# War

Germany was defeated in World War 1 and the subsequent Treaty of Versailles had broken up Austro-Hungarian, German, and Russian empires: this redrew the map of Europe. President Wood Wilson had wished to make World War 1 the war to end all wars and hoped that his new paradigm of collective security in international relations, as actualized through the League of Nations, would limit power struggles among the nations of the world.

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The 1920s and 1930s some Americans favored active engagement in Europe but most Americans and many politicians did not want to get involved in European affairs. America interfered with other countries in the Western Hemisphere but they wanted to avoid global conflict. they still enter the war when the four power treaty signed by Great Britain france and Japan in 1921 agreed to forgo territorial expansion in Asia. In 1928 the United States and 14 countries signed the Kellogg briand pact declaring war an international crime. But it failed because there was no enforcement if nations failed to abide by the Kellogg briand pact.

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Economic depression and political instability were growing in Europe when the United States remained more insular and isolationist. During the 1920s the international financial system was propped up largely by American loans to foreign countries. The crash of 1929 when the US stock market plummeted in American capital dried up it set in motion a series of financial chain reactions a contributed significantly to a global downward economic spiral. Around the world industrialized economies face significant problems of economic depression and worker unemployment.

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many European countries suffered even before the Great Depression. A post war recession and the continuation of wartime inflation had hurt many economies as did a decrease in agricultural prices which made it harder for farmers to buy manufactured goods or pay off loans to banks. In such an environment Benito Mussolini capitalized on the frustrations of the Italian people who felt betrayed by the versaille treaty. In 1919 Mussolini created the fasce italiani di combattimento also known as the Italian combat squadron. The organization's main tenets of fascism called for a heightened focus on national unity militarism social darwinism and a lo

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The Nazis gained a lot of followers during the Great Depression it hurt Germany tremendously plunging it further into economic crisis. But 1930 two 30% of the German labor force was unemployed. And many people were angry salad . Hitler a World War One veteran promised to return Germany to greatness by the beginning of 1933 the Nazis had become the largest party in the German legislature. Germany's president Paul von heidenburg at the urging of large industrials who feared the communist uprising appointed Hitler to the position of chancellor in January 1933. The Nazis gained power in 1933 and passed the enabling act in the same month which ga

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Leaders in the Soviet Union, which developed its own form of brutal totalitarianism through communism, paid close attention to Hitlers actions and public pronouncements. Soviet leader Joseph Stalin realized that Poland, part of which had belonged to Germany before the First World War, was most likely next. Although fiercely opposed to Hitler, Stalin, sobered by the French and British betrayal of Czechoslovakia and unprepared for a major war, decided the best way to protect the Soviet Union, and gain additional territory, was to come to some accommodation with the German dictator. In August 1939, Germany and the Soviet Union essentially agree

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Militaristic politicians also took control of Japan in the 1930s. The Japanese had worked assiduously for decades to modernize, build their strength, and become a prosperous, respected nation. The sentiment in Japan was decidedly pro-capitalist, and the Japanese militarists were fiercely supportive of a capitalist economy. They viewed with great concern the rise of Communism in the Soviet Union and in particular China, where the issue was fueling a civil war, and feared that the Soviet Union would make inroads in Asia by assisting Chinas Communists. The Japanese militarists thus found a common ideological enemy with Fascism and National Socia

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President Franklin Roosevelt was aware of the challenges facing the targets of Nazi aggression in Europe and Japanese aggression in Asia. Although he hoped to offer U.S. support, Congresss commitment to nonintervention was difficult to overcome. Such a policy in regards to Europe was strongly encouraged by Senator Gerald P. Nye of North Dakota. Nye claimed that the United States had been tricked into participating in World War I by a group of industrialists and bankers who sought to gain from the countrys participation in the war. The United States, Nye urged, should not be drawn again into an international dispute over matters that did not c

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Roosevelts willingness to accede to the demands of the noninterventionists led him even to refuse assistance to those fleeing Nazi Germany. Although Roosevelt was aware of Nazi persecution of the Jews, he did little to aid them. In a symbolic act of support, he withdrew the American ambassador to Germany in 1938. He did not press for a relaxation of immigration quotas that would have allowed more refugees to enter the country, however. In 1939, he refused to support a bill that would have admitted twenty thousand Jewish refugee children to the United States. Again in 1939, when German refugees aboard the SSÂ St. Louis, most of them Jews, wer

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To ensure that the United States did not get drawn into another war, Congress passed a series of Neutrality Acts in the second half of the 1930s. The Neutrality Act of 1935 banned the sale of armaments to warring nations. The following year, another Neutrality Act prohibited loaning money to belligerent countries. The last piece of legislation, the Neutrality Act of 1937, forbade the transportation of weapons or passengers to belligerent nations on board American ships and also prohibited American citizens from traveling on board the ships of nations at war.

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Once all-out war began between Japan and China in 1937, Roosevelt sought ways to help the Chinese that did not violate U.S. law. Since Japan did not formally declare war on China, a state of belligerency did not technically exist. Therefore, under the terms of the Neutrality Acts, America was not prevented from transporting goods to China. In 1940, the president of China, Chiang Kai-shek, was able to prevail upon Roosevelt to ship to China one hundred P-40 fighter planes and to allow American volunteers, who technically became members of the Chinese Air Force, to fly them.

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In 1938, the agreement reached at the Munich Conference failed to satisfy Hitlerin fact, the refusal of Britain and France to go to war over the issue infuriated the German dictator. In May of the next year, Germany and Italy formalized their military alliance with the Pact of Steel. On September 1, 1939, Hitler unleashed his Blitzkrieg, or lightning war, against Poland, using swift, surprise attacks combining infantry, tanks, and aircraft to quickly overwhelm the enemy. Britain and France had already learned from Munich that Hitler could not be trusted and that his territorial demands were insatiable. On September 3, 1939, they declared war

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In August 1941, Roosevelt met with the British prime minister, Winston Churchill, off the coast of Newfoundland, Canada. At this meeting, the two leaders drafted the Atlantic Charter, the blueprint of Anglo-American cooperation during World War II. The charter stated that the United States and Britain sought no territory from the conflict. It proclaimed that citizens of all countries should be given the right of self-determination, self-government should be restored in places where it had been eliminated, and trade barriers should be lowered. Further, the charter mandated freedom of the seas, renounced the use of force to settle international

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By the second half of 1941, Japan was feeling the pressure of the American embargo. As it could no longer buy strategic material from the United States, the Japanese were determined to obtain a sufficient supply of oil by taking control of the Dutch East Indies. However, they realized that such an action might increase the possibility of American intervention, since the Philippines, a U.S. territory, lay on the direct route that oil tankers would have to take to reach Japan from Indonesia. Japanese leaders thus attempted to secure a diplomatic solution by negotiating with the United States while also authorizing the navy to plan for war. The

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Whatever reluctance to engage in conflict the American people had had before December 7, 1941, quickly evaporated. Americans incredulity that Japan would take such a radical step quickly turned to a fiery anger, especially as the attack took place while Japanese diplomats in Washington were still negotiating a possible settlement. President Roosevelt, referring to the day of the attack as a date which will live in infamy, asked Congress for a declaration of war, which it delivered to Japan on December 8. On December 11, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States in accordance with their alliance with Japan. Against its wishes, the U