CHAPTER 36  
WWII

World War II (1939-1945)

- Allies (Big 3)
  - Great Britain
  - U.S.
  - Soviet Union

- Axis
  - Italy
  - Germany
  - Japan

The Odd Triplets:
- G.B. and U.S. hate Commies
- Soviets hate Cappies
- Church and Stalin = Mutual Hatred
  - FDR the arbitrator
- Why trust Soviets?
  - Non-Aggression Pact
  - Russians in WWI
On the Homefront

- Gets US out of the Great Depression
  - War Production Board
    - Bread to Bullets
  - AAA ended
    - Needed more Food
  - Office of Price Administration
    - Controlled inflation
    - Began rationing
- War Labor Board
  - Maximum wage ceiling
  - No Strike Pledge = AFL
- Smith Connally Anti-Strike Act
  - Govt. take over of industries under strike
  - Coal and RRs taken over

Manpower and womanpower

- 15 million men
- 200,000 women
  - Enlisted and Drafted
- First use of women in armed forces: WAACS, WAVES, SPARS
- Shortage of workers led to:
  - Bracero Program
  - Rosie the Riveter (free day care)
  - 1.6 million blacks moved to the North, and West (see p. 834) and the growth of the NAACP, the creation of CORE, and the “Double V”

Disposible income

- More than doubled.
- Big Gov’t BOOMED
  - $330,000,000,000 dollars spent (start of the welfare state and Military/Industrial complex)
- National debt went from $49 billion to $260 billion.
- Japanese Internment camps (Korematsu v. US)

The 2nd Front

- Stalin asks for 2nd Front
  - Needed to ease Hitler’s invasion
- Wants to relieve Red Army

But Churchill… (Well you know the Brits)

- He called it “sheer suicidal folly”
- Calls for an assault on Mediterranean and North Africa
- Not until Stalin begins marching through Eastern Europe

The Eastern Front & Stalingrad

- June 22, 1941
  - Hitler invades Soviet Union
  - Begins Eastern Front
- It was the sight of some of the war’s bloodiest fighting
• The Soviet forces on the Eastern Front continued to fight and retreat and destroy their own countryside, towns, crops, etc to slow the Germans until their best weapon—WINTER could set in.

• The Red Army finally forced a German retreat in the bloody Battle of Stalingrad in August 1942. The tide was turned.

• By 1942, millions of Soviets had died. By war’s end—over 20,000,000

Casablanca, Morocco

• Finally, in January, 1943, Great Britain and the US met to:
  – plan the invasion of Italy from North Africa
  – Demand “Unconditional Surrender” to assuage Uncle Joe’s (Stalin’s) fear that his allies might quit on him.

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Europe’s soft Underbelly????

• In July 1942, the Allies had begun a series of intensive military tank campaigns in North Africa that ended with the defeat of the German and Italian occupying forces in May 1943

• August 1943 Allied forces attacked Sicily
• Sept. 1943 Mussolini is deposed & Italy surrenders and declares war on Germany
• Oct, 1943 German army retakes Northern Italy and the “2nd front” bogs down.
• Soviet army enters Poland

Teheran Conference Dec. 1943

• The Big Three: Stalin, FDR, Churchill
• Prepared for a cross-channel attack via France to open a Western Front and keep Stalin from conquering Germany alone.
• Meanwhile—in the Pacific…
The Pacific—an overview:

- Dec. 7th 1941 Japan attacks American:
  - Pearl Harbor
  - Philippines
  - Guam
  - Wake
- US flights re-supply Chinese general Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek)
- Japan quickly takes
  - French Indonesia
  - Dutch East Indies
  - Taiwan
  - Etc.
  - Gen. MacArthur holds Philippines till May 1943 (Bataan Death March)
  - See map for all the little islands

LOSSES at Coral Sea May 1942

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AMERICA</th>
<th>JAPANESE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Air craft carriers</td>
<td>Two Air Craft Carriers</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Sunk: USS Lexington</td>
<td>- sunk</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Damaged: USS Yorktown</td>
<td>- Two destroyers sunk</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Destroyer sunk</td>
<td>- Numerous other ships</td>
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<tr>
<td>One Tanker Sunk (USS Neosho)</td>
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<tr>
<td>65 Aircraft Lost</td>
<td>- Between 75 and 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>About 540 Died</td>
<td>- aircraft Lost</td>
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<td>- About 3500 Died</td>
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Battle of Midway June 3rd - 6th 1942

- Japanese attacked to gain base for bombing Pearl Harbor
- Code-breakers intercepted the message and US admiral Nimitz used surprise to defeat a larger Japanese navy.
- Also found where Admiral Yamamoto would be
- Put Japanese on the defensive
- Back to the Europe....

FINALLY-
the second front
D-Day June 6th 1944
takes pressure off of poor beat up USSR
The Battle of The Bulge Dec. 16, 1944

• The first major step in defeating Hitler was the Allied victory at the Bulge which allowed Allies to cross the Rhine River and enter Germany.
• Hitler then concentrated all his forces on the West, allowing Allies in the East to push through Poland and get within 35 miles of his Berlin Headquarters.
As they marched to Berlin

Eisenhower

- After seeing the horror of the death camps, Eisenhower said, “I want every American unit not actually in the front lines to see this place. We are told that the American soldier does not know what he is fighting for. Now, at least, he will know what he is fighting against.”

The End is Near

- The “Big Three” began to discuss terms of surrender for Germany as they halted their troops just mere miles outside of the Capital.
- The Soviets began their assault on the capital on April 16th, followed by the Allies assault on April 25th.

The Death of Hitler!

- With the End of the war so close at hand Hitler had a small ceremony in his bunker and married his longtime lover Eva Braun, hours later the couple killed their infant child and then committed suicide.
- His body was quickly burned and his ashes buried as one author wrote “all that as mortal of Hitler, the vilest tormentor of mankind, was but a handful of dust.”

Victory In Europe!

- On May 7, 1945 Admiral Dönitz, Hitler’s successor, declared Germany’s unconditional surrender to the Allies.
- The following day was V-E Day and was a day of rejoicing and relief for Europe.
Atlantic Charter (1941)

- no territorial gains were to be sought by the United States or the United Kingdom;
- territorial adjustments must be in accord with the wishes of the peoples concerned;
- all peoples had a right to self-determination;
- trade barriers were to be lowered;
- there was to be global economic cooperation and advancement of social welfare;
- the participants would work for a world free of want and fear;
- the participants would work for freedom of the seas;
- there was to be disarmament of aggressor nations, and a postwar common disarmament.

July 1945 Potsdam Conference

- TRUMAN, not FDR
- Warns Japan to surrender or be destroyed
- Starts with Churchill (Attlee eventually takes over)
- NOT the Atlantic Charter
- Germany divided into 4 zones
- WAR crime tribunals
- War reparations for the USSR to be paid in German lands
- Dismantle German war industries

Between 1943 and 1944 the U.S. attacked and took many islands from the Japanese in the Pacific Theater (Island Hopping).

One of the most important islands that had to be taken was Iwo Jima.

On February 19, 1945 U.S. forces landed on the beaches and fought a 36 day battle against the embedded Japanese force.

- The Japanese defenders consisted of nearly 23,000 and after the fighting ceased only 1,000 were left alive. The U.S. landed with a force of 250,000 and had over 22,000 casualties, including 5,300 deaths.
- The Americans quickly went on to capture the neighboring island of Okinawa on April 1, 1945 and the Philippine Islands.
- McArthur had “returned”.
- This prepared the U.S. for a full attack and defeat of Japan.
- “Leapfrogging” – US plan to specifically capture islands with weak Japanese defenses.
- Battle of Iwo Jima - US needed an airbase to launch attacks on Japan—later attacked Okinawa, which allowed the US to invade the main island of Japan.
- Leyte Gulf oct 1944 wipes out Japanese navy
- US Air Corps can bomb Japan with impunity.
- 80,000 die in Tokyo in one night of fire-bombing
- Japan attempted to counteract with air strikes and suicide missions: kamikaze. (succeeded with destruction of 200 vessels)
• Although US had isolated Japan to its last island stronghold, they remained insistent on winning.
• During the early critical period of presidency, Truman prepared to meet with Stalin and Churchill to decide a quick end to the war using the atomic bomb.
• Interim Committee: strongly suggested that:
  – The atomic bomb should be used against the Japanese ASAP
  – It should be used on a dual target – a military installation or war plant near houses and other buildings most susceptible to damage, so as to to demonstrate the bomb’s power
  – It should be used without prior warning about the nature of the weapon
• Development of an atomic bomb dated back to 1940
  – First successful test: July 16, 1945 in New Mexico

**“Fat Man”**

**“Little Boy”**

This boy was 2 miles from ground zero

**Truman’s Thoughts**

• Though Truman was worried about the loss of lives from the atomic bomb, he did not question the words of his advisors
  – he believed in giving the Japanese a shock in order to ensure their surrender.
• August 14, 1945 – Japan surrendered to the Allies
Results of the War

- **Casualties**
  - Over 300,000 American deaths with 700,000 wounded
  - Over 50 million lives lost
  - 7 million homes destroyed from 3 million tons of bombs
- **American Opinion:**
  - US participation in war was worth the costs
  - US played major role in stopping rise of fascism and Hitler's genocide
  - US halted Japan's war of conquest in Pacific
  - Felt that the US fought a “good war” against evil.

BUT....

- Disillusionment quickly set in as people realized the potential of human injustice
  - Holocaust
  - Fascism
  - Rape of Nanking
- Yes even the Americans
  - Japanese concentration camps
  - Ignoring the problems of the Jewish Europeans
  - The atomic bomb

American Choices

- **After WWI**
  - Refused to join League of Nations
  - Became isolationist: High Tariffs helped to create a depression in Europe.
  - The Treaty of Versailles ignored Wilson's 14 points and punished Germany.
- **After WWII**
  - America played a leading role in the creation of the United Nations.
  - America got seriously involved in European affairs. Rebuilding Europe and Japan helped to stave off a depression.
  - The treaties signed by Germany and Japan did not punish either nation. America actually rebuilt them.