



LIFE·PAC®

History & Geography



Alpha Omega Publications®

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY 1108

A NATION AT WAR

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HISTORY 1108

A NATION AT WAR

The Depression that hit the United States during the early 1930s was not experienced by the United States alone. The effects of the economic disaster were felt world-wide and resulted in widespread hunger, unemployment, and desperation. Because of that desperation, some European nations built large military forces to combat the economic situation. As jobs became more numerous because of the increase in military troops, this build-up increased production and lowered unemployment. The subsequent military expansion, however, caused growing tensions as smaller nations were overcome by the threat of the great military power. This tension would eventually result in a second global confrontation, World War II. After the war disputes over occupied territories gave way to a Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. Each nation sought the victory of its political philosophies on a world-wide scale. The eventual involvement of the United States in fighting the growth of Communism and totalitarianism throughout the world brought divisiveness and frustrations to its own people.

In this unit you will learn about the mounting tension on the European scene as nations overstocked their military might and sought to expand and to conquer. You will also examine the role of the United States and the strategies of the Allies in World War II on both the European and the Pacific fronts that ended in victory over the determined Axis powers. Next, you will observe how the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union arose over the occupation of nations following the war and how the Soviets later branched out with repeated outbreaks of Communist infiltration throughout the world. Also, you will learn why the United States assumed the role of “the world’s policeman” against Communism and why it determined to help smaller nations against the threat of a Communist takeover. Finally, you will study the effect of the overseas involvement of the United States and the subsequent frustrations from the problems this involvement brought to America and its people.

Once steeped in isolationism, the United States stepped out boldly in the 1950s and 1960s to become the staunch opponent of Communism wherever it threatened the freedom of others. Hopefully, by studying this unit, you will better understand the price this country paid in terms of freedom—not only here but also for the freedom of people around the world.

OBJECTIVES

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFE PAC®.

When you have finished this LIFE PAC, you should be able to:

1. Explain the economic and military causes of World War II.
2. Describe the Allied victories on the European front that led to the end of the war in Europe.
3. Describe the strategies and victories of the United States in the war on the Pacific front.
4. Identify the main issues and developments of the Cold War.
5. List the early offensives under President Truman and President Eisenhower against the growing communist threat.
6. Describe the causes and the hostilities of the Korean conflict.
7. Explain both the background and the influence of President Eisenhower in promoting world peace.
8. List the steps taken by President Kennedy in the United States’ increased resistance against communist world infiltration.
9. Describe President Nixon’s plan for withdrawal from Vietnam.
10. Describe the effects of the Vietnam war on United States servicemen and civilians.

Survey the LIFE PAC. Ask yourself some questions about this study. Write your questions here.

I. WORLD WAR II

The 1930s were years of desperate struggle for the citizens of the United States as they strove to keep their heads above the deep waters of the Great Depression. The positive actions of President Franklin D. Roosevelt had put a large number of people back to work and had inspired a discouraged United States. Economic recovery, however, had a long way to go to put the United States back on its feet. A world conflict played a major role.

World War II caused more deaths, cost more money, damaged more property, affected more people, and probably caused more far-reaching changes than any other war in history. The Second World War introduced the atomic age and brought sweeping changes in warfare. Trucks sped infantrymen to the battlefield after aerial bombings; giant tanks and pinpoint artillery weakened the enemy. Bombers and ballistic missiles rained death and destruction upon the armed forces and civilians alike. Airplanes, warships, and men worked together with split-second timing in **amphibious** attacks and paratroopers dropped from airplanes or landed in gliders to seek out the enemy.

The number of men killed, wounded or missing between September 1939 and September 1945, is impossible to accurately count. It is estimated that more than 10 million Allied troops and nearly 6 million Axis troops died during the Second World War. The war cost more than \$1,000 trillion. More than fifty countries took part in the war with the entire world feeling the effects in one way or another. Fighting erupted in almost every part of the world. The chief battlefields of World War II were located in Asia, Europe, North Africa, the Atlantic Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, and both in and around the Mediterranean Sea.

World War II began on September 1, 1939 when Germany attacked Poland by using the *blitzkrieg*, or lightning warfare. Soon after this successful attack, the German war machine defeated Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and France. Surprisingly, the Germans required only three months to conquer these countries. However, Adolf Hitler, the dictator of Germany, failed in his prolonged attempt to defeat Great Britain with bombing missions and with submarine blockades. Nevertheless, by 1941 Hitler's armies had also conquered Yugoslavia and Greece and had marched into Soviet union.

Japan's plans for expansion in the Far East included a surprise attack on the United States' naval fleet at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Finally, after a series of serious disasters, the Allies took the offensive. Totally committed and determined, the Allies halted the Axis advances at El Alamein in North Africa, off Midway Island in the Pacific, and at Stalingrad in Soviet union. Allied amphibious invasions leapfrogged across the Pacific Islands and brought the Allies to the doorstep of Japan. In Europe, Allied troops landed in Italy and France and methodically pushed on into Germany. Italy sur-

rendered on September 3, 1943; Germany surrendered on May 7, 1945; and, after the dropping of the atomic bomb on two Japanese cities, the Japanese surrendered on September 2, 1945, bringing an end to the terrible conflict known as World War II.

In this section you will study the economic and military causes of World War II and the factors that caused the United States to become involved in this global conflict.

SECTION OBJECTIVES

Review these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Explain the economic and military causes of World War II:
 - 1.1 Describe the build-up of power in Germany, Italy, and Japan in the 1930s.
 - 1.2 Name two advantages of war on a nation's economy.
 - 1.3 Outline the seizure of land and power by the Germans and the Italians.
 - 1.4 Describe Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.
2. Describe the Allied victories on the European front that led to the end of the war in Europe.
3. Describe the strategies and victories of the United States in the war on the Pacific front:
 - 3.1 Describe Doolittle's raid.
 - 3.2 Outline General MacArthur's strategies.
 - 3.3 Describe the bombing of Japan.

VOCABULARY

Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.

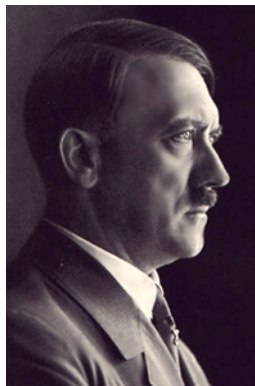
amphibious	Debarking from ship to land
armada	A fleet of ships or large force of moving things
chancellor	In some European countries, a chief minister of state
dictator	One ruling absolutely and often oppressively
fascism	A political philosophy supporting an autocratic government headed by a dictator
Fuhrer	A title applied to Hitler by his followers; German for "leader"
guerrilla	Irregular fighting forces often operating at the rear of the enemy and using unconventional tactics
mobilize	To assemble and prepare for war or combat
premier	Chief minister of state
reprisal	The application of force by one nation against another in retaliation for acts committed

Note: All vocabulary words in this LIFEPAAC appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are unsure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

WORLD WAR II: CAUSES OF THE WAR



During the early 1930s Europe also felt the effects of the Great Depression. Hunger and unemployment were observed everywhere. In desperation the people of the Eastern Hemisphere, lacking strong leadership, capital, and equipment allowed things to occur that in better times they would have vigorously opposed. Hopelessly and tragically the people fell under the leadership of ruthless dictators and **fascism**.



Hitler

Economic causes. In Germany during the early 1930s, a sense of despair and helplessness prevailed. Germany's democratic tradition was deeply undermined when President Paul von Hindenburg asked Adolf Hitler to become **chancellor**. Many prominent Germans backed the appointment in hopes that this move would help to strengthen and to unite the country. As promised, Hitler did reduce unemployment. However, he accomplished this reduction by building up the military and by establishing various branches of his National Socialist Party's (Nazi) youth movement. Industrial jobs became numerous especially in factories producing military products. With the growth of industry, the economy improved. By building up its army, navy, and air force, the Germans were directly violating the Versailles Treaty that prohibited military growth. Hitler's ideas concerning the military were not confined to defensive purposes alone. A nation that banks its economy so heavily on its military strength becomes a dangerous nation that eventually requires an outlet such as war.



Mussolini

Meanwhile, in Italy, Benito Mussolini was in power as the **premier** and **dictator** from 1922 to 1943. Mussolini also limited unemployment by stressing military duty. Although not nearly as productive as German industry, the Italian economy was also based on a large military buildup, thus presenting another dangerous potential.

By the late 1930s Japan had also become more and more ambitious. For economic reasons, the Japanese were determined to take control of the various islands in southeast Asia. The natural resources of these islands, especially rubber and oil, were greatly needed by the Japanese. Control of these islands would also provide better trade and an advantage in fishing rights. With 90 million people living on four major islands and many smaller ones, Japan needed tremendous imported resources to fuel its modern industries. Because of a depressed economy and international politics, raw materials and trade in Japan were at dangerously low levels. The United States had created a sensitive situation with Japan because of the strong competition it was giving them in the race for natural resources and for increased Pacific trade.

