

Unit III

Week 8

Read chapter 26 and answer the following questions:

1 What activities were the Germans and Japanese involved in that led to the outbreak of the second World War in Europe and Asia? How did the US government respond to the war prior to 1941?

In the years prior to the Second World War, totalitarianism spread across Europe and Japan. In Germany, Adolph Hitler quickly rose in popularity in rank promoting extreme nationalism. After assuming the role of President then appointing himself as supreme leader, Hitler intensified his efforts towards expanding an empire which he believed would dominate the world. Disregarding the Versailles Treaty, Hitler remilitarized Germany requiring mandatory service and building an airforce. In one of his earliest tests of strength, Hitler ordered the invasion of the demilitarized zone of Rhineland. After a successful takeover there, he forced a union of Austria with Germany. Facing no real opposition from other nations, Hitler moved toward claiming Sudetenland where he threatened a war with all of Europe should any country attempt to interfere. Assuming that allowing Hitler control of the area would prevent further issues, Great Britain and France agreed in the Munich Pact to transfer the land to Germany. With no intentions of honoring the agreement, Hitler took control over the remainder of the Czech Republic. Even though it was already clear Hitler was not a man of his word, leaders of other nations continued to sign agreements with him. Ignorant of Hitler's intent to ultimately invade the Soviet Union through Poland, Soviet leader Josef Stalin agreed to divide control over parts of Europe, including Poland, between himself and Hitler. Hitler's invasion of allied Poland spurred Great Britain and France to declare war on the increasingly threatening Germany.

In Japan, violent militarism took over as mistrust in party government began to spread in response to ongoing rivalries between China and Japan and relations with the United States. Japan's idea of empirical expansion included desires to take over China as a means to meet its ever-increasing needs for supplies and raw materials. Fighting between the two previously at Manchuria, and later at the Marco-Polo Bridge in Beijing, led to the start of the Second Sino-Japanese war. As Axis-aligned Japan expanded its conquered territories in China and other countries throughout Asia and the Pacific, Japan met resistance with the

American government and was cut off from receiving imports of necessities and war materials from the US including oil. Japan's retaliation strike on America at Hiroshima prompted President Roosevelt to enter fully in the war.

Prior to 1941, the United States attempted to maintain its isolationist attitudes pledging to remain out of foreign affairs as much as possible. After continued attacks across Europe and Asia by the Axis Powers, President Roosevelt began to urge Congress to consider increasing military spending in preparation of imminent war. He revised the Neutrality acts preventing the supplying materials to nations at war deeming it imperative that the US do more to stop aggressive nations while not participating in actual fighting. After the Nazi takeover of France, Roosevelt again urged the expansion of the military in anxious preparation and ramped up military supplies for the British forces with hopes they would be able to defeat Germany on their own and without the need for US physical involvement. During this time Roosevelt worked on eroding American resistance to internationalism to gain the support of a nation needing to homogenize for the coming war effort. Many isolationist politicians opposed entering into war and did not approve of expanding the military and some even supported Nazism. Nonetheless, a mandatory draft was instituted and the Lend-Lease Act was enacted allowing the US to provide lend military equipment to any nation deemed vital to the protection of the United States thus ending the United States' claims of neutrality.

2 How did Americans respond to the war effort here at home?

How was society impacted?

Describe the impact American troops had after entering the war?

List major events/battles in the European and Pacific theaters.

Highlight the major decisions made at the Yalta Conference

Prior to America's admittance into the war, many Americans opposed the US in the affairs of other countries. The attack at Pearl Harbor changed attitudes of isolationism and set off waves of new military recruits eager to defend the United States from fascist rule. The entire US population was called upon to turn all efforts and production towards supporting and manufacturing supplies needed to defeat the Axis Powers. The rise in production and vacancies left by those who joined the military led to a plethora of available jobs. Many people migrated from rural areas and to other parts of the country during this time to fill the open

positions including millions of women. Traditional family roles began to change to the dismay of many with men gone and women leaving home to work long hours. Due to the massive amount of supplies needed to sustain the soldiers in battle laws were passed to place limits on increasing prices of consumer goods and certain items were dispensed according to ration. Heavy reliance on pro-war and Anti-Axis propaganda was utilized to persuade favoritism towards the war efforts. Still some people were reluctant to show support and complained of the restrictions of services and goods. Workers of industries had their bargaining rights refused when the US government declared authority to seize operations of plants if workers went on strike. Racial relations in the US took a turn for the worse with rampant anti-Asian prejudice which led to the imprisonment of Japanese Americans at internment camps. The joining of multiple races and ethnicities into the ranks of the military and in various job positions stirred racial tensions in the military and in the states. The need for specialized help led the military to revise some of its discriminatory practices for the duration of the war.

After entering the war, the Axis powers were met with a severely underestimated show of force by the United States military. Utilizing the mass amounts of recruits and supplies provided by the efforts of the US population, America strengthened the defense of the Allied powers beyond the capabilities of its enemies. After the bombing of Hiroshima US and the declaration of war on the US by Germany and Italy, the US began retaliation towards Germany by sinking many of their U-boats and going after their lesser controlled Axis areas such as Morocco and Sicily. Americans along with the British were able to crack German radio codes which gave Allied advantage in the seas and allowed the transportation of American troops and war goods to rise exponentially. In attempts to destroy Germany directly the American Airforce orchestrated assaults on Germany which led Hitler to direct more resources into aerial battle which they did not have to spare. In a surprise attack at the beaches of Normandy, American and Allied forces stormed the Germans and were ultimately able to overpower them, leading the way for the Soviet offense to further destroy the Germans stationed in various areas of Europe. At the Battle of the Bulge, Hitler attempted to disrupt the invasion of allied Forces into Germany but was ultimately defeated by the help of General Patton's Third Army of 250,00 soldiers and supplies dropped by US airmen.

Meanwhile, battles happening in the Pacific also demanded an American military response. In the Philippines, thousands of American soldiers were

captured and tortured by the Japanese at the Bataan Death March enraging American soldiers and people at home. Shortly after at the Battle of Coral Sea, US troops were able to divert an attack on New Guinea and destroy a Japanese aircraft carrier. Americans were able to crack Japan's radio code heading off another attack the Japanese were planning for Pearl Harbor at the Battle of Midway where Americans took out a large percent of Japan's air fleet. In other areas of the Pacific, American General MacArthur led American and Australian forces against the Japanese during the Battle of Leyte Gulf where several areas were liberated from Japanese control. In the final battles leading up to Japan's surrender, attacks were attempted by American-led Allies on Iwo Jima and on Okinawa with hopes of turning the areas into air bases. Shortly after American generals ordered the use of napalm bombs against the defiant Japanese military and people.

At the imminence of Germany's defeat, Josef Stalin called upon Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt to discuss how Germany and parts of Europe would be divided among the allied superpowers. Stalin's goal was to ultimately spread Soviet control over the majority of eastern and Central Europe. At the heart of his request for territorial claims was the desire to regain control over areas of Poland that had once belonged to Russia. Churchill and Roosevelt held no disagreement except for the idea that if Stalin were allowed to regain control, Poland would not be under communist order and would operate as a self-governing democracy. Stalin refused this idea and used the ongoing war in Japan as a bargaining chip to demand areas in Japan and China as well. The US and Britain both depended on the efforts of the Soviet military to win the war so the three world leaders signed the Yalta Declaration of Europe which released nations of Europe to Stalin with promises that the areas would be allowed to form their own democracies. In order to gain Soviet participation in the United Nations, concessions for Stalin's demands were made to the disapproval of many who viewed the compromises as short-sighted.

3 What finally brought about the Japanese surrender?

Japan's refusal to accept defeat led President Truman to authorize the use of the atomic bomb against Japan. At an allied conference in Germany, Japan was ordered to surrender under the threat of utter destruction should the country not comply. After the day ordered for surrender came and went, the first atomic bomb was dropped over Hiroshima. With Japan's refusal to surrender and to avoid opportunistic infiltration of Japan from the Soviets, Truman ordered another

atomic bomb dropped over Nagasaki. Five days later Japan accepted the terms of surrender and agreed to cease fighting.

Week 9

Please read Chapter 27 and answer the following questions:

1 What are the origins of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union?

Though Allied together to stop Japan and Germany in the world war, contentions grew between the United States and the Soviet Union as both sought the implementation of their own very conflicting ideals over parts of Europe and Asia. The death of President Roosevelt complicated matters as the new president Harry Truman engaged in confrontational solutions aimed at stopping the spread of communism. With Soviet non-compliance to the Yalta agreement, the US set out to undermine Soviet control of Europe while simultaneously seeking to instate capitalistic democracies across the same areas. Stalin's promises to allow liberated countries a free democratic process were disregarded and instead the people of those areas were met with a heavy-handed totalitarian regime where they had no choice other than to comply or be punished. This, and the Soviet development of the atomic bomb, was extremely concerning to the US government who now fully understood the Soviet Union as a threat to the American capitalist system which controlled the US and areas where the US had a major influence. The Soviet threat to capitalism and the world economy, which America benefited greatly from, spurred the United States to greater action against Stalin's attempts at control and expansion. In order to gain support from the American people, exaggerations were made about the communist threat fueling fear and mistrust of nations aligned with the Soviet superpower. Disagreements between the US and the Soviet Union regarding government structure, religious freedom, human rights, and individual liberties led to battles that would penetrate American life and foreign policy for decades.

2 What was the Fair Deal and what was its main agenda?

With the support of Truman's presidency in steady decline and reelection on the table, President Truman looked towards the rebranding of Roosevelt's New Deal which included proposals that were aimed at helping the American people and economy. The major goals of Truman's Fair Deal included a focus on civil rights, preventing discrimination, public housing legislation, expanding benefits for the retired and unemployed, increasing federal spending on education, tax cuts, providing citizens with health insurance, expanding the energy grid, raising the minimum wage, and fair labor practices. Truman saw his Fair Deal as a means to provide greater economic opportunities and a better more stable way of life for the American people.

3 What were the major international developments between 1949 and 1950?

How did they alter United States foreign policy?

What was the "Red Scare?"

What impact did it have on politics/government and the American people?

By 1949 focus on domestic issues took a backseat to more pressing international affairs. The Chinese Nationalist loss to the Communists in the Chinese Civil War presented a problem for the United States. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union had detonated their own more powerful atomic bombs. In response, Truman requested an assessment for determining America's ability to contain the spread of communism. The NSC-68 report detailed a necessity for building up the military and increasing the stockpile of weapons including nuclear bombs. The fear of Soviet domination drove the US to supply allied nations with financial and material aid for expanding their own arsenals. The containment of communism became a major driver of near all foreign policy for many years until the end of the Cold War in the 1990s.

The ongoing war on communism and constant concerns of infiltration set America on edge. Claims from the House Committee on Un-American Activities made claims that Communist agents were actively attempting to overthrow the government of the United States. In response, Truman began ordering extensive background checks to ensure government workers had no ties to communism. The same group also made claims that Hollywood was working for communist regimes leading to the arrest and prosecution of people supposedly found to be

plotting against the US. Some people were found selling atomic secrets to the Soviet Union and the hysteria thereafter led to mass suspicions and innocent people accused of being foreign agents or spies. Some politicians exploited the fears of communism with false testimonies which took off like wildfire among people who took the claims as truth. Red-baiting tactics were used to attack the character of other politicians, sway public opinions, prevent people of certain political affiliations from employment, and even affected free speech. People immigrating to the United States were met with increased suspicion and scrutiny and were outright banned if they had affiliations with totalitarian parties. The Red Scare led to the disruption of people's lives as paranoia took hold and people began suspecting even their neighbors of being Soviet spies.

Week 10 and 11

Please read Chapter 28 and answer the following questions:

1. What were President Eisenhower's political philosophy, main priorities, and what was his influence on global affairs?

President Eisenhower's political philosophy was built upon what he referred to as moderate conservatism. His intent was to preside from a middle way in between conservatism and liberalism. He considered himself to be mostly conservative dealing with money and liberal when dealing with people. Many of his goals were focused on perpetuating the American Dream through idealized views encompassed in the traditional values of white conservative culture. As a strong supporter of state's rights, he sought to cut back on excessive federal interference in local government, yet he did not completely dismantle the progressive reforms put in place by his Democratic predecessors. Most of his priorities focused on reigning in federal spending, balancing the legislature, cutting taxes, allowing for worker protections, raising wages, providing housing for low-income Americans, expanding infrastructure, extending Social Security, and maintaining peace at home and globally.

In foreign matters, Eisenhower's main focus was on the "peaceful" removal of the Communist threat. With nuclear weapons in play, Eisenhower utilized the threat to persuade other nations to comply with US demands. In Korea, promises to use nuclear warfare were sufficient to persuade North Korea into a ceasefire agreement. President Eisenhower also used underhanded approaches to gain intel and prevent Communist leaders from assuming power through the CIA to manipulate foreign governments. He went to great lengths to attempt to stop

communism but stopped short of preventing dictatorships from assuming power, even helping them, such as he did in Iran, so long as they opposed communism. Eisenhower held to the idea that areas susceptible to communist control, like Vietnam, needed immediate intervention or else surrounding areas would fall like dominoes which led his administration to view every insurgency as a major crisis that would affect America. As a Soviet threat moved towards Hungary, American anti-communist propaganda filled their radio waves projecting a false sense of US-backed support led to the deaths of thousands of Hungarian Freedom fighters and forcing another 200,000 to flee. In Egypt, as fighting went on about control over the Suez Canal, Eisenhower went against the invading British and French troops, condemning their attempts to gain control over the contested canal even threatening to impose economic sanctions on the countries should they continue to interfere. After the incident, Eisenhower elected the US to be in charge of Western relations in the Middle East with the Eisenhower Doctrine, which promised to provide aid to Arab nations dealing with Communist aggression. In Germany Eisenhower again threatened the use of the nuclear bomb against Soviet Russia for intimidating West Berlin but was met with accusations of illegal spying when an intel plane was shot down in Soviet airspace. In his final days of office, one of his last acts to stave off the communistic threat was to suspend diplomatic relations with Cuba and train a rebel force after a US-led dictator lost control to Communist Fidel Castro.

2. What factors contributed to postwar prosperity? How did Americans benefit from it?

With manufacturers no longer needing to focus on turning out supplies for the war, mass production of consumer goods and meeting the material needs of the new housing market, paired with increased government spending, led to one of America's greatest economic booms. Infrastructure projects, which included the construction of interstates, airports, and bridges led to an increase in tourism which in turn stimulated the creation of motels, convenience stores, restaurants, and growth of the automobile industry. Military-related research led to new inventions and discoveries which were translated into consumer goods. During this time the aircraft industry made huge gains and by 1957 was the largest employer in the US. Because so many nation's economies were devastated during the war, the US had a monopoly on production and international trade. Cheap oil at home made heating and travel affordable. The employment rate was extremely low and many Americans experienced large increases in spendable

income which drove materialism and consumer culture. More people were able to receive loans to buy homes sending homeownership rates higher than they had ever been. The GI-Bill helped veterans attend college, start businesses and get jobs, and also provided access to homes with no down payment.

3. What were the goals and strategies of the civil rights movement that emerged in the 1950s? What was its impact?

Many of the benefits America saw during the 50s were not extended towards people of color. Racism and discrimination were still prevalent and far-reaching in a largely bigoted society preventing the majority of African Americans and other races and ethnicities from achieving the same successes or comforts the white population were able to enjoy. Though civil rights movements had been in motion prior to this time, they came to a head when many African Americans and their supporters banded together to call out their unfair treatment and being viewed as inferior based solely on the color of their skin or country of origin. In the streets, people protested and went against local laws, even risking arrest, physical abuse, and other punishments to call attention to their dissatisfaction with being forced to concede to whites in every aspect of life on a daily basis. Wanting nothing more than a level playing field between all Americans and fair treatment as human beings, Civil Rights activists pushed for integration at schools, improved access to education, the removal of Jim Crow practices including the segregation of public facilities and interferences with their rights to vote, along with an end to discriminatory practices in housing and employment. Several cases were taken into the courts to fight the oppression such as *Brown v. Board of Education* the Supreme Court was called upon to desegregate public schools. President Eisenhower showed no support however and sided with segregationists which fueled already racist political and social movements intended to prevent equality among differing races. With segregation being ruled unconstitutional, many racists pushed back violently warranting a military response. Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr, and other activists promoted the idea of nonviolent civil disobedience and encouraged boycotts as a means to make their concerns heard. The actions of the civil rights activists brought a change in multiple aspects of people's lives, but the fight for equality was still far from over.