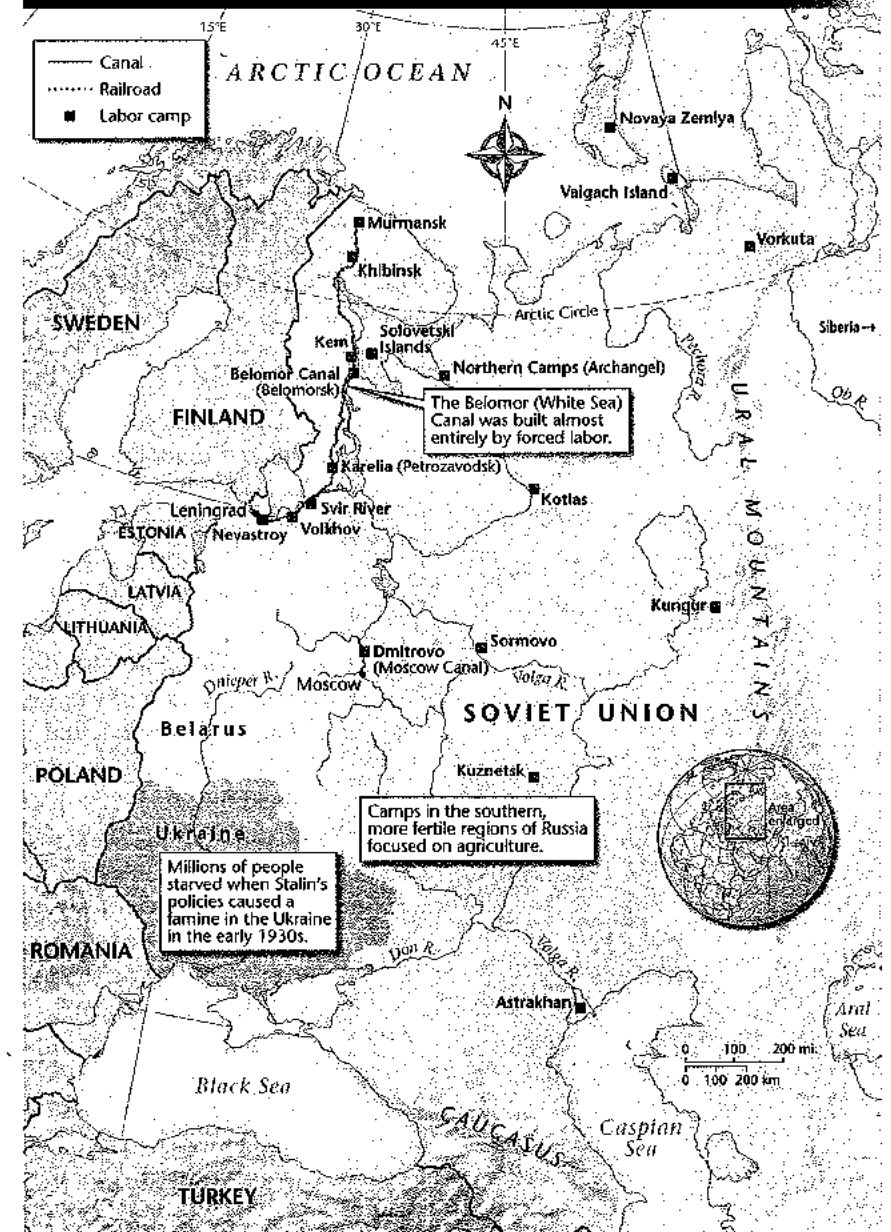
The state takeover of farming was completed within a few years, but with terrible consequences. In the Ukraine and other agricultural regions, Stalin punished resistant farmers by confiscating much or all of the food they produced. Millions of people died from starvation, and millions more fled to the cities. Stalin also sent approximately 5 million peasants to labor camps in Siberia and northern Russia.

In addition to the human cost, the collectivization campaign caused agricultural production to fall dramatically. Food shortages forced Stalin to introduce rationing throughout the country.

Stalin pursued rapid industrialization with more success. He assigned millions of laborers from rural areas to build and run new industrial centers where iron, steel, oil, and coal were produced. Because Stalin poured money and labor into these basic industries rather than housing, clothing, and consumer goods, the Soviet people endured severe shortages of essential products, and their standard of living fell sharply. Still, by 1940 Stalin had achieved his goal of turning the Soviet Union into a modern industrial power.

**Stalin's Reign of Terror** During the economic upheaval, Stalin completed his political domination of the Soviet Union through a series of **purges**. In political terms, a purge is the process of removing enemies and undesirable

## Labor Camps in the Western Soviet Union, circa 1936



**MAP SKILLS** Stalin presided over a vast expansion of the Soviet Union's system of labor camps. **Place** What hardships did prisoners experience in the northernmost camps?

## READING CHECK

How did Stalin establish total control of the Soviet Union?

individuals from power. Stalin “purified” the Communist Party by getting rid of his opponents and anyone else he believed to be a threat to his power or to his ideas. The Great Purge began in 1934 with a series of “show trials,” in which the only possible verdict was “guilty.” Stalin’s reign of terror did not stop there, however. He and his followers purged local party offices, collective farms, the secret police, and the army of anyone whom he considered a threat.

By 1939, his agents had arrested more than 7 million people from all levels of society. A million were executed, and millions more ended up in forced labor camps. Nearly all of the people were innocent victims of Stalin’s paranoia. But the purges successfully eliminated all threats to Stalin’s power, real or imagined.

## Fascism in Italy

As in the Soviet Union, Italy’s totalitarian government arose from the failures of World War I. Benito Mussolini had fought and been wounded in the war. He believed strongly that the Versailles Treaty should have granted Italy more territory. A talented speaker, Mussolini began to attract followers, including other dissatisfied war veterans, opponents of the monarchy, Socialists, and anarchists. In 1919, Mussolini and his supporters formed the revolutionary Fascist Party.

Calling himself *Il Duce* (“the leader”), Mussolini organized Fascist groups throughout Italy. He relied on gangs of Fascist thugs, called Blackshirts because of the way they dressed, to terrorize and bring under control those who opposed him. By 1922, Mussolini had become such a powerful figure that when he threatened to march on Rome, the king panicked and appointed him prime minister.

Strikes and riots had plagued Italy since World War I. Mussolini and the Fascists vowed to end Italy’s economic problems. In the name of efficiency and order, they suspended elections, outlawed all other political parties, and established a dictatorship.

Italy’s ailing economy improved under *Il Duce*’s firm command. Other European nations noted his success with the Italian economy and applauded him as a miracle worker. They would soon choke on their words of praise, however, for Mussolini had dreams of forging a new Roman Empire. A Fascist slogan summed up Mussolini’s expansionist goals: “The Country Is Nothing Without Conquest.”

In October 1935, Mussolini put those words into practice by invading the independent African kingdom of Ethiopia. The

Ethiopians resisted fiercely, but the large Italian army, using warplanes and poison gas, overpowered the Ethiopian forces. By May 1936, Ethiopia’s emperor had fled to England and the capital, Addis Ababa, was in Italian hands.

## Hitler’s Rise to Power

While Mussolini was gaining control in Italy, a discontented Austrian painter was rising to prominence in Germany. Like Mussolini, Adolf Hitler had been wounded while serving in World War I. He, too, felt enraged by the terms of the peace settlement, which stripped Germany of land and colonies and imposed a huge burden of debt to pay for the damage done to France, Belgium, and Britain. He especially hated the war-guilt clause—the section of the Versailles Treaty that forced Germany to accept the blame for starting the war.



**VIEWING HISTORY** This poster announced, “Italy finally has its empire,” after the conquest of Ethiopia. The letters A.O. are the Italian abbreviation for East Africa—the site of Mussolini’s empire. **Drawing Inferences** How does this poster glorify Mussolini?

**The Nazi Party** In 1919, Hitler joined a small political group that became the National Socialist German Workers’ Party, or Nazi Party. The philosophy and policies of this party came to be called **Nazism**. Nazism was a form of fascism shaped by Hitler’s fanatical ideas about German nationalism and racial superiority.

Hitler’s powerful public-speaking abilities quickly made him a leader of his party. The Nazis held mass meetings at which Hitler spoke passionately against Germany’s national humiliation. One such meeting in 1921 drew more than 8,000 people. Nazi posters helped to boost attendance:

“White collar and manual workers of our people, you alone have to suffer the consequences of this unheard-of treaty. Come and protest against Germany being burdened with the war guilt. Protest against the peace treaty of Versailles which has been forced upon us. . . .”

—Nazi poster, Munich, Germany, March 1921

In November 1923, with some 3,000 followers, Hitler tried to overthrow the German government. Authorities easily crushed the uprising. Although a German court sentenced Hitler to five years in prison, he spent only nine months in confinement.

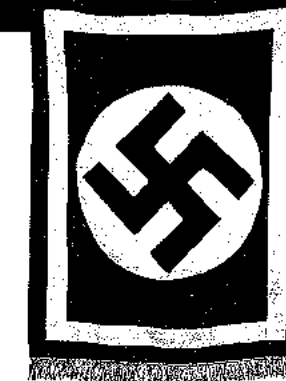
While in prison, Hitler began writing an autobiography, *Mein Kampf* (“My Struggle”). In it Hitler outlined the Nazi philosophy, his views of Germany’s problems, and his plans for the nation. According to *Mein Kampf*, Germany had been weakened by certain groups that lived within its borders. In particular, Hitler bitterly criticized the nation’s Jewish population, which he blamed irrationally for Germany’s defeat in World War I.

In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler proposed, in defiance of the Versailles Treaty, strengthening Germany’s military and expanding its borders to include Germans living in other countries. He also called for purifying the so-called “Aryan race” (blond, blue-eyed Germans) by removing from Germany those groups he considered undesirable. In time, removal came to mean the mass murder of millions of Jews and other peoples.

After Germany’s economy recovered from an inflationary crisis in the mid-1920s, the Great Depression hit in the early 1930s. The German people, facing more poverty, looked to their political leaders for help. In response, Hitler and the Nazis promised to stabilize the country, rebuild the economy, and restore the empire that had been lost.

**Hitler Becomes Chancellor** Hitler’s promises gradually won him a large following. In the 1932 elections, the Nazi Party became the largest group in the *Reichstag* (the lower house of the German parliament). Also in 1932, Hitler placed second to Paul von Hindenburg, a general in World War I, in the presidential election. In January 1933, the elderly President Hindenburg made Hitler chancellor, or head of the German government.

Hitler soon moved to suspend freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Thousands of Nazi thugs, called storm troopers or Brown-shirts, waged a violent campaign that silenced those opposed to Hitler’s policies. In the March elections, the Nazis gained enough seats to

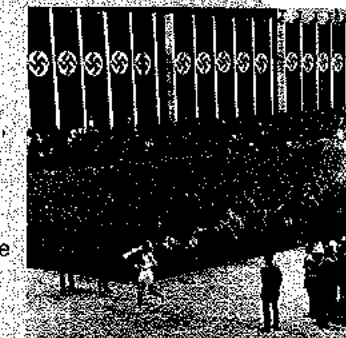


Adolf Hitler spoke with a charismatic passion that helped him expand the reach of the Nazi Party. The party’s symbol, the swastika, is shown here.

## Focus on CULTURE

**The Berlin Olympics** Hitler used the 1936 Olympic Games, hosted by Berlin, to spotlight his theory of the racial superiority of “Aryan” Germans. To link the Nazi regime with the heritage of ancient Greece, Hitler introduced the custom of carrying a torch from the birthplace of the Olympics to the modern games. Hitler

hoped that German athletes would sweep the competition and awe the world. Instead, an African American runner, Jesse Owens, won four gold medals, as well as the support of the crowd.







**VIEWING HISTORY** Germany's democratically elected assembly, the *Reichstag*, gave Hitler dictatorial powers in March 1933. **Drawing Conclusions** What does this photograph indicate about the *Reichstag*'s independence from Hitler?

dominate the *Reichstag*. Less than three weeks later, the *Reichstag* building burned down in a suspicious fire. Hitler blamed the Communists and used the disaster to convince the parliament to pass an Enabling Bill which gave him dictatorial powers. When Hindenburg died in August 1934, Hitler became both chancellor and president. He gave himself the title *Der Führer* ("the leader").

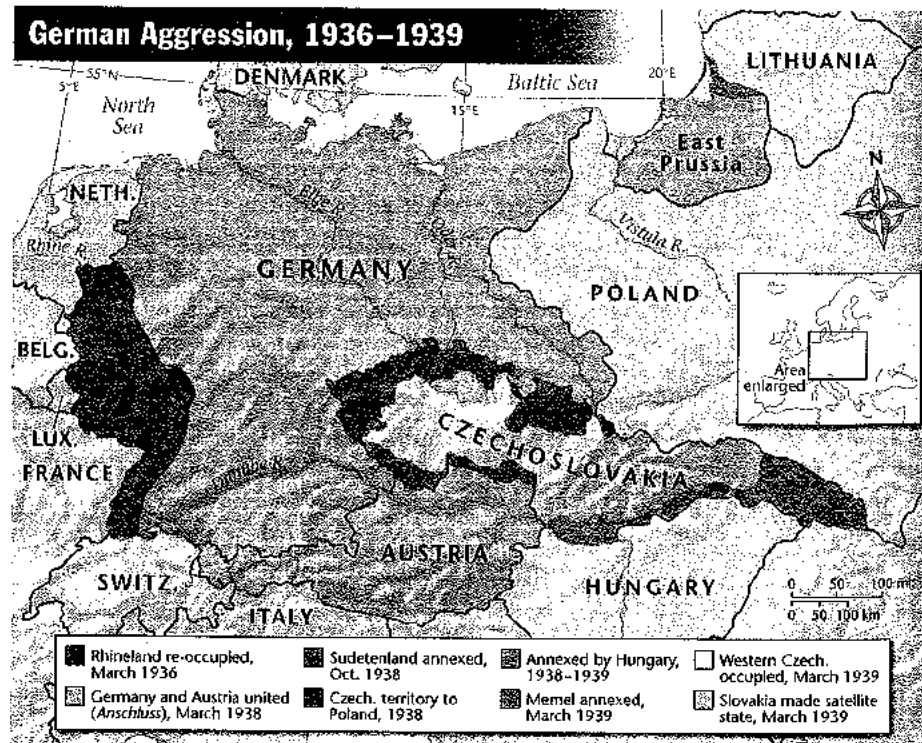
**Germany Rearms** Determined to put Germans to work while restoring Germany's military might, the Nazis secretly began spending money on rearming and expanding the armed forces in violation of the Versailles Treaty. They also hired unemployed workers to build

massive public buildings and a network of highways known as the *autobahn*. Unemployment fell to near zero, industry prospered, and, by 1936, the Depression had ended in Germany. In addition, the Nazis were now in a position to put Hitler's expansion plans into action.

Like Mussolini, Hitler saw expansion as a way to bolster national pride. He also longed to see Germany return to a dominant position in the world. To do this, he believed, Germans needed more territory, or what he called *lebensraum* ("living space"), to the east. Hitler's main goal, therefore, became the conquest of eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. First, he needed to assert German military power within Germany's own borders.

On March 7, 1936, German troops entered the Rhineland, a region in western Germany. The Versailles Treaty had expressly banned German military forces from this region, which Germany had used as a base for the 1914 attack on France and Belgium. Since the Allies had taken no action in 1935 when Hitler revealed Germany's illegal rearmament, he had reason to believe that the Allies would not enforce the treaty.

**MAP SKILLS** Germany annexed Austria and dismembered Czechoslovakia without triggering a war. **Place** What advantage did Germany gain by stationing troops in the Rhineland?



Still, Hitler took an enormous gamble in remilitarizing the Rhineland. The German army was not ready for war. However, neither Britain nor France chose to react to this blatant violation of the Versailles Treaty. Many people believed that the treaty had been too harsh on Germany. The British and French had not forgotten the awful costs of World War I, and their leaders were reluctant to challenge Hitler.

Also in 1936, Hitler signed an alliance with the Italian dictator, Mussolini. Their agreement created what Mussolini called an "axis" between Rome and Berlin, the capitals of the two nations. Germany and Italy, joined later by Japan, became known as the **Axis Powers**.

**Germany Expands** Two years later, the German Army was much stronger. Hitler began to press his homeland of Austria for *Anschluss*, or political union with Germany. In March 1938, after Austria's chancellor refused to surrender his country to Germany, Hitler ordered German troops into the country. Most Austrians warmly welcomed the Nazis, who were often presented with flowers by cheering crowds. When Britain and France protested the German actions, Hitler replied that the affair concerned only the German people.

Several months later, Hitler demanded the Sudetenland, an industrial region of western Czechoslovakia with a heavily German population and many fortifications crucial to Czechoslovakia's defense. Neville Chamberlain, the British prime minister, met with Hitler twice to try to resolve the issue. Chamberlain pursued a policy of **appeasement**, or giving in to a competitor's demands in order to keep the peace. Hitler kept increasing his demands, so Chamberlain and the French president, Édouard Daladier, met with Hitler and Mussolini in Munich, Germany, in September 1938.

Because Britain and France were unprepared for a conflict, they agreed to sacrifice the Sudetenland, in the hopes that Hitler's appetite for territory would be satisfied. Although France was bound by treaty to defend Czechoslovakia, Daladier and Chamberlain agreed to let Hitler annex the Sudetenland on his own terms. No one consulted Czechoslovakia's leaders. British crowds cheered Chamberlain upon his return home for achieving what he called "peace in our time."

### The Spanish Civil War

While Britain and France struggled to maintain peace with Germany, civil war was raging in Spain. Spain's democratic government held what would be the country's last free elections under the old republic in February 1936.

Numerous political parties vied for power, including small Fascist and Communist organizations. In this atmosphere, labor strikes, assassinations, and street battles became commonplace.

A group backed by liberal parties won, and five months later the military began a rebellion against the newly elected government, whose supporters were called the Republicans. General Francisco Franco led the rebels, who became known as the Nationalists. By October, the Nationalists had formed their own government, a military dictatorship under the rule of Franco.

The uprising turned into a fierce civil war between the Nationalists and the Republicans. Both sides turned to foreign powers for help. Germany and Italy provided planes, tanks, and soldiers to the Nationalists. Their aid attracted international attention in 1937 when Hitler's Condor Legion



**VIEWING HISTORY** Upon his return to London from Munich in September 1938, Neville Chamberlain showed crowds the agreement that promised "peace in our time." **Drawing Conclusions** Why did Chamberlain sign the Munich Agreement?

German bombers left the Spanish city of Guernica in ruins.





**VIEWING FINE ART** Spanish artist Pablo Picasso painted *Guernica* to convey the horrors of the Spanish Civil War to a world audience. **Making Comparisons** Which do you think illustrates the raid more effectively, *Guernica* or the photograph on the previous page? Explain.

bombed the northern Spanish town of Guernica into ruins. Attacking on a market day, German pilots incinerated the town center and fired on civilians from the air. One person, watching the attack from nearby hills, described it as “a preview of the end of the world.” In fact, the attack was a preview of the destruction that would strike hundreds of cities in Britain, Germany, Poland, and other countries a few years later.

The Soviet Union sent arms and supplies to the Republicans. Although Britain, France, and the United States did not intervene, some 40,000 foreigners volunteered to fight for the Republicans as part of the International Brigades. Mostly young and many of them Communist, the soldiers of the International Brigades came from about 50 countries, including the United States.

In March 1939, the Nationalist army finally took the Spanish capital of Madrid and ended the civil war. Franco kept firm control of the government after the war and ruled Spain until his death in 1975.

## Section 1

## Assessment

### READING COMPREHENSION

- (a) How did Stalin change the Soviet economy? (b) How did he change the lives of the Soviet people?
- Why did many Germans support Hitler and **Nazism** in the early 1930s?
- Why did Britain and France pursue a policy of **appeasement** with Hitler?
- How did the Spanish Civil War highlight divisions in Europe?

### CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING

- Making Comparisons** (a) How did leaders of totalitarian states feel about using force against people and nations they considered their enemies? (b) How did that compare with how leaders of democratic countries such as Britain and France felt about using force against other nations?
- Creating a Time Line** Create a time line of important events in Germany in the 1930s.



### Take It to the NET

**Activity: Writing an Editorial**  
Take notes on the reaction to German aggression in Europe, particularly following the Munich Conference. Write an editorial for an American newspaper reacting to the events you've studied. Use the links provided in the *America: Pathways to the Present* area of the following Web site for help in completing this activity.  
[www.phschool.com](http://www.phschool.com)

## Section

# 2

## Europe Goes to War

### READING FOCUS

- How did the German invasion of Poland lead to war with Britain and France?
- What wartime victories and setbacks did Germany experience in western Europe?
- Why was the Battle of Britain an important victory for Britain?

### KEY TERMS

*blitzkrieg*  
collaboration  
Resistance  
Allies

### TAKING NOTES

As you read, prepare an outline of this section. Use Roman numerals to indicate the major headings of the section, capital letters for the subheadings, and numbers for the supporting details.

#### I. Invasion of Poland

- Hitler invades Czechoslovakia.
- Stalin and Hitler agree to divide Eastern Europe between them.
- German *blitzkrieg* attack overwhelms Poland in three weeks.

#### II. War in the West

**Setting the Scene** Neville Chamberlain's triumphant return from the Munich Conference in 1938 did not cheer everyone. Winston Churchill, a member of the British Parliament, believed that sacrificing part of Czechoslovakia to preserve peace was a fatal mistake. He made a dire prediction about this choice: “Britain and France had to choose between war and dishonor,” Churchill said. “They chose dishonor. They will have war.”

Churchill thought that Hitler had no intention of stopping his military machine and that Chamberlain's peace agreement would give Britain only a few more months of peace. He and other members of Parliament urged Chamberlain to reconsider Britain's policy toward Germany. Alfred Duff Cooper, the head of the British navy, chose to resign rather than accept that policy. In his resignation speech to Parliament, he insisted that Hitler had to be confronted with British might, not appeased:

“That is the deep difference between the Prime Minister and myself throughout these days. The Prime Minister has believed in addressing Herr Hitler through the language of sweet reasonableness. I have believed that he was more open to the language of the mailed [armored] fist.”

—Alfred Duff Cooper, First Lord of the Admiralty, 1938

Hitler had promised that the Sudetenland was all he wanted. But in March 1939, only six months after annexing the Sudetenland, Hitler occupied the western half of Czechoslovakia and divided the rest of the country among his allies. Most Czechs were hostile to Hitler and bitterly opposed to the German occupation. The following month, Italian forces invaded and occupied Albania, a nation on the Balkan Peninsula north of Greece. Although no shots had been fired, peace in Central Europe was rapidly breaking down.



Winston Churchill succeeded Neville Chamberlain as prime minister in May 1940.



## Invasion of Poland

The March invasion of Czechoslovakia ended Chamberlain's hope of working peacefully with Hitler. Britain and France abandoned their policy of appeasement and prepared for war. After Hitler took Czechoslovakia, British and French leaders warned him that any further German expansion would risk war. On March 31, 1939, they formally pledged their support to Poland, agreeing to come to its aid if Germany invaded. Hitler, however, did not believe their warning.

Hitler did have one major concern. As in 1914, Germany could ill afford to fight a war on two fronts at the same time. Hitler wanted to deal with Britain and France, his foes to the west, without having to fear an attack from the east.

**Hitler's Pact With Stalin** Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union had been sworn enemies, but Hitler and Stalin recognized that they had much to gain by working together. Stalin refused to believe that Hitler's long-term plans included conquering the Soviet Union. In August, he and Hitler signed a ten-year Nonaggression Pact, which eliminated the danger of a Soviet invasion from the east.

A secret document attached to the pact divided up the independent states of eastern Europe between Germany and the Soviet Union. One week later, on September 1, 1939, Hitler invaded Poland. On September 3, Britain and France declared war on Germany.

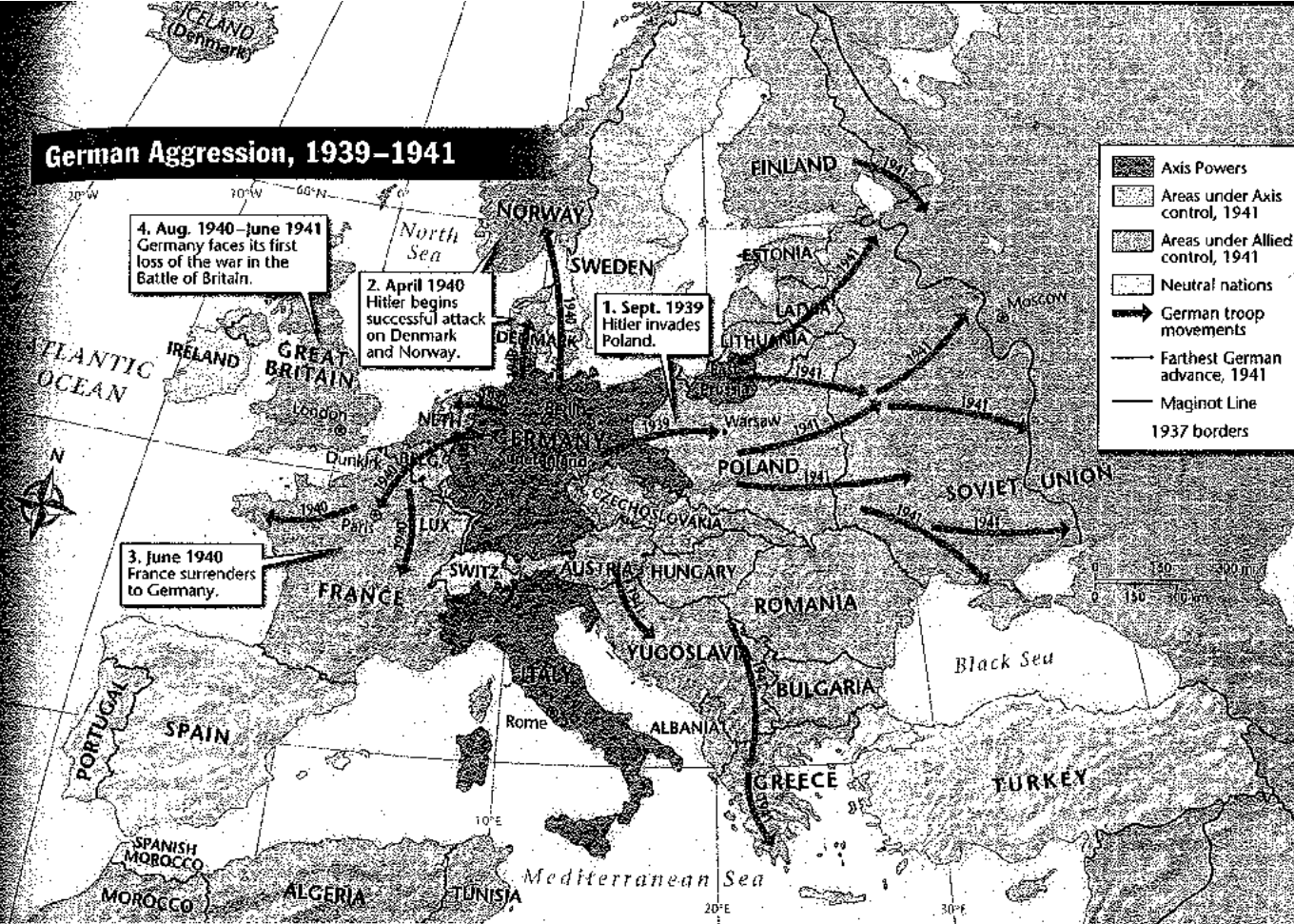
**Lightning War** Britain, France, and Poland together made an impressive alliance, at least on paper. They had more soldiers and more infantry divisions than Germany. Each German division, however, had superior firepower—more machine guns, artillery, and other weapons. Unlike Britain and France, Germany organized its tanks into separate panzer, or armored divisions.

In addition, the Germans practiced a new form of attack that they unveiled in the invasion of Poland. Called *blitzkrieg* ("lightning war"), this new military tactic included a fast, concentrated air and land attack that took the enemy's army by surprise. The German *stuka*, a divebombing warplane, began the *blitzkrieg* by shattering defenses and terrorizing civilians. Then the tanks and mobile artillery of the panzer divisions punched through enemy lines, encircling and capturing opposing troops. Finally, the infantry moved in to defeat the enemy and occupy the country.

Using the *blitzkrieg* tactic, German troops overran Poland in less than a month. They imposed German laws, and imprisoned and murdered Jewish citizens. This treatment of Jews, known as the Holocaust, is discussed in the next chapter. Britain and France watched helplessly, unable to aid Poland in time. Meanwhile, in mid-September, Soviet forces joined the German attack. Under the secret terms of his Nonaggression Pact with Hitler, Stalin seized eastern Poland for the Soviet Union.

## War in the West

## German Aggression, 1939–1941



conditioning. Underground rail lines connected its main sections. Thick concrete walls and extra-heavy artillery stood ready to fend off any invading army. The Maginot Line had two major problems, however. It protected only the part of the French border that faced Germany, leaving France open to an attack through Belgium. In addition, all of its heavy guns pointed east, toward Germany. If the Germans got around the line, those guns would be useless.

**Germany Attacks** On April 9, 1940, the phony war came to an end as Hitler began a successful attack on Denmark and Norway. Then, on May 10, German troops launched a *blitzkrieg* on the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg. Although British and French troops rushed to Belgium to defend their neighbor, they were too late. The German army overran Luxembourg in a day, the Netherlands in five days, and Belgium in less than three weeks. Meanwhile, in mid-May, German motorized divisions in Belgium invaded northern France, skirting the end of the Maginot Line. They raced from there all the way to the English Channel, splitting the main French armies to the south from the British and French troops in north-

**MAP SKILLS** Germany overran northern and western Europe in 1940, conquered Yugoslavia and Greece in the spring of 1941, and invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941. **Location** How does this map illustrate the dire situation of the Allies in 1941?

This 1940 British painting depicts the difficult circumstances surrounding the retreat from Dunkirk.



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## War in the West

After Poland fell, the war entered a quiet period. The British and French held back their troops, fearing tremendous losses. The American press dubbed this lack of combat the "phony war." The Germans labeled the lull in fighting the *sitzkrieg* ("sit-down war"). For the next several months, German troops sat and waited while French forces held their defenses.

The key to these defenses was the Maginot Line, a massive string of fortifications along France's border with Germany. A triumph of modern technology, the Maginot Line provided housing for troops, recreational areas, and even air



WONDER HOW LONG THE HONEYMOON WILL LAST?

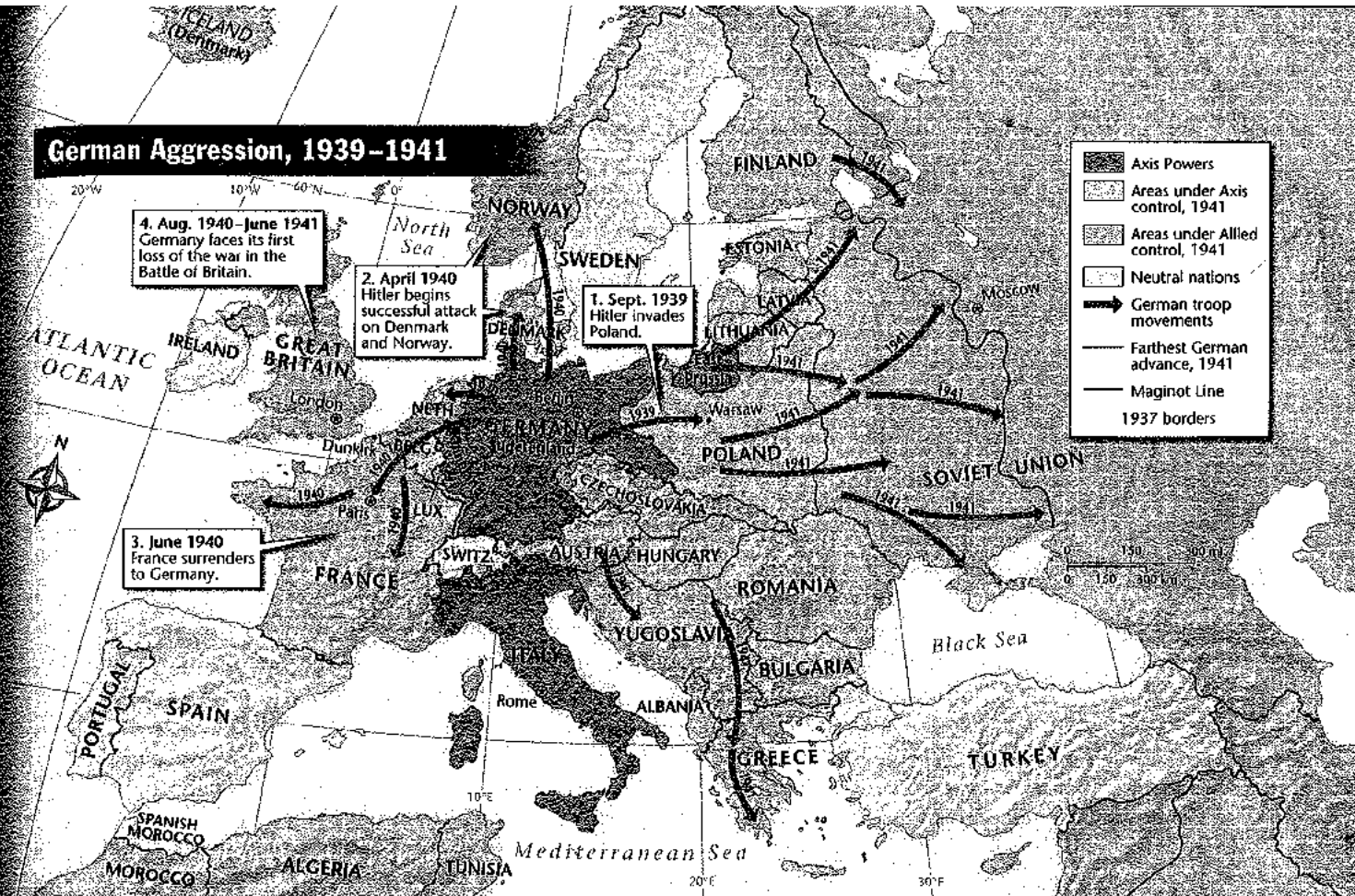
### INTERPRETING POLITICAL CARTOONS

The unlikely alliance between Nazi Germany and the Communist Soviet Union stunned western observers. **Drawing Inferences** What does the caption imply about the Nonaggression Pact?

### READING CHECK

How did Britain and France react to the fall of Poland?

## German Aggression, 1939–1941



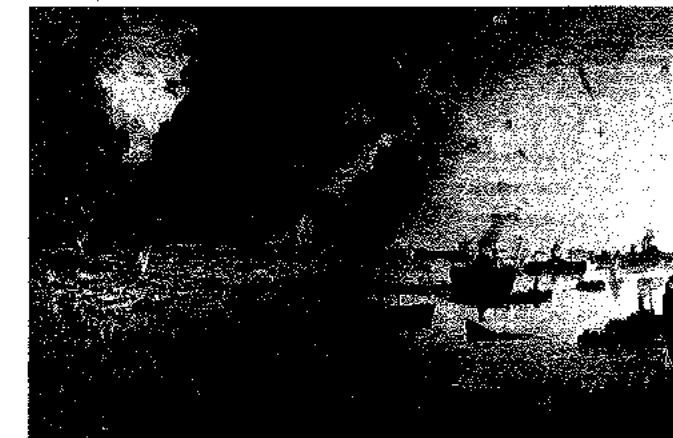
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**Dunkirk** The German drive west divided British and French troops into two pockets, one in the north and one in the south. In the face of Germany's advance, French and British forces in the north retreated to the coastal city of Dunkirk. There, over a nine-day period in late May and early June, one of the greatest rescues in the history of warfare took place. While some troops fought to slow the advancing Germans, others hastily

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This 1940 British painting depicts the difficult circumstances surrounding the retreat from Dunkirk.







Adolf Hitler posed before the Eiffel Tower during a victory tour of German-occupied Paris.

assembled a makeshift fleet consisting mainly of tugboats, yachts, and other small private craft. Braving merciless attacks by the *Luftwaffe* (the German air force), about 900 vessels carried some 340,000 soldiers across the English Channel to Great Britain. Although Dunkirk marked a retreat for the British, the remarkable boatlift saved British and some French forces from almost certain capture by the Germans.

**The Fall of France** Hitler's armies turned and swept south through France. On June 10, the French government abandoned Paris. With France's defeat only a matter of time, Italy declared war on France and Britain on the same day. On June 14, German troops entered Paris, and on June 22 France and its more than 1.5 million soldiers officially surrendered. Adolf Hitler himself traveled to France to join the armistice negotiations and to make a brief victory tour of Paris. The British and French were stunned by the speed of Germany's conquest of France.

According to the surrender terms, Germany occupied the northern three fifths of France and the entire Atlantic Coast southward to Spain. The French government supervised the unoccupied south from the vacation resort of Vichy, and this zone became known as Vichy France. Under General Henri-Philippe Pétain, Vichy France adopted a policy of **collaboration**, or close cooperation, with Germany.

Free France, a government-in-exile in London, continued the struggle against the German invaders from bases in Britain and in France's colonies in Africa. Led by General Charles de Gaulle, the Free French also backed the underground **Resistance** movement in France. The Resistance consisted of groups of French citizens whose activities ranged from distributing anti-German leaflets to sabotaging German operations in France.

Until the summer of 1940, Hitler had experienced nothing but success. German armies had conquered most of Western Europe. He seemed to be on the verge of destroying the **Allies**, the group of countries who opposed the Axis Powers. Eventually, the United States and the Soviet Union would join the Allies, but at that time Great Britain stood alone.

## The Battle of Britain

As France fell, Hitler amassed troops on the French coast. His next invasion target, Great Britain, lay just 20 miles away, across the English Channel. Winston Churchill, now Britain's prime minister, pledged that the British would defend their island at all costs:

*"We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender."*

—Winston Churchill

**Relentless Attack** Britain's large and well-equipped navy stood between Hitler and England. To neutralize the British navy, Germany would have to control the air. Hitler turned to the *Luftwaffe* to destroy Britain's air defenses. In August 1940, he launched the greatest air assault the world had yet seen. This intense attack, called the Battle of Britain, would continue well into September. Day after day, as many as 1,000 planes rained bombs on Britain.

The 1923 Hague Draft Rules of Air Warfare prohibited attacks on civilians. At first, the Germans only targeted British ports, airfields, and radar installations. Later they attacked aircraft factories and oil storage tanks. In late August, a

group of German bombers strayed off course and dropped their bombs on London. Two nights later, perhaps in retaliation, British planes bombed Berlin. A new, more deadly type of air war was about to begin.

In early September, Hitler ordered massive bombing raids on London and other cities to try to break the British people's will to resist. These attacks included firebombs, which carried a mix of chemicals that burned at a temperature high enough to set buildings on fire. The bombing of London, called the Blitz, would continue off and on until May 1941. The bombing of population centers, by both sides, would continue throughout the war.

**Courageous Defense** Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF), although greatly outnumbered, stoutly defended its homeland. In a typical raid, slow-moving German bombers, accompanied by speedy fighter planes, would cross the English Channel at a height of about 15,000 feet. RAF pilots in British Spitfires and Hurricanes dodged the German fighter planes while trying to shoot down the bombers. They inflicted heavy damage on the attackers, sometimes flying six or seven missions a day. Hundreds of RAF pilots died defending Britain, but German losses were higher. "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few," said Churchill, praising the courageous resistance of the RAF.

The British people showed equal bravery. In December 1940, German bombing of London started some 1,500 fires, setting the center of the historic city ablaze. Despite massive losses, the British people kept their will to fight. By the end of 1941, when the German air raids ended, some 20,000 Londoners had been killed and more than 70,000 injured.

Besides courageous pilots and citizens, Britain had another advantage. By February 1940, scientists in Britain had cracked the code that Germany used for top-secret communications. By deciphering coded messages, the British military could get a general idea of Hitler's battle plans. They knew, for example, that Hitler would not invade Britain until the *Luftwaffe* established air superiority—which it never did.

## Focus on DAILY LIFE

**London in the Blitz** Some Londoners sought nighttime shelter from the Blitz in the stations of London's Underground subway system. The authorities tried to discourage the practice for safety reasons, but they were overwhelmed by the number of people who hurried underground in advance of air raids. Eventually, London Transport allowed civilians to spend the night on the tracks and platforms and even provided special trains to supply them with coffee and snacks.



**VIEWING HISTORY** London's St. Paul's Cathedral survived the Battle of Britain while surrounding buildings were reduced to rubble. The cathedral became a powerful symbol of Britain's spirit of defiance. **Drawing Conclusions** How did this spirit help defeat the *Luftwaffe*?



## Section

## Assessment

### READING COMPREHENSION

1. How did relations between Britain and Germany change between the Munich Conference and the invasion of Poland?
2. What were three reasons why Germany was able to defeat Poland in less than a month?
3. What was the French policy of **collaboration** with Germany?
4. Why were aircraft crucial to Germany's planned invasion of Britain?

### CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING

5. **Identifying Alternatives** (a) Why did Britain and France choose not to attack Germany in 1939 and early 1940? (b) What were the possible disadvantages of attacking Germany?
6. **Demonstrating Reasoned Judgment** Do you think bombing cities is a fair act of war? Explain your answer.
7. **Creating a Time Line** Construct a time line of important events in Europe in 1939 and 1940.



### Take It to the NET

**Virtual Field Trip** The Maginot Line was designed to shield France from German aggression following World War I. Take a virtual tour of these historic fortifications and write a summary of what you learn on the journey. Use the links provided in the *America: Pathways to the Present* area of the following Web site for help in completing this activity.  
[www.phschool.com](http://www.phschool.com)



# Examining Photographs

Photographs are a form of visual evidence that can provide valuable information about an event or a historical period. Photographers, however, like other observers of events, have their own points of view. By their choice of subject, lighting, and camera angle, photographers can influence what is seen and how it is perceived. They may also distort the appearance of objects in their photographs to create an illusion or to convey a particular mood. For these reasons, you should always analyze photographs carefully.

### LEARN THE SKILL

Use the following steps to examine photographs:

1. **Study the photograph to identify the subject.** Look at the photograph as a whole; then study the details. If a title and a caption are provided, refer to them for more information.
2. **Analyze the reliability of the photograph as a source of information.** Note how the photograph conveys information and how it creates a mood or an emotion. Think about other ways the event or scene might have been photographed.
3. **Study the photograph to learn more about the historical period.** Think about how the photograph fits with what you already know. Consider what the photograph adds to your understanding of the historical period.

### PRACTICE THE SKILL

Answer the following questions:

1. (a) What do you see in the picture? (b) How does the caption help you understand the photograph? (c) What visual details of the men in the water help you understand what happened at Dunkirk?
2. (a) Do you think the photograph depicts the situation accurately? Explain. (b) What mood or emotion do you think the photographer wanted viewers to feel? (c) What aspects of the photograph help to create this feeling? (d) What choices might the photographer have made before taking this picture? (e) What other choices (of subject or camera angle, for example) might the photographer have made to give a different impression of Dunkirk? Explain.
3. (a) Briefly summarize what you already know about the evacuation at Dunkirk. Does this photograph in any way contradict what you already know, or does it add to your understanding? Explain. (b) What can photographs like this contribute to your knowledge of an event that written sources cannot?

### APPLY THE SKILL

See the Chapter Review and Assessment for another opportunity to apply this skill.



▲ Soldiers of the British Expeditionary Force waded to the safety of one of 900 vessels that evacuated Allied troops trapped on the beaches of Dunkirk, France, May 1940.

# Japan Builds an Empire

### READING FOCUS

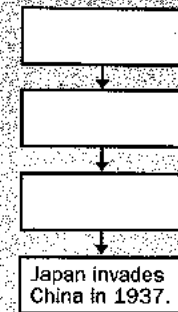
- What were the causes and effects of Japan's growing military power?
- Why was the Manchurian Incident a turning point for Japan's civilian government?
- What was the initial outcome of Japan's war against China?
- Why did Japan look beyond China for future expansion?

### KEY TERMS

- Manchurian Incident
- puppet state
- Burma Road
- Greater East Asia
- Co-Prosperity Sphere

### TAKING NOTES

Copy this flowchart. As you read this section, fill in the boxes with some of the major events that led to Japan's invasion of China in 1937.



### MAIN IDEA

The Japanese military expanded Japan's power into China and Southeast Asia and came to dominate Japan's government.

**Setting the Scene** Japan emerged from isolation in the mid-1800s. The United States forced Japan to open its markets to foreigners when Matthew Perry sailed into Tokyo Bay in 1853. That event pushed Japan to strengthen its military and modernize its economy in order to defend itself. Japan also developed a constitutional government, although the emperor remained a respected figure and the divine leader of the nation.

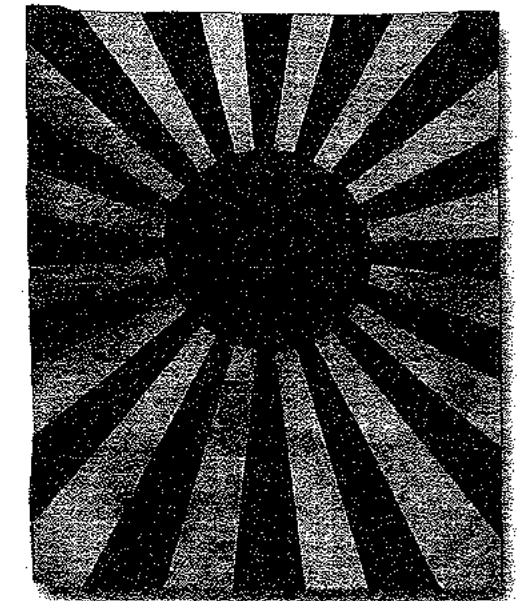
By engaging in wars against China (1894–1895) and Russia (1904–1905), Japan expanded its sphere of influence in East Asia. It took control of Korea and gained considerable influence over the northern Chinese province of Manchuria, where it stationed soldiers. By the eve of World War I, Japan had developed into the strongest nation in East Asia and one of the most powerful nations in the world.

### Growing Military Power

During World War I, Japan joined the Allies. Although Japan played just a minor military role, it conquered several German possessions in the Pacific and won access to markets abandoned by the Europeans. As a result, Japan's economy prospered.

After the war, Japan enacted political reforms that resulted in a two-party parliamentary system and a sharp increase in the number of people allowed to vote. Japan also slowed its territorial expansion. It helped found the League of Nations and signed international agreements designed to keep the peace. By signing the 1928 Kellogg-Briand Pact, Japan condemned war and pledged to solve all disagreements peacefully. Events would soon show how little influence such international peace agreements really had.

**Democracy in Crisis** In the early 1920s, a series of recessions rocked Japan's economy. As in Germany, conditions grew worse after 1930 because of the Great Depression. Japan's industries depended on selling their goods to foreign countries, but many of the nation's trading partners put high tariffs on Japanese goods to protect their own businesses. The resulting industrial decline led to



**VIEWING HISTORY** The rising sun was the symbol of Imperial Japan. **Synthesizing Information** Why was this an appropriate symbol for Japan in the early 1900s?





Japanese troops in Manchuria

massive layoffs, strikes, and widespread political discontent. Many Japanese blamed the new multiparty system of government. Politicians, they believed, had taken too long to deal with the mounting economic problems. While economic conditions were worsening, some politicians had enriched themselves by taking bribes from the huge family-owned companies that dominated the economy.

The Japanese military, too, expressed dissatisfaction with democracy. At the Washington Conference in 1922, the Japanese government had accepted limits on the size of its navy. Later it had cut the strength of the army and prevented the military from challenging the Chinese troops in Manchuria.

**Rise of Nationalism** Several radical nationalist groups formed in response to the government's perceived weaknesses. They demanded a return to traditional ways and an end to multiparty rule, powerful businesses, and other Western-style institutions. Radicals assassinated several business and political leaders. By committing terrorism, they hoped to force the military to take over the government. Some members of the military, especially younger officers, supported the radicals.

### The Manchurian Incident

Japan, located on a chain of volcanic islands, experienced a population explosion in the 1900s. By 1930, the population neared 65 million, and it was growing by about one million people per year. Japan lacked the land needed to feed its rising population and the raw materials and markets needed to power the Japanese economy. Many Japanese saw the acquisition of Manchuria as a solution to these problems, both for its coal and iron ore and for its immense areas of undeveloped land.

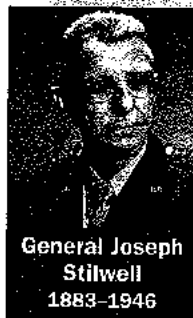
In September 1931, a Japanese army stationed in Manchuria took matters into its own hands. Claiming that Chinese soldiers had tried to blow up a railway line, they captured several cities in southern Manchuria. Chinese troops withdrew from the area. Japan's civilian government tried but failed to prevent the army from taking further action. By February 1932, the army had seized all of Manchuria. World leaders and most Japanese expressed shock at what came to be called the **Manchurian Incident**.

In response, Japan announced that Manchuria was now the independent state of Manchukuo, under Japanese protection. Japan installed a new head of state—P'u-I, China's last emperor from a Manchurian dynasty—with Japanese advisors to run the government. In fact, Manchukuo was a **puppet state**, or a supposedly independent country under the control of a powerful neighbor. Japan sent more than a million farmers, entrepreneurs, and soldiers with the goal of securing Manchuria as a Japanese colony.

The United States and Britain protested that Japan had broken the Kellogg-Briand Pact, but they did not act to halt Japan's aggression. The League of Nations ordered Japan to end its occupation of Manchuria. Japan refused and withdrew from the League instead.

The Manchurian Incident greatly increased the army's power over the government, but some radicals in the military wanted complete control. In 1932, naval officers helped assassinate the prime minister. Other military leaders did not support the assassins, but they used this opportunity to end the multiparty government, putting the parliamentary system itself in danger. In 1936, an uprising by junior military officers resulted in the murder of several high government officials. The uprising failed, but it gave the military even greater power. Civilian politicians began to

## BIOGRAPHY

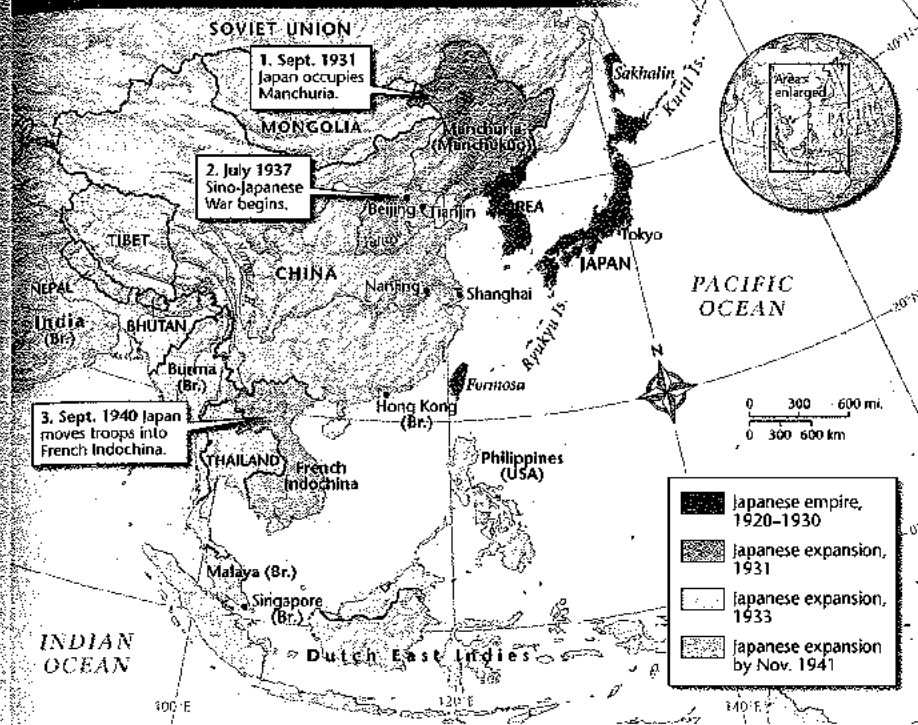


General Joseph Stilwell  
1883–1946

One high-ranking American soldier witnessed Japan's aggression in China from a local perspective. A West Point graduate, Joe Stilwell served in the Philippines and France before returning to the United States where he learned Chinese. From 1926 to 1929 and 1932

to 1946, Stilwell lived in China, where he represented the United States Army and developed close ties to Jiang Jieshi. Stilwell rose from Jiang's chief of staff to commander of U.S. forces in China, Burma, and India. During World War II, he played an important role in defending South Asia from Japan and in keeping China's links to the West open.

## Japanese Aggression, 1931–1941



fear for their lives so much that they dared not criticize the military. The new prime minister said:

*“The military are like an untamed horse left to run wild. If you try head-on to stop it, you'll get kicked to death. The only hope is to jump on from the side and try to get it under control while still allowing it to have its head to a certain extent.”*

—Hirota Koki

Japan's military leaders never actually seized control of the government. However, they took a much stronger hand in governing the nation, especially in the area of foreign policy. They began to develop Manchuria as a base for even further Japanese expansion in Asia.

### War Against China

In July 1937, Japan resumed its invasion of China. The Japanese army turned a minor clash at the Marco Polo Bridge outside Beijing into a full-scale war. By the end of the month, Japanese forces occupied the major cities of Beijing and Tianjin and threatened the rest of northern China. The Chinese Nationalist army, led by General Jiang Jieshi (jyawnng jch SHEE), fiercely resisted the invasion. In battle after battle, however, Japan's superior weapons overcame China's huge manpower advantage. Japanese warplanes ruthlessly bombed Chinese cities. During the “Rape of Nanjing,” Japanese soldiers brutalized or killed at least 100,000 civilians, including women and children, in the former capital of China.

The United States and other nations condemned Japan's actions. President Roosevelt spoke out against international aggression, saying that “the epidemic of world lawlessness is spreading” and calling for a “quarantine” to protect peaceful nations. Meanwhile, Congress passed a series of Neutrality Acts that prevented the United States from becoming involved in foreign conflicts. The

**MAP SKILLS** Japan's gradual expansion in Asia led to an outright war with China in 1937. **Location** List three countries or colonial possessions that appeared to be likely targets of Japanese aggression in November 1941. Explain your reasoning.

### READING CHECK

How successful was Japan's 1937 invasion of China?

# Fast Forward to Today

## An American Partner in the Pacific

Since the 1930s and 1940s, when they competed for control of the Pacific, Japan and the United States have become important allies and trading partners. The two countries share concerns about aggressive moves by North Korea and China.

Japan had renounced war and had limited the use of its much-reduced military to defense purposes after World War II. In 1998, the Japanese government announced that Japan would offer non-combat support to American troops in "areas surrounding Japan." This bill upset many Japanese who were unwilling to send any troops overseas, even in noncombat roles, to avoid association with Japan's wartime past.

**?** Why did the United States and Japan come into conflict in the 1930s and 1940s?

Soviet Union also voiced its concern and backed up its words with arms, military advisors, and warplanes for China. Later, Britain sent a steady stream of supplies to the Chinese over the **Burma Road**, a 700-mile-long highway linking Burma (present-day Myanmar) to China.

The war brought two longtime enemies together. Jiang and Chinese Communist leader Mao Zedong, who were locked in a bitter struggle for power, put aside their differences to fight the Japanese. When direct resistance failed, Jiang withdrew his armies to the mountains of remote Sichuan province in the south. Mao split his army into small groups of soldiers who organized bands of Chinese guerrilla fighters to harass the Japanese. While Japanese troops controlled the cities, these guerrillas dominated the countryside. By 1939, the war in China had reached a stalemate.

## Looking Beyond China

Meanwhile, the start of the war in Europe distracted European powers from the defense of their colonies in East Asia. Japanese leaders took this opportunity to expand their influence in the region to its south. In 1940, Japan's prime minister announced a **Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere** to be led by the Japanese, extending from Manchuria in the north to the Dutch East Indies in the south. Japan declared it would liberate Asia from European colonizers. In reality, Japan needed the region's natural resources, especially oil and rubber, to carry on its war against China. In this way, Japan's co-prosperty sphere resembled Hitler's invasion of other countries for *lebensraum* ("living space").

In September 1940, Japan allied itself with Germany and Italy through the Tripartite Pact. That same month, Japan moved troops into the northern part of French Indochina, with the reluctant permission of the Vichy government of France. With the Netherlands in German hands, Japan also set its sights on the oil-rich Dutch East Indies. Then, in April 1941, the Japanese signed a neutrality pact with the Soviet Union. The stage was now set for Japan to challenge the Europeans and Americans for supremacy in Asia.

## Section

# 4

## From Isolationism to War

### READING FOCUS

- Why did the United States choose neutrality in the 1930s?
- How did American involvement in the European conflict grow from 1939 to 1941?
- Why did Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor lead the United States to declare war?

### KEY TERMS

Neutrality Acts  
cash and carry  
America First Committee  
Lend-Lease Act

### TAKING NOTES

As you read, complete this chart by listing reasons why people supported or opposed the involvement of the United States in the war.

Supported Involvement in the War	Opposed Involvement in the War
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Britain was defending American ideals of freedom and democracy.</li> <li>The Axis Powers would eventually declare war on the United States.</li> </ul>	

### MAIN IDEA

United States foreign policy changed slowly from neutrality to strong support for the Allies. Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor immediately brought the United States into the war with the full support of the people.

**Setting the Scene** During the 1930s, the United States largely turned away from international affairs. Instead, the government focused its energies on solving the domestic problems brought about by the Great Depression. Even as Italy, Germany, and Japan threatened to shatter world peace, the United States clung to its policy of isolationism. The horrors of World War I still haunted many Americans who refused to be dragged into another foreign conflict. President Franklin Roosevelt assured Americans that he felt the same way:

*"I have seen war. I have seen war on land and sea. I have seen blood running from the wounded. I have seen men coughing out their gassed lungs. I have seen the dead in the mud. I have seen cities destroyed. I have seen two hundred limping, exhausted men come out of line—the survivors of a regiment of one thousand that went forward forty-eight hours before. I have seen children starving. I have seen the agony of mothers and wives. I hate war."*

—Franklin D. Roosevelt, address at Chautauqua, New York, August 1936



**VIEWING HISTORY** Franklin Roosevelt used "fireside chats" to speak directly to Americans during the Depression and later as the United States drew closer to war.

Few people in the United States agreed with the actions or the ideas of the Fascists, the Nazis, or the Japanese radicals. Most Americans sympathized with the victims of aggression. Still, nothing short of a direct attack on the United States would propel Americans into another war.

## The United States Chooses Neutrality

American isolationism increased in the early 1930s, although President Roosevelt, elected in 1932, favored more international involvement. The demands of carrying out the New Deal kept Roosevelt focused on domestic issues, however. He was more concerned with lifting the United States out of the Depression than with addressing foreign concerns.

## Section

## Assessment

### READING COMPREHENSION

- (a) Who among the Japanese was responsible for the conquest of Manchuria? (b) How was this invasion different from Germany's invasion of Poland?
- Why was Japan unable to win the war in China?
- (a) According to Japan, what was the purpose of the **Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere**? (b) What was Japan's real goal?

### CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING

- Drawing Conclusions** What do Japan's actions indicate about the way economic problems affect foreign policy? Cite evidence from your reading.
- Writing an Opinion** Read the quote from Hirota Koki. Write a paragraph defending or criticizing Hirota's response to the military's actions.

### Take It to the NET

**Activity: Writing a Newspaper Article** The massacre at Nanjing was a terrible episode of World War II. Using eyewitness accounts and other primary sources, write a newspaper article on this topic. Use the links provided in the *America: Pathways to the Present* area of the following Web site for help in completing this activity.  
[www.phschool.com](http://www.phschool.com)





In 1930, Congress had passed the Hawley-Smoot tariff to protect American industries from foreign competitors. In response, other nations raised their tariff walls against American goods. Although they were reduced in 1934, these trade barriers prolonged the Depression and isolated the United States.

Congress again prevented international involvement by passing a series of **Neutrality Acts**. The first of these, in 1935, banned the United States from providing weapons to nations at war. The second, in 1936, banned loans to such nations. The third, in 1937, permitted trade with fighting nations in nonmilitary goods as long as those nations paid cash and transported the cargo themselves. This policy became known as **cash and carry**.

The Neutrality Acts prevented the United States from selling arms even to nations that were trying to defend themselves from aggression. By doing this, as FDR pointed out later, the Neutrality Acts encouraged aggression. By the end of 1938, Italy had conquered Ethiopia, Japan had invaded

China, and Germany had taken Austria and the Sudetenland. The United States watched warily from a distance, protected by the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

## American Involvement Grows

As the decade wore on, the American economy recovered somewhat. Unemployment and business failures no longer required the nation's full attention. At the same time, Germany and Japan stepped up their aggression against neighboring countries. This combination of events softened Americans' isolationist views.

American opinion shifted even further against the Axis Powers in September 1939, when Germany invaded Poland. At that time, almost no one believed that America should enter the war against Germany. But many people felt that the United States shared Britain's interests, and given the constraints of neutrality, President Roosevelt began to look for ways to send more aid to the Allies.

**Debating the American Role** Three weeks after the invasion of Poland, Roosevelt asked Congress to revise the Neutrality Acts to make them more flexible. Congress did so by repealing the arms embargo and providing Britain and France with the weapons they needed. A later amendment allowed American merchant ships to transport these purchases to Britain. The neutrality legislation was effectively dead.

In June 1940, France fell to the Germans, and Hitler prepared to invade Britain. France's rapid collapse shocked Americans, who had expected the Allies to defend themselves effectively against Germany. Now Britain stood alone against Hitler, and many Americans supported "all aid short of war" for Britain. Roosevelt successfully pressed Congress for more aid. On September 3, the United States agreed to send 50 old destroyers to Britain in return for permission to build bases on British territory in the Western Hemisphere. Some Americans saw this exchange as a dangerous step toward direct American military involvement. Two days after the trade, a group of isolationists formed the **America First Committee** to block further aid to Britain. At its height, this group attracted more than 800,000 members, including Charles Lindbergh.

During the presidential campaign of 1940, both Roosevelt and his Republican opponent, Wendell Willkie, supported giving aid to the Allies. They disagreed, however, on how much aid should be given and on what the aid should be. As election day approached, Willkie sharpened his attack, saying that if FDR won, he would plunge the nation into war. To counter this charge, FDR assured all parents: "Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars." In reality, both men knew that war would be hard to avoid.

**Lend-Lease** In November 1940, Roosevelt won reelection to a third term as President. His easy victory encouraged him to push for greater American involvement in the Allied cause. To continue battling Germany, Britain needed American equipment. Britain, however, faced a financial crisis. Prime Minister Churchill, in a letter to FDR, confessed that his country was nearly bankrupt. "The moment approaches," he wrote in December, "when we shall no longer be able to pay cash for shipping and other supplies."

In December 1940, Roosevelt introduced a bold new plan to keep supplies flowing to Britain. He proposed providing war supplies to Britain without any payment in return. Roosevelt explained his policy to the American people by

## READING CHECK

Why did Roosevelt press Congress for aid to Britain?

**VIEWING HISTORY** Members of the "Mothers' Crusade" knelt and prayed outside the Capitol to stop Congress from passing the Lend-Lease Act, Bill 1776. **Drawing Inferences** How did these protesters hope to sway votes?

## COMPARING PRIMARY SOURCES

### Assistance for Britain

Britain stood alone against Germany. Americans debated whether to assist. What assistance should take.

Compare the statements of the two speakers.

### In Favor of Aid

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"The Nazi masters of Germany have made it clear that they intend . . . to enslave the whole of Europe, and then to use the resources of Europe to dominate the rest of





the use of a simple comparison: If your neighbor's house is on fire, you don't sell him a hose. You lend it to him and take it back after the fire is out.

The America First Committee campaigned strongly against this new type of aid. Nevertheless, Congress passed the **Lend-Lease Act** in March 1941, authorizing the President to aid any nation whose defense he believed was vital to American security. FDR immediately began sending aid to Britain. After Germany attacked the Soviet Union, the United States extended lend-lease aid to the Soviets as well. By the end of the war, the United States had loaned or given away more than \$49 billion worth of aid to some 40 nations.

### Japan Attacks Pearl Harbor

Although Roosevelt focused his attention on Europe, he was aware of Japan's aggressive moves in the Pacific. In July 1940, Roosevelt began limiting what Japan could buy from the United States. In September, he ended sales of scrap iron and steel. He hoped to use the threat of further trade restrictions to stop Japan's expansion. A year later, however, Japanese forces took complete control of French Indochina. In response, Roosevelt froze Japanese financial assets in the United States. Then he cut off all oil shipments. As you have read, Japan desperately needed raw materials, and this embargo encouraged Japan to look to the lightly defended Dutch East Indies for new supplies of oil. For the next few months, leaders in the United States and Japan sought ways to avoid war with each other.

**Final Weeks of Peace** While Japanese and American diplomats negotiated, a militant army officer took power in Japan. General Tojo Hideki, who supported war against the United States, became prime minister in October 1941. Yet Roosevelt still hoped for peace, and he continued negotiations.

More than a year earlier, American technicians had cracked a top-secret Japanese code. Knowing this code allowed them to read intercepted diplomatic messages. By November 27, based on decoded messages, American military leaders knew that Japanese aircraft carriers were on the move in the Pacific. They expected an attack, but they did not know where.

Indeed, a Japanese fleet of 6 aircraft carriers and more than 20 other ships was already on the move. Its target was Pearl Harbor, the naval base on the Hawaiian island of Oahu that served as the home of the U.S. Pacific Fleet. Japan's leaders had gambled that they could cripple the American fleet and then achieve their goals in Asia before the United States could rebuild its navy and challenge Japan.

**The Attack** Shortly after 7:00 on the morning of December 7, an American army radar operator on Oahu noticed a large blip on his radar screen. He called his headquarters to report that planes were headed toward the island. The only officer on duty that Sunday morning believed that the planes were American. "Don't worry about it," the officer told the radar operator, and he hung up the

phone. Less than an hour later, more than 180 Japanese warplanes streaked overhead. Half of the Pacific Fleet lay at anchor in Pearl Harbor, crowded into an area less than three miles square.

Japanese planes bombed and strafed (attacked with machine-gun fire) the fleet and the airfields nearby. By 9:45, the attack was over. In less than two hours, some 2,400 Americans had been killed and nearly 1,200 wounded. Nearly 200 American warplanes had been damaged or destroyed; 18 warships had been sunk or heavily damaged, including 8 of the fleet's 9 battleships. Japan had lost just 29 planes.

### United States Declares War

The attack on Pearl Harbor stunned the American people. Calling December 7, 1941, "a date which will live in infamy," Roosevelt the next day asked Congress to declare war on Japan:

*"Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger. With confidence in our armed forces—with the unbound determination of our people—we will gain the inevitable triumph—so help us God."*

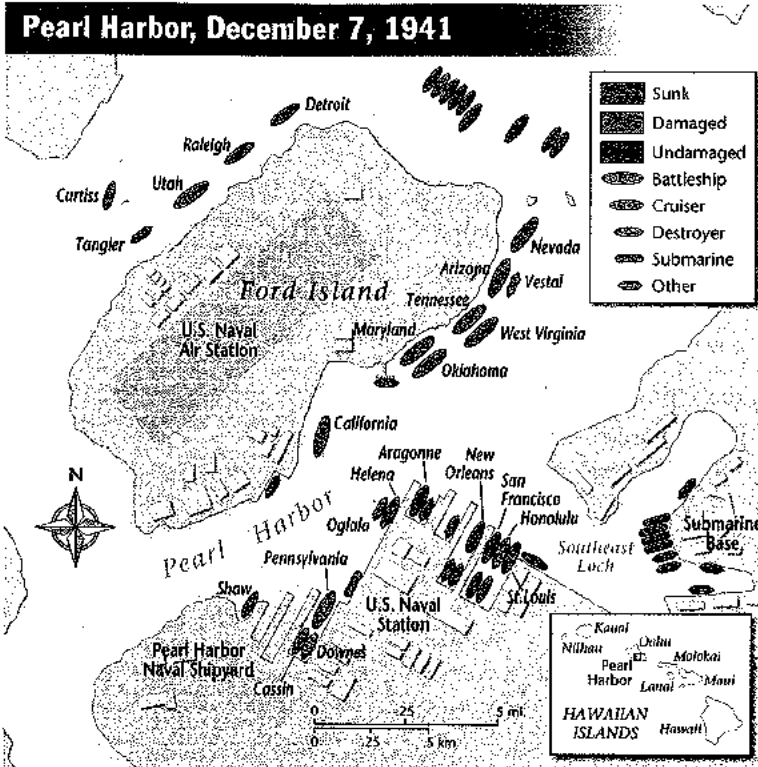
—Franklin D. Roosevelt, December 8, 1941

Within hours after Roosevelt finished speaking, Congress passed a war resolution. Only one of its members, pacifist Jeannette Rankin of Montana, voted against declaring war. Even the America First Committee called on its members to back the war effort.

On December 11, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States. For the second time in the century, Americans had been drawn into a world war. Once more, their contributions would make the difference between victory and defeat for the Allies.



Wearing a black armband to mourn those killed at Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt signed a declaration of war against Japan on December 8, 1941.



**MAP SKILLS** The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was surprising and swift. **Location** Where did the Japanese inflict the most damage?

## Section 4 Assessment

### READING COMPREHENSION

- (a) What was required by the **Neutrality Acts**? (b) Did they succeed in keeping the United States neutral? Why or why not?
- Why did Roosevelt ask Congress to pass the **Lend-Lease Act**?
- In your own words, describe relations between Japan and the United States before the attack on Pearl Harbor.

### CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING

- Recognizing Cause and Effect** (a) How much did President Roosevelt consider American public opinion when deciding how to respond to the conflict in Europe? (b) Why did he need to consider public opinion at all?
- Writing a News Story** Write a short newspaper article on the fall of France from an American point of view. Explain the consequences for the United States.

### Sounds of an Era

Listen to Roosevelt's speech and other sounds from World War II.

### Take It to the NET

**Activity: Writing a Diary Entry**  
Read eyewitness accounts of the Pearl Harbor bombing online. Next, write a personal diary entry as if you were present for this historic event. Use the links provided in the *America: Pathways to the Present* area of the following Web site for help in completing this activity.  
[www.phschool.com](http://www.phschool.com)