

Events Prior to
WWII

I. Postwar Peace

- Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928)
 - 60 nations pledged to “renounce war as an instrument of national policy”
 - Problems:
 - No enforcement
 - No national defense

II. War Debts

- Debtor Nation—Prior to WWI the US was a debtor nation—they owed money to other nations;
- Creditor Nation—After WWI the US was a creditor nation—other nations owed them money

Britain and France → US \$



\$\$--lost WW1

Germany

- Reparations—repayment for war debt
- Dawes Plan—gives Germany more time to pay back war debts

III. Rise of the Dictators

A. Mussolini (Italy)

- Italy mad—they were on the winning side but did not achieve their war goals in the Versailles Treaty. Failing economy, political and class tensions divided the nation as well.
- Mussolini played on the fears of the people –economic collapse and communism
- blamed Italy's problems on communists, corrupt businessmen, weak politicians
 - Wanted to restore Italy to the time where it was in its height of glory—the ancient Roman Empire



A. Mussolini (cont...)

- Founded the Fascist party, 1919—outlawed all other political parties
- favored a single leader
- opposed democracy
- His private army known as the “Black shirts”
- Italy’s king proclaimed Mussolini the prime minister in 1922
- became known as “Il Duce”—the leader



III. Rise of the Dictators

B. Hitler (Germany)

- High inflation, middle-class Germans worried they lost all their money
- Wanted to blame someone, needed a strong leader
- Political choices: communism, monarchy—
new choice: national socialist party—
previously known as the national socialist
German workers party—changed the name to
appeal to more people—party led by Hitler



A German young lady using worthless paper money to heat her home in 1923.



B. Hitler (cont..)

- He blamed Germany's defeat in WW1 on the Jews, communists, traitors and cowards—he stated that Germany had to surrender in the Versailles Treaty under humiliating terms— suggested that Germany had not lost the war because the allies were effective in defeating them, but that Germany lost due to internal struggles and weakness in their government at the time, The Weimar Republic
- He was a very charismatic, engaging speaker who gained many followers due to his mass rallies that gave a specific enemy and group to blame for Germany's demise in WW1 and economic demise as well.



B. Hitler (cont...)

- Beer Hall Putsch – Burgerbrau Keller – Beer Hall in Munich - went to jail in 1923 for causing a riot to try to overthrow the Weimar government - tried for treason – sentenced to five years; served 8 months
- While in prison he devised a majority of his plans and ideas and wrote them in his book, Mein Kampf, or “My Struggle”
- early 1920s the Nazi’s were a small, ineffective political organization
- January 1933—businessmen persuaded Germany’s president to name Hitler Chancellor of Germany—prime minister.



B. Hitler (cont...)

- “Communists” set fire to the Reichstag (Feb 1933)
 - Were they really Communists or Nazis saying they were Communists to incite fear?
 - Enabling Act (March, 1933) - if there is an emergency, all power goes to the Chancellor
 - With this Hitler was able to gain “temporary” unlimited power. This gave him the opportunity to eliminate political opponents and pack the German govt. with Nazi’s who would support his ideas.



- “Der Fuhrer”—the leader

C. Hitler in Power

- Hunted down and killed members of Weimar govt. who signed Versailles Treaty
- Books by Jewish authors and those who favored democracy were burned
- Govt. controlled schools and what students learned
- Jews deprived of citizenship and jobs



IV. Japanese Militarism

- During 1920s Japan had become tight with the west
- However many extreme Japanese nationalists wanted a return to Japan's glory days with absolute rule by an Emperor
- Goal:
 - drive out western colonial powers
 - rule all of Asia
 - expansion for economic reasons
- Needed
 - more space for increase in population
 - more national resources

IV. Japanese Militarism (cont...)

- When economic problems of 1930s arose, these extremists came out from the shadows and made their opinions known
- Censored media and demanded total obedience to the state
- Invaded Manchuria (northeast China—check on map)
 - This got the US angry b/c the US had protected the open door policy to ensure that all countries would be able to invest and derive Asia's natural resources



V. Neutrality → War

- Mussolini conquers Ethiopia
 - Hitler and Mussolini = Rome-Berlin axis, 1936
- Democracy lost in Spain; loyalists lost the Spanish civil war
- General Francisco Franco in charge = Dictator
- Consequences in Germany:
 - Hitler stated he would not obey the Versailles Treaty anymore—Germany would rebuild its army
 - Occupies the Rhineland—strip of land that bordered France; France did nothing to stop Hitler



A. Reasons for British and French Inaction (why they did nothing):

1. Memory of WW1

2. Fear of Soviet Communism -
thought strong Germany may be a
good balance against the Soviet Union

3. Unease with the Versailles treaty —
Maybe Germany had valid objections
to the treaty?

4. Hope for Compromise

→ Therefore decided to appease

Hitler

B. Hitler Takes Things Further:

- March 1938—occupied Austria—Austrians ok
- Wanted to annex Czechoslovakia
- the Czech's objected
- Munich Conference—British and French govt. met with Hitler and came to a compromise (Sept 1938)
 - Neville Chamberlain (PM of England) – “We have achieved peace for our time”



B. Hitler Takes Things Further (cont...)

- According to the Munich Conference:
 - Hitler could occupy the Sudetenland (a German speaking part of Czech.) but Hitler had to promise not to make any more territorial demands in Europe.
 - He agreed



Hitler Wants to Create a 3rd Reich:

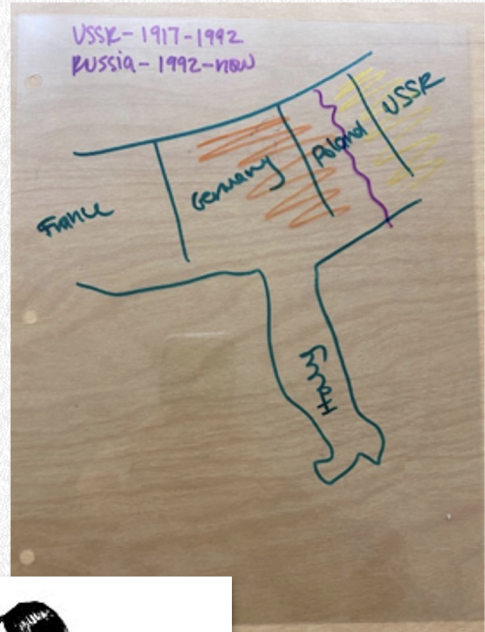
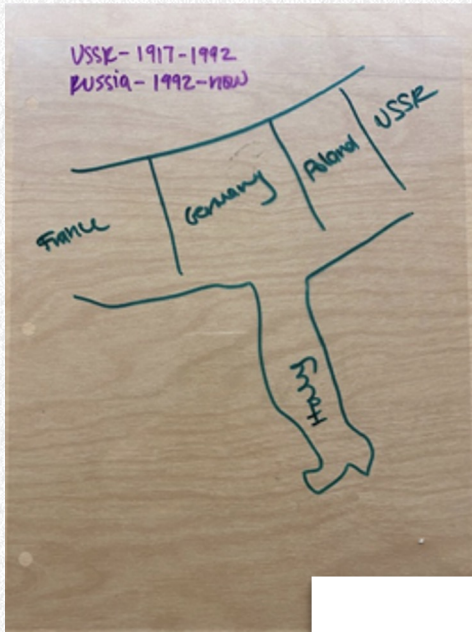
- 1st Reich=Holy Roman Empire:
800-1600
- 2nd Reich = German Empire
(1800-1918) under Otto Von
Bismark
- 3rd Reich = A new German
Empire under Hitler
 - He wanted it to last “1000
years”
- Reich = Empire

C. War Begins

- Hitler takes over the rest of Czechoslovakia
- Wants to take over Poland
- Britain and France pledge to defend Poland
- Britain and France want to develop a pact with the Soviets
- Hitler and Stalin sign a non-aggression pact
 - now allies
- War begins **Sept. 1, 1939**
 - Germany invades Poland
 - Britain and France declare war
 - Poland conquered in 3 weeks
 - Western part of Poland → Germany
 - Eastern part of Poland → USSR

As a result of the Non-Aggression Pact:

- Western part of Poland → Germany
- Eastern part of Poland → USSR



VI. American Involvement

- FDR neutral (President: 1933-1945)
- 1st ever peacetime draft—tripled the size of the army
- people wanted Hitler to be stopped but also wanted to remain out of the war
- Election of 1940—FDR's campaign promise: "Your boys will be kept out of war"
- Neutral?
 - Aided Britain—Lend-Lease Act: allowed the president to sell, lend, or lease war materials to any nation whose defense he thought vital to American security.
 - Atlantic charter—what the US and Britain would do post-war...make the world safe AGAIN for democracy...people should be free to live in peace and choose their own government.
 - Continued U-Boat torpedo of US ships

VII. Germany Invades USSR

- Hitler invades—wants more land
- Going East—June 1941
 - Surprise attack
 - Successful at first → problems
 - Britain and France offered assistance to Stalin
 - now Hitler has to fight a two-front war
 - Why was it important for the allies to create a two-front war?

VIII. Japan in War

- Japan attempted to gain control of East Asia and aimed first off for a huge territory of land called China.
 - US wants to halt Japanese expansion
 - Halted iron and steel exporting; Japanese feel US is hurting them economically
 - Japan remained in China and in July 1941 moved troops into French colonial held Indochina.
 - The US cut off oil exports to Japan
 - Japanese war minister, Hideki Tojo, thought war was inevitable.
 - The Japanese continued peace talks with Washington, all the while preparing for war.
 - American experts broke Japanese code. Knew something would happen Sunday, December 7, 1941
- Question: when and where they were going to be attacked.

IX. US Pulled Into War

December 7, 1941

- US's largest naval base—Pearl Harbor, Oahu, Hawaii
- 7:55 am—353 Japanese bombers, fighters and torpedo planes
 - few losses for Japanese—kamikazes
- FDR asks Congress for a declaration of war
 - War Declared: **December 8, 1941**
 - 82-0 vote—Senate
 - 388-1 vote—House
 - Jeanette Rankin (Pacifist)
- 3 Days later, Japan's allies, Italy and Germany declare war on US