# World War II

## 1930s Totalitarian Regimes

Fascism was on the rise, people were questioning democracy. In a fascist system, everything is political and serves the interest of the state.

4 regimes, all totalitarian:

* Italy - Benito Mussolini, Fascism.
* Germany - Adolf Hitler, National Socialism. Predicated on racial identity.
* Soviet Union - Josef Stalin, Communism.
* Japan - Emperor Hirohito, Militarism.

## The US Pre-WWII

**US Neutrality Acts**

* Banned US sale of war supplies to nations at war
* Banned US loans to nations at war
* Declared US citizens sail on vessels at war at their own risk

## World War II Unfolds

* August 23, 1939: Nazi Germany and Soviet Union sign a non-aggression pact.
* Sept 1, 1939: Nazi Germany invades Poland, Britain and France declare war. This is the start of the war.
* Sept 17, 1939: Soviet Union invades Poland.
* June 25, 1940: France falls to Germany
* June 10-October 31, 1940: Battle of Britain. Germany launches an air attack on Britain, trying to take out the Royal Air Force to prevent bombing of Germany.
* June 22, 1941: Germany invades the Soviet Union. Bad move, Hitler.

## US Aid to Britain and the Allies

* 1939: Cash-and-Carry policy. British have to pay in cash up front, and they have to pay for shipping, but the US will sell things to Britain
* 1940: “Bases-for-destroyers” deal. Britain needs destroyers to fight the U-boats, US trades naval bases for destroyers
* 1941: Lend-lease program. The US gives stuff to Britain to be paid back whenever you feel like, man.

## Helping Britain in the Battle of the Atlantic

* US Navy Neutrality patrols. US Navy planes are monitoring for German U-boats in the Atlantic.
* US Marines occupy Iceland in 1941
* Churchill and Roosevelt met in 1941, acting as allies before the US entered the war. Strengthened the bond between Britain and the US.

## 1941 Tensions Mount in the Atlantic

* USS Greer trades shots with German U-boat, FDR issues “shoot-on-sight” order
* Several US merchant ships are sunk
* USS Kearny is torpedoed, 11 sailors killed
* USS Reuben James torpedoed and sunk, 115 sailors lost, 44 survivors
* Congress authorizes arming of US merchant vessels

## Meanwhile in the Pacific

* 1937: Japan invades China
* 1941: US imposes oil embargo on Japan

## Pearl Harbor - December 7, 1941

Japan launches an attack on the US naval base of Pearl Harbor. Sinks a few destroyers, some of which were restored and used in the war. Brings the US into the war.

## America’s Arsenal of Democracy

The US has tons of planes, tanks, arms, field guns and mortars, landing craft, ships, and ammo. Congress doesn’t take over companies, instead lets them operate at a profit and produce things for the war. Companies retool themselves to produce wartime products.