America and World War II
Mobilizing for War

- FDR was concerned about fighting a global war, but Churchill knew that winning a war depended on a country’s industrial power, of which the US had plenty of.
- During the war, the US was twice as productive as Germany and five times more productive than Japan.
- American war productions turned the tide in favor of the Allies.
- In four years, the US did something no other nation has ever done—fought a two-front war with two powerful empires and won, forcing the countries to surrender unconditionally.
Mobilizing for War

- Rather than taking bids for military goods, the government came up with the cost-plus contract.
- Cost-plus contracts pay businesses how much the good costs to make plus a certain percentage.
- FDR and Henry Stimson, Sect. of War, knew that they had to have business on their side in order to win the war.
- The system was not cheap, but it get war materials produced in large quantities.
- The government even gave the Reconstruction Finance Committee the ability to make loans to companies who could not afford reequip their factories.
Mobilizing for War

- By the fall of 1941 many companies were producing military equipment, most still preferred to make consumer goods. This is the beginning of the end of the Great Depression.
- The attack on Pearl Harbor changed everything.
- By summer of ’42, all major industries, and nearly 200,000 companies, had converted to war production.
Mobilizing for War

• The automobile industry was uniquely suited to the mass production of military equipment. They produced trucks, Jeeps, and tanks that were critical in modern warfare since the country who could move the quickest tended to win the battle.

• The auto industry also built artillery, rifles, mines, helmets, pontoon bridges, and cooking pots, as well as the B-29 bomber, known as the “Liberator”.

• Overall, the auto industry produced 1/3 of the military equipment manufactured during the war.
Mobilizing for War

- Henry Kaiser’s shipyards were famous for building “liberty ships”, which were basic cargo ships that were welded instead of riveted. Riveted ships, when hit, tend to come lose and sink. A welded ship, if hit by a torpedo, could usually get back to port, make repairs, and return to service.
- American companies became frustrated with government agencies with regards to contracts and whose orders had highest priority.
- After Pearl Harbor, FDR create the War Production Board to try to control the situation.
- When the WPB did not work, FDR created the Office of War Mobilization to settle arguments between different agencies.
• If the U.S. was going to win the war, they had to focus on building up their armed forces. Within days of Germany’s attack on Poland, FDR expanded the Army to 227,000 soldiers.

• After the French surrendered to Germany in 1940, two members of Congress introduced the Selective Service and Training Act, the first peace-time draft.

• The public had originally opposed this, but opinions changed after Germany defeated France.
Mobilizing for War

- The training facilities were overwhelmed by the number of draftees. They endured housing and equipment shortages.
- New draftees were sent through physical exams, injections, and then issued uniforms labeled “G.I.”, meaning “Government Issue.”
- Recruits were then sent to basic training for 8 weeks, where they learned basic drills.
- Some veterans complained after the war that the training was useless. Despite these concerns, basic training helped the soldiers break down barriers between themselves.
- One soldier stated, “the reason you storm the beaches is not patriotism or bravery. It’s that sense of not wanting to fail your buddies.”
Mobilizing for War

- At the beginning of the war, the Army was segregated. Many African American leaders combined patriotism with protest in what was called the “Double V Campaign.”
- The campaign argued that African Americans should join the war effort to achieve a double victory – a victory over Hitler’s racism abroad and the racism at home.
- The Tuskegee Airmen were an all-African American squadron of P-51 pilots. They were so named because they trained at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Many did not believe that African Americans could handle flying fighters, but the squadron played an important role in the Battle of Anzio in Italy.
Mobilizing for War

- Women are enlisted into the Army for the first time during WWII. They will still not be allowed to fight in combat.
- The Americans who went to war in 1941 were not well trained. Many had no military experience; officers had never led in combat. Despite these challenges, the US performed very well in battle.
- Of all major powers involved in the war, the US had the fewest casualties.
- When one Czechoslovakian was asked what he thought of the unprofessional American soldiers, he commented, “they walk like freemen.”
The Early Battles

- While Japan had damaged the American fleet at Pearl Harbor, they missed the aircraft carriers which were at sea.
- Gen. MacArthur was commanding troops in the Philippines when the Japanese attacked there.
  - They drove forces back until FDR ordered an evacuation of US forces to Australia.
  - MacArthur said “I came through, and I shall return.”
- Those who did not leave were captured on April 9, 1942 and were marched to a Japanese prison camp (this became known as the Bataan Death March because so many died).
- In May of 1942 the Philippines fell to the Japanese.
FDR wanted to increase the morale of the American people.

Bombing Japan would do just that, however, US short-range missiles could not reach from their position in the Pacific.

If they used long-range missiles, they would have to fly B-25s off the aircraft carriers, and then land them in China, since they could not land on a short deck.

On April 18, with Col. James Doolittle in charge, American bombs fell on Japan for the first time.
The Early Battles

• Japanese Adm. Yamamoto knew that they needed to destroy the American fleet
• His plan was to lure the American fleet out to defend Midway thinking that Japan could then destroy them
• Meanwhile, they were also trying to cut US supply line to Australia by attacking New Guinea but only sent three ships while the rest went to Midway
The Early Battles

- The Japanese did not anticipate that the US had cracked their operations codes, thus allowing the US to get down to New Guinea.
- Once there the *Lexington* was sunk and the *Yorktown* was badly damaged, but they managed to keep the Japanese out of New Guinea and keep supply line open with Australia.
- This is called the Battle of the Coral Sea.
The Early Battles

- While the Battle of the Coral Sea occurred, US intercepted info regarding the attack on Midway—Adm. Yamamoto used the same code the US had already cracked
- American Adm. Nimitz had been waiting for a chance to ambush the Japanese, which came at Midway
- 38 Japanese planes were shot down in the first wave of attacks, then the US launched a counter attack where they sank four aircraft carriers—Adm. Yamamoto knew he was defeated and ordered a retreat
- The Battle of Midway was a turning point in the Pacific Theater, only six months after Pearl Harbor, US forces stopped Japanese advancement
The Early Battles

- As soon as the US entered the war, Stalin was requesting the US to open an attack on Germany on the western front since SU was doing most of the fighting.
- Churchill urged FDR to hold off since neither was ready for a full attack on Germany.
- Instead US and Britain attacked the periphery, or edges of the German Empire.
- In July 1942, the US and Britain attacked Morocco and Algeria, French territories under indirect control of the German government.
The Early Battles

- FDR choose Morocco and Algeria for two reasons: gave the army experience, they would be able to help the British fight Germany in Egypt.
- Egypt was important to Britain because of the Suez Canal which allowed Britain to supply India, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaya and Australia.
- The German forces in Egypt were called the “Afrika Korps” lead by Gen. Erwin Rommel, or “Desert Fox”
Britain forced Rommel back, but Germany still remained a threat.

When American invasion got underway Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower was commander while Gen. Patton captured Casablanca in Morocco.

The plan was for the British and US forces to trap Rommel between them.

As American troops advanced, they ran into the German army in Tunisia and didn’t do well.

At the Battle of Kasserine Pass, US suffered heavy losses until Eisenhower put Patton in charge of the advance.

The Early Battles

• The war in the Atlantic Ocean continued to intensify which American cargo ships a particular favorite
• Cities along the US eastern coast would dim lights, drive without headlights, and use blackout curtains to avoid creating silhouettes of the ships
• 360 ships were sunk off the US coast by Aug. 1942, causing gas and fuel to be rationed
• US implemented the convoy system again, putting warships around merchant ships
• US also implemented radar, sonar, and depth charges allowing them to locate and attack German subs
• This slowly started the turn for the Allies favor in the Atlantic
The Early Battles

- Before the turn of the Atlantic and North Africa, Hitler was convinced Germany would win the war and it was now time to turn on the SU
- Hitler knew that he had to destroy the SU economy to take it over, and the city of Stalingrad was the key to that
- He ordered his forces to take it, while Stalin ordered his troops to protect it no mater the cost, retreat was not an option
- While the Germans invaded, SU reinforcements surrounded the Germans, trapping 250,000
- When the battle ended in Feb. 1943 91,000 Germans were taken prisoner (only 5,000 survived to go home after the war)
The Early Battles

- The Battle of Midway had put Japan on the defense which is where they stayed for the rest of the war.
- The Battle of Stalingrad put Germany on the defense which is where they stayed for the rest of the war.
Bell Ringer

- Open Book Quiz
1. What brought the US into WWII?
2. Which battle put Germany on the defense for the rest of the war?
3. Which battle put Japan on the defense for the rest of the war?
4. Which country was Mussolini from?
5. Who was president of the US during WWII?
Life on the Home Front

• While WWII was causing devastation across Europe and Asia, in America WWII created a positive effect
• The war put an end to the Great Depression in the US, mobilizing troops opened up 19 million new jobs and doubled the average family income
• While many factories wanted to hire white men only, they were forced to hire women and minorities due to the lack on white men
• It was thought that married women should stay at home and not take jobs from men until the war started
Life on the Home Front

- Women were hired for typical jobs like clerical work, but the idea of women working in factories took off.
- “Rosie the Riveter” became a popular figure depicting a women who works leading women to take jobs in shipyards, aircraft factories, etc.
- While most women left the factories after the war, their success changed American attitudes about women in the workplace.
Life on the Home Front

- African Americans were still not getting hired so A. Philip Randolph organized the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters—a major union for African American railroad workers—and told FDR that he would bring thousands to march on Washington to secure employment.

- In response FDR issued the Executive Order 8802 which stated “there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color or national origin”.

- He established the Fair Employment Practices Commission—the first civil rights agency established by the federal government since Reconstruction era.
Life on the Home Front

• To help with the shortage of farmers in the Southwest the government introduced the Bracero Program
• This program arranged for 200,000 Mexicans to help harvest crops
• This program lasted until 1964, leading to migrant farmworkers becoming such an important part of the Southwest’s agricultural system
Life on the Home Front

- People began moving to the West and the South to get new jobs
- For the first time since the Industrial Revolution the South and West led the way in manufacturing and urbanization
- The Sunbelt, a new industrial region, was created throughout the Deep South
- The biggest problem was finding housing for these new people, so the government gave 1.2 B to build public housing, schools and community centers
- Nearly 2M people lived in government housing during the war
Life on the Home Front

- The Great Migration, African Americans moving from the South to the North in search for jobs, died down during the Great Depression, but increased again during WWII.
- As they moved to the North they were sometimes met with suspicion and intolerance.
- Violence such as the Detroit Riots and the Zoot Suit Riots broke out.
- Zoot suits are baggy suits with hats and chains, which seemed unpatriotic to those wearing victory suits, which was made with little material.
- Violence erupted in L.A. when Mexican-Americans who had adopted the zoot suits attacked sailors, 2,500 sailors went into Mexican-American neighborhoods and attacked them, the police did nothing to stop this.
- L.A. banned zoot suits.
Life on the Home Front

- Many people on the West Coast felt that Japanese Americans would not remain faithful to the US when we went to war with Japan.
- Americans turned their anger towards Japanese Americans, attacking their businesses and homes.
- On Feb. 19, 1942 President Roosevelt signed an order allowing the War Department to declare any part of the US a military zone and to remove anybody they wanted from that zone.
- Henry Stimson declared most of the West Coast a war zone and ordered all people of Japanese ancestry to evacuate to 10 internment camps.
- In *Korematsu v. the United States* the Supreme Court ruled relocation constitutional because it was based on military urgency, not race.
- Despite all this, no Japanese America was ever tried for espionage or sabotage, some even fought in the war as part of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the most decorated unit in WWII.
- In 1988 President Reagan apologized to Japanese Americans and granted each surviving Japanese American to had been interned $20,000.
Life on the Home Front

- When the economy got better, FDR got worried about inflation.
- Both prices and wages rose quickly so to stabilize, FDR came up with the Office of Price Administration and the Office of Economic Stabilization.
- OES regulated wages and the price of farm products while OPA regulated all other prices.
- Meanwhile the War Labor Board tried to prevent strikes.
Life on the Home Front

• The demand for raw materials and supplies created shortages
• The OPA began rationing products to ensure there was enough for the military
• Meat, sugar, gas and rubber were rationed, the speed limit was dropped to 35 and driving was restricted
• Every month each house would receive coupon books: Red coupons controlled meats, fats, and oils while Blue coupons controlled processed foods
• When you bought food you had to give enough coupon points to cover purchases
Life on the Home Front

- Americans returned to victory gardens, something that was promoted by the government.
- Americans also donated spare rubber, tin, aluminum and steel which came from pots, tires, tin cans, car bumpers, broken radiators, and rusting bikes.
- They exchanged bacon grease and meat for extra ration coupons.
Life on the Home Front

- The US paid more than $300 B during WWII—more money than it spent from Washington’s administration to FDR’s second term
- To raise the money the government raised taxes, which only covered 45% of the cost
- The rest of the money came from issued war bonds; E bonds were most common which Americans paid 18.75 and could be redeemed in 10 years for 25.00 (Individuals bought 50B and business bought 100B worth)
- While there were many challenges for the Americans, most stood united behind one goal—winning the war
Pushing the Axis Back

- Every one involved knew that a beach invasion would be difficult, there is no cover, you cannot retreat, but if the Allies were going to win it is what had to be done in both the Pacific and in Europe.
- After the invasion in 1942, FDR was convinced we could succeed again so he met with Churchill at the Casablanca conference and together they decided the Italy was the “soft underbelly” of Europe who would quit if the Allied forces invaded their territory.
- The goal of this new campaign was to undermine the German military, industrial and economic systems and the morale of the German people.
Pushing the Axis Back

- The Allies had already been bombing Germany before the Casablanca Conference.
- BRAF had dropped 2300 tons of explosives every month for past three years (US added 1500 in 1942).
- These numbers were small compared to the new campaign—between 1943-1945 the RAF and USAF-Army dropped 53,000 tons on Germany per month.
- While the campaign did not destroy the German morale or economy, it did cause an oil shortage, destroyed the RRs and aircraft factories, ensuring the Allies had control of the sky and their troops would not be bombed.
Pushing the Axis Back

- Gen. Eisenhower was put in charge of the invasion of Sicily.
- Gen. Patton and Montgomery were in charge of ground forces which began in July 1943.
- By August 18 the Germans had evacuated the island which lead to a crisis in the Italian government.
- The King and other officials wanted to get rid of Mussolini so he invited him to the palace and arrested him then held secret meetings with Allied forces to discuss surrendering.
- On Sept. 8 the Italian government announced their surrender.
Pushing the Axis Back

- Hitler was not willing to give up Italy so he ordered troops to gain control of Northern Italy where they put Mussolini back in charge.
- After five months of battle in North Italy, Germany was forced to retreat, two weeks later the Allies captured Rome.
- Fighting in Italy would continue on for another year—the Italian campaign was the bloodiest in the war, the Allies lost more than 300,000.
Pushing the Axis Back

- FDR wanted to meet with Stalin prior to an attack on Germany through France
- FDR, Stalin and Churchill met in Tehran, Iran to discuss a plan of action
- Stalin agreed to attack Germany on the eastern coast when the US and Britain went into France
- The three also agreed that they would break up Germany after the war so that it could never threaten peace again
- The SU promised to help the US attack Japan
- They also agreed to create a peace organization
FDR wanted to choose Gen. Marshall for Operation Overlord, but didn’t want to send him to Europe, so he put Gen. Eisenhower in charge.

In this operation, Germany had formidable defensives, but the Allies had the advantage of surprise.

Germany didn’t know when or where the Allies would come into France, but they assumed that Pas-de-Calais might be—the Allies helped them think this by placing rubber tanks, empty tents and dummy landing craft across from Calais, meanwhile the real target was Normandy.
Pushing the Axis Back

- Once everything was set to go, they had to pick a date, the weather had to be perfect, the moon had to provide light to begin the attack at night.
- The letter “D” was used to refer to the day any operation began, so this attack became known as D-Day.
- Shortly after midnight on June 6, 1944 Eisenhower gave the final order: “OK, we’ll go.”
Pushing the Axis Back

• D-Day is referred to as the Longest Day as well

• They attacked five beaches with the codenames “Utah,” “Omaha,” “Gold,” “Sword,” and “Juno”

• All were going as planned or better except Omaha, where American forces were nearly disintegrated

• However after backup arrived all five beaches were breached and 58,000 Americans were on shore while another 75,000 British and Canadian troops pushed through as well

• The invasion was a success
While invasions into France were going well, Americans had to worry about driving the Japanese back as well.

Military leaders came up with a two prong attack, Adm. Nimitz would “island-hop” getting closer to Japan while Gen. MacArthur would advance through the Solomon Islands, take N. New Guinea, and then retake the Philippines.
Pushing the Axis Back

- Adm. Nimitz went from Tarawa, to Kwajalein, both part of the Marshall Islands, then moved on to the Mariana Islands, which included Saipan, Tinian, and Guam

- Despite resistance from the Japanese, the US captured all the islands and was now in easy bombing distance of Japan
Pushing the Axis Back

• MacArthur lead his troops to take Guadalcanal, they secured New Guinea and then stopped in Morotai, to plan their attack on the Philippines

• The Battle of Letye Gulf was the largest naval battle in history, When MacArthur’s people had come onto the beach he said “People of the Philippines, I have returned. By the grace of the Almighty God, our forces stand again on Philippine soil.”

• The long and grueling battle was the first time kamikazes were used, luckily, they retreated thinking more American ships were coming’

• Fighting would continue until Aug. 1945, it did not stop until word arrived that the Japanese had surrendered
The War Ends

- While D-Day was a success, FDR knew the only way to stop the Nazis was to take France back and invade Germany.
- Within three weeks, American troops were within 20 miles of the German border.
- The Battle of the Bulge was Hitler’s last desperate attempt, he launched a surprise attack on American forces to try to cut supply lines.
- Germans surrounded American forces in Bastogne and demanded surrender to which the American commander sent the message of “Nuts!”
- Eisenhower ordered Patton to rescue them, within three days, Patton’s troops slammed through their line, and by Christmas Eve, the Germans were weak but didn’t withdraw until Jan. 8th, America could enter Germany now.
The War Ends

• While America was encroaching on Berlin from the West, the Soviets were coming in from the East
• By April 16 Soviet troops crossed the Oder River, outside of Berlin while Americans came through the Rhine, Germany’s last stronghold
• On April 30, 1945 Hitler realizing the end was near, shot himself
• His secretary, Martin Bormann carried Hitler’s body out, doused it in gasoline and set it on fire
• Hitler had chosen Grand Admirl Karl Doenitz to be his successor
• Doenitz tried to surrender to America while fighting the Soviets, but Eisenhower demanded unconditional surrender
• On May 7 1945 Germany surrendered, the next day—May 8—is proclaimed as V-E Day for “Victory in Europe”
The War Ends

- FDR would never see the defeat of Germany, on April 12, 1945 FDR suffered a stroke and died
- Harry S Truman stepped into office and told reporters: “Boys, if you ever pray, pray for me now...When they told me yesterday what happened, I felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me.”
- While the war in Germany was over in a few weeks, Japan continued to intensify, forcing Truman to make some of the most difficult decisions a president has every made
The War Ends

• B-29s kept missing targets in Japan due to it being too far to fix fuel errors, so plans were made to take a closer island—Iwo Jima
• Iwo Jima was a difficult take due to harsh terrain and Japanese artillery
• Inch by inch, American marines worked their way into the interior
• After 6,800 Marines lost their lives, Iwo Jima was secured
• Adm. Nimitz said “uncommon valor was a common virtue” when describing what happened on Iwo Jima
The War Ends

- The Manhattan Project was created by FDR after a letter he received from Albert Einstein
- The committee developed the first nuclear reactor and the detonated the first atomic bomb in New Mexico
The War Ends

- Truman gave the Japanese every opportunity to surrender unconditionally, but they refused, saying they wanted to keep their emperor in power.
- The Allies threatened Japan one final time with “prompt and utter destruction”, the Japanese didn’t reply.
- Truman felt it was his place to use every weapon available to save American lives, so on August 6, 1945 a B-29 bomber dropped “Little Boy” on Hiroshima destroying 63% of the city, and about 100,000 lives.
The War Ends

• Three days later, SU declared war on Japan
• Later that day the US dropped “Fat Man” on Nagasaki
• On Aug. 15, 1945 Japan surrendered unconditionally, this day is know as V-J Day
• The long war was finally over
The War Ends

- The United Nations was formed and Britain, France, China, SU and US were permanent members with veto powers
- The International Military Tribunal was formed to hear cases of war crimes
- The first cases were the Nuremberg Trials
- Similar trials were held for Japanese leaders as well
- Robert Jackson, chief counsel for the US at the Nuremberg Trials said “The wrongs we seek to condemn and punish have been so calculated, so malignant and so devastating, that civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored because it cannot survive their being repeated.”