

Chapter 1 : Military history of the United States during World War II - Wikipedia

For instance, during World War II, gas, sugar, and butter were a few of the items rationed in the United States. WACS/WAVES Women's Army Corps/Women Appointed for Volunteer Emergency Service in the Navy - about , women served in these units, including the marines, Coast Guard, and army air corps.

They sought peace through isolation and throughout the s advocated a policy of disarmament and nonintervention. As a result, relations with Latin-American nations improved substantially under Hoover, an anti-imperialist. This enabled Roosevelt to establish what became known as the Good Neighbor Policy , which repudiated altogether the right of intervention in Latin America. By exercising restraint in the region as a whole and by withdrawing American occupation forces from the Caribbean, Roosevelt increased the prestige of the United States in Latin America to its highest level in memory. As the European situation became more tense, the United States continued to hold to its isolationist policy. Congress, with the approval of Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull , enacted a series of neutrality laws that legislated against the factors that supposedly had taken the United States into World War I. As Italy prepared to invade Ethiopia , Congress passed the Neutrality Act of , embargoing shipment of arms to either aggressor or victim. Stronger legislation followed the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in , in effect penalizing the Spanish government, whose fascist enemies were receiving strong support from Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler. National Archives, Washington, D. When Japan invaded China in , however, he seemed to begin moving away from isolationism. He then quickly denied that his statement had any policy implications , and by December, when Japanese aircraft sank a U. With strong public opposition to foreign intervention, Roosevelt concentrated on regional defense, continuing to build up the navy and signing mutual security agreements with other governments in North and South America. With the fall of France to Germany in June , Roosevelt, with heavy public support, threw the resources of the United States behind the British. He ordered the War and Navy departments to resupply British divisions that had been rescued at Dunkirk minus their weaponry, and in September he agreed to exchange 50 obsolescent destroyers for year leases on eight British naval and air bases in the Western Hemisphere. The question of how much and what type of additional aid should be given to the Allies became a major issue of the election of , in which Roosevelt ran for an unprecedented third term. Public opinion polls, a new influence upon decision makers, showed that most Americans favoured Britain but still wished to stay out of war. An alarmed Roosevelt fought back, going so far as to make what he knew was an empty promise. Roosevelt won a decisive victory. Roosevelt watching while the blindfolded secretary of war, Henry L. Stimson, draws the first number in the first peacetime draft lottery in U. In August Roosevelt met with the British prime minister , Winston Churchill , off the coast of Newfoundland to issue a set of war aims known as the Atlantic Charter. It called for national self-determination, larger economic opportunities, freedom from fear and want, freedom of the seas, and disarmament. Although in retrospect U. Isolationism was a great political force, and many influential individuals were determined that U. In fact, as late as August 12, , the House of Representatives extended the Selective Training and Service Act of by a vote of only to Despite isolationist resistance, Roosevelt pushed cautiously forward. In late August the navy added British and Allied ships to its Icelandic convoys. Its orders were to shoot German and Italian warships on sight, thus making the United States an undeclared participant in the Battle of the Atlantic. During October one U. The United States now embarked on an undeclared naval war against Germany, but Roosevelt refrained from asking for a formal declaration of war. According to public opinion polls, a majority of Americans still hoped to remain neutral. The war question was soon resolved by events in the Pacific. As much as a distant neutral could, the United States had been supporting China in its war against Japan, yet it continued to sell Japan products and commodities essential to the Japanese war effort. Then, in July , the United States applied an embargo on the sale of aviation gas, lubricants, and prime scrap metal to Japan. When Japanese armies invaded French Indochina in September with the apparent purpose of establishing bases for an attack on the East Indies , the United States struck back by embargoing all types of scrap iron and steel and by extending a loan to China. Japan promptly retaliated by signing a limited treaty of alliance, the Tripartite Pact , with Germany and Italy.

Roosevelt extended a much larger loan to China and in December embargoed iron ore, pig iron, and a variety of other products. Japan and the United States then entered into complex negotiations in the spring of 1941. Neither country would compromise on the China question, however, Japan refusing to withdraw and the United States insisting upon it. Believing that Japan intended to attack the East Indies, the United States stopped exporting oil to Japan at the end of the summer. The United States Pacific Fleet and to conquer Southeast Asia, thereby becoming self-sufficient in crude oil and other vital resources. By the end of November Roosevelt and his military advisers knew through intercepted Japanese messages that a military attack was likely; they expected it to be against the East Indies or the Philippines. To their astonishment, on December 7 Japan directed its first blow against naval and air installations in Hawaii. In a bold surprise attack, Japanese aircraft destroyed or damaged 18 ships of war at Pearl Harbor, including the entire battleship force, and planes. Pacific Fleet, December 7, 1941. On December 8, 1941, Congress with only one dissenting vote declared war against Japan. Three days later Germany and Italy declared war against the United States; and Congress, voting unanimously, reciprocated. As a result of the attack on Pearl Harbor, the previously divided nation entered into the global struggle with virtual unanimity. The United States at war. Although isolationism died at Pearl Harbor, its legacy of unpreparedness lived on. Anticipating war, Roosevelt and his advisers had been able to develop and execute some plans for military expansion, but public opinion prohibited large-scale appropriations for armament and defense. Thus, when Pearl Harbor was attacked, the United States had some 2 million men under arms, but most were ill-trained and poorly equipped. Barely a handful of army divisions even approached a state of readiness. The Army Air Corps possessed only 1,000 combat planes, many of which were outdated. The navy was better prepared, but it was too small to fight a two-ocean war and had barely been able to provide enough ships for convoy duty in the North Atlantic. Eventually more than 15 million men and women would serve in the armed forces, but not until would the United States be strong enough to undertake large-scale offensive operations. War production Roosevelt had begun establishing mobilization agencies in 1940, but none had sufficient power or authority to bring order out of the chaos generated as industry converted to war production. He therefore created the War Production Board in January 1942 to coordinate mobilization, and in an Office of War Mobilization was established to supervise the host of defense agencies that had sprung up in Washington, D. C. Gradually, a priorities system was devised to supply defense plants with raw materials; a synthetic rubber industry was developed from scratch; rationing conserved scarce resources; and the Office of Price Administration kept inflation under control. Stock footage courtesy The WPA Film Library After initial snarls and never-ending disputes, by the beginning of production was reaching astronomical totals—double those of all the enemy countries combined. Hailed at the time as a production miracle, this increase was about equal to what the country would have produced in peacetime, assuming full employment. War production might have risen even higher if regulation of civilian consumption and industry had been stricter. Scientists, under the direction of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, played a more important role in production than in any previous war, making gains in rocketry, radar and sonar, and other areas. Among the new inventions was the proximity fuze, which contained a tiny radio that detonated an artillery shell in the vicinity of its target, making a direct hit unnecessary. Of greatest importance was the atomic bomb, developed by scientists in secrecy and first tested on July 16, 1945. Taxes paid 41 percent of the cost, less than Roosevelt requested but more than the World War I figure of 33 percent. The remainder was financed by borrowing from financial institutions, an expensive method but one that Congress preferred over the alternatives of raising taxes even higher or making war bond purchases compulsory. The Revenue Act of 1942 revolutionized the tax structure by increasing the number who paid income taxes from 13 million to 50 million. At the same time, through taxes on excess profits and other sources of income, the rich were made to bear a larger part of the burden, making this the only period in modern history when wealth was significantly redistributed. Social consequences of the war Despite the vast number of men and women in uniform, civilian employment rose from 46 million in 1940 to more than 53 million in 1945. The pool of unemployed men dried up in 1945, and further employment increases consisted of women, minorities, and over- or underage males. These were not enough to meet all needs, and by the end of the year a manpower shortage had developed. One result of this shortage was that blacks made significant social and economic progress. Although the armed forces continued to practice segregation, as did Red Cross blood

banks, Roosevelt, under pressure from blacks, who were outraged by the refusal of defense industries to integrate their labour forces, signed Executive Order on June 25, It prohibited racial discrimination in job training programs and by defense contractors and established a Fair Employment Practices Committee to insure compliance. By the end of nearly 2,, blacks were at work in defense industries. As black contributions to the military and industry increased, so did their demands for equality. This sometimes led to racial hostilities, as on June 20, , when mobs of whites invaded the black section of Detroit. Nevertheless, the gains offset the losses. Lynching virtually died out, several states outlawed discriminatory voting practices, and others adopted fair employment laws. Full employment also resulted in raised income levels, which, through a mixture of price and wage controls , were kept ahead of inflation. Despite both this increase in income and a no-strike pledge given by trade union leaders after Pearl Harbor, there were numerous labour actions. Workers resented wage ceilings because much of their increased income went to pay taxes and was earned by working overtime rather than through higher hourly rates. In consequence, there were almost 15, labour stoppages during the war at a cost of some 36,, man-days. Strikes were greatly resented, particularly by the armed forces, but their effects were more symbolic than harmful. The time lost amounted to only one-ninth of 1 percent of all hours worked. Because Pearl Harbor had united the nation, few people were prosecuted for disloyalty or sedition , unlike during World War I. The one glaring exception to this policy was the scandalous treatment of Japanese and Americans of Japanese descent. The Japanese-Americans lost their liberty, and in most cases their property as well, despite the fact that the Federal Bureau of Investigation , which had already arrested those individuals it considered security risks, had verified their loyalty. The election Roosevelt soundly defeated Gov. Dewey of New York in the election , but his margin of victory was smaller than it had been previously. His running mate, chosen by leaders who disliked former vice president Henry A. Wallace for his extreme liberalism, was Sen. Truman of Missouri , a party Democrat who had distinguished himself by investigating fraud and waste among war contractors. After a series of conferences in December , Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill announced the formation of the United Nations , a wartime alliance of 26 nations. In Roosevelt began planning the organization of a postwar United Nations, meeting with congressional leaders to assure bipartisan support. In addition to political harmony, Roosevelt promoted economic cooperation, and, with his full support, in the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were created to bar a return of the cutthroat economic nationalism that had prevailed before the war. Throughout the war Roosevelt met with Churchill and Stalin to plan military strategy and postwar policy. His last great conference with them took place at Yalta in Crimea in February There policies were agreed upon to enforce the unconditional surrender of Germany, to divide it into zones for occupation and policing by the respective Allied forces, and to provide democratic regimes in eastern European nations.

Chapter 2 : WORLD WAR II UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE VICTORY MEDAL | eBay

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Using the high altitude B, it was necessary for the raids to be conducted in daylight for the drops to be accurate. As adequate fighter escort was rarely available, the bombers would fly in tight, box formations, allowing each bomber to provide overlapping machine-gun fire for defense. The tight formations made it impossible to evade fire from Luftwaffe fighters, however, and American bomber crew losses were high. One such example was the Schweinfurt-Regensburg mission, which resulted in staggering losses of men and equipment. In part because of their heavier armament and armor, they carried smaller bomb loads than British bombers. Also, both the U. Government and its Army Air Forces commanders were reluctant to bomb enemy cities and towns indiscriminately. They claimed that by using the B and the Norden bombsight, the USAAF should be able to carry out "precision bombing" on locations vital to the German war machine: The text of the Casablanca directive read: Formations of unescorted bombers were no match for German fighters, which inflicted a deadly toll. In despair, the Eighth halted air operations over Germany until a long-range fighter could be found in; it proved to be the P Mustang, which had the range to fly to Berlin and back. USAAF leaders firmly held to the claim of "precision bombing" of military targets for much of the war, and dismissed claims they were simply bombing cities. Within two weeks of the arrival of these first six sets, the Eighth command gave permission for them to area bomb a city using H2X and would continue to authorize, on average, about one such attack a week until the end of the war in Europe. In reality, the day bombing was "precision bombing" only in the sense that most bombs fell somewhere near a specific designated target such as a railway yard. Conventionally, the air forces designated as "the target area" a circle having a radius of feet around the aiming point of attack. In the fall of , only seven percent of all bombs dropped by the Eighth Air Force hit within 1, feet of their aim point. Nevertheless, the sheer tonnage of explosive delivered by day and by night was eventually sufficient to cause widespread damage, and, more importantly from a military point of view, forced Germany to divert resources to counter it. This was to be the real significance of the Allied strategic bombing campaignâ€”resource allocation. For the sake of improving the US air-force Fire bombing capabilities a mock-up German Village was built up and repeatedly burned down. It contained full-scale replicas of German residential homes. Fire bombing attacks proved quite successful, in a single attack on Hamburg roughly 50, civilians were killed and practically the entire city destroyed. With the addition of the Mustang to its strength, the Combined Bomber Offensive was resumed. Gen Jimmy Doolittle signaled a change in how the American bombing effort went forward over Europe. When the Combined Bomber Offensive officially ended on 1 April, Allied airmen were well on the way to achieving air superiority over all of Europe. German prisoners of war escorted by American soldiers in Cherbourg, Operation Overlord The second European front that the Soviets had pressed for was finally opened on 6 June, when the Allies attacked the heavily fortified Atlantic Wall. Supreme Allied commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower had delayed the attack because of bad weather, but finally the largest amphibious assault in history began. Army Rangers scaled the cliffs at Pointe du Hoc under intense enemy fire and destroyed the German gun emplacements that could have threatened the amphibious landings. Also prior to the main amphibious assault, the American 82nd and 101st Airborne divisions dropped behind the beaches into Nazi-occupied France, in an effort to protect the coming landings. Many of the paratroopers were not dropped on their intended landing zones and were scattered throughout Normandy. As the paratroops fought their way through the hedgerows, the main amphibious landings began. The landing craft bound for Utah, as with so many other units, went off course, coming ashore two kilometers off target. The 4th Infantry Division faced weak resistance during the landings and by the afternoon were linked up with paratroopers fighting their way towards the coast. At Omaha the Germans had prepared the beaches with land mines, Czech hedgehogs and Belgian Gates in anticipation of the invasion. Intelligence prior to the landings had placed the less experienced German 16th Division in charge

of the defense of the beach. However, the highly trained and experienced nd moved in days before the invasion. As a result, the soldiers from the 1st and 29th Infantry Divisions became pinned down by superior enemy fire immediately after leaving their landing craft. In some instances, entire landing craft full of men were mowed down by the well-positioned German defenses. As the casualties mounted, the soldiers formed impromptu units and advanced inland. The small units then fought their way through the minefields that were in between the Nazi machine-gun bunkers. After squeezing through, they then attacked the bunkers from the rear, allowing more men to come safely ashore. By the end of the day, the Americans suffered over 6, casualties. Landings here were necessary in order to link up the British landings to the east at Gold Beach with the American landing to the west at Utah Beach, thus providing a continuous lodgement on the Normandy coast of the Bay of the Seine. Taking Omaha was to be the responsibility of United States Army troops, with sea transport and naval artillery support provided by the U. Navy and elements of the British Royal Navy. Army Rangers redirected from Pointe du Hoc, were to assault the western half of the beach. The battle-hardened 1st Infantry Division was given the eastern half. The initial assault waves, consisting of tanks, infantry, and combat engineer forces, were carefully planned to reduce the coastal defenses and allow the larger ships of the follow-up waves to land. The primary objective at Omaha was to secure a beachhead of some five miles eight kilometres depth, between Port-en-Bessin and the Vire River, linking with the British landings at Gold Beach to the east, and reaching the area of Isigny to the west to link up with VII Corps landing at Utah Beach. Opposing the landings was the German nd Infantry Division, a large portion of whom were teenagers, though they were supplemented by veterans who had fought on the Eastern Front. The nd had never had any battalion or regimental training. Of the 12, men of the division, only 6, were experienced combat troops, detailed to defend a kilometre-long mile front. The Germans were largely deployed in strongpoints along the coastâ€”the German strategy was based on defeating any seaborne assault at the water line. Difficulties in navigation caused the majority of landing craft to miss their targets throughout the day. The defenses were unexpectedly strong, and inflicted heavy casualties on landing US troops. Under heavy fire, the engineers struggled to clear the beach obstacles; later landings bunched up around the few channels that were cleared. Weakened by the casualties taken just in landing, the surviving assault troops could not clear the heavily defended exits off the beach. This caused further problems and consequent delays for later landings. Small penetrations were eventually achieved by groups of survivors making improvised assaults, scaling the bluffs between the most heavily defended points. The US VII Corps immediately began making their push after the beaches were secured on 6 June, facing mix of weak regiments and battlegroups from several divisions who used the bocage terrain, flooded fields and narrow roads to their advantage which slowed the American advance. After being reinforced, VII corps took control of the peninsula in fierce fighting on 19 June and launched their assault on Cherbourg on 22 June. The German garrison surrendered on 29 June, but by this time they had destroyed the port facilities, which were not made fully operational until September. The battle took place between 10 and 15 June , on the approaches to and within the city of Carentan, France. The objective of the attacking American forces was consolidation of the U. The defending German force attempted to hold the city long enough to allow reinforcements en route from the south to arrive, prevent or delay the merging of the lodgments, and keep the U. The 17th SS Panzergrenadier Division, ordered to reinforce Carentan, was delayed by transport shortages and attacks by Allied aircraft. The attacking st Airborne Division, landed by parachute on 6 June as part of the American airborne landings in Normandy, was ordered to seize Carentan. In the ensuing battle, the st forced passage across the causeway into Carentan on 10 and 11 June. A lack of ammunition forced the German forces to withdraw on 12 June. Operation Cobra After the amphibious assault, the Allied forces remained stalled in Normandy for some time, advancing much more slowly than expected with close-fought infantry battles in the dense hedgerows. However, with Operation Cobra, launched on 24 July with mostly American troops, the Allies succeeded in breaking the German lines and sweeping out into France with fast-moving armored divisions. This led to a major defeat for the Germans, with , soldiers trapped in the Falaise pocket , and the capture of Paris on 25 August. The offensive is also referred to in American and British histories of the Battle of Normandy as the Mortain counter-offensive. The assault was ordered by Adolf Hitler, to eliminate the gains made by the First United States Army during

Operation Cobra and the subsequent weeks, and by reaching the coast in the region of Avranches at the base of the Cotentin peninsula, cut off the units of the Third United States Army which had advanced into Brittany.

Chapter 3 : Milestones: – Office of the Historian

The United States in World War II: - (The Drama of American History Series Book 20) - Kindle edition by James Lincoln Collier, Christopher Collier. Download it once and read it on your Kindle device, PC, phones or tablets.

Visit Website Did you know? As early as , in his memoir and propaganda tract "Mein Kampf" My Struggle , Adolf Hitler had predicted a general European war that would result in "the extermination of the Jewish race in Germany. In the mids, he began the rearmament of Germany, secretly and in violation of the Versailles Treaty. After signing alliances with Italy and Japan against the Soviet Union , Hitler sent troops to occupy Austria in and the following year annexed Czechoslovakia. Hitler had long planned an invasion of Poland, a nation to which Great Britain and France had guaranteed military support if it was attacked by Germany. The pact with Stalin meant that Hitler would not face a war on two fronts once he invaded Poland, and would have Soviet assistance in conquering and dividing the nation itself. On September 17, Soviet troops invaded Poland from the east. Under attack from both sides, Poland fell quickly, and by early Germany and the Soviet Union had divided control over the nation, according to a secret protocol appended to the Nonaggression Pact. In fact, the Germans broke through the line with their tanks and planes and continued to the rear, rendering it useless. Hitler now turned his attention to Britain, which had the defensive advantage of being separated from the Continent by the English Channel. To pave the way for an amphibious invasion dubbed Operation Sea Lion , German planes bombed Britain extensively throughout the summer of , including night raids on London and other industrial centers that caused heavy civilian casualties and damage. Arguments between Hitler and his commanders delayed the next German advance until October, when it was stalled by a Soviet counteroffensive and the onset of harsh winter weather. World War II in the Pacific With Britain facing Germany in Europe, the United States was the only nation capable of combating Japanese aggression, which by late included an expansion of its ongoing war with China and the seizure of European colonial holdings in the Far East. On December 7, , Japanese aircraft attacked the major U. Germany and the other Axis Powers promptly declared war on the United States. After a long string of Japanese victories, the U. Pacific Fleet won the Battle of Midway in June , which proved to be a turning point in the war. On Guadalcanal, one of the southern Solomon Islands, the Allies also had success against Japanese forces in a series of battles from August to February , helping turn the tide further in the Pacific. In mid, Allied naval forces began an aggressive counterattack against Japan, involving a series of amphibious assaults on key Japanese-held islands in the Pacific. The approach of winter, along with dwindling food and medical supplies, spelled the end for German troops there, and the last of them surrendered on January 31, Soviet troops soon advanced into Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania, while Hitler gathered his forces to drive the Americans and British back from Germany in the Battle of the Bulge December January , the last major German offensive of the war. An intensive aerial bombardment in February preceded the Allied land invasion of Germany, and by the time Germany formally surrendered on May 8, Soviet forces had occupied much of the country. Hitler was already dead, having committed suicide on April 30 in his Berlin bunker. Post-war Germany would be divided into four occupation zones, to be controlled by the Soviet Union, Britain, the United States and France. Heavy casualties sustained in the campaigns at Iwo Jima February and Okinawa April-June , and fears of the even costlier land invasion of Japan led Truman to authorize the use of a new and devastating weapon—the atomic bomb—on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in early August. On August 10, the Japanese government issued a statement declaring they would accept the terms of the Potsdam Declaration, and on September 2, U. World War II proved to be the most devastating international conflict in history, taking the lives of some 35 to 60 million people, including 6 million Jews who died at the hands of the Nazis. Millions more were injured, and still more lost their homes and property. The legacy of the war would include the spread of communism from the Soviet Union into eastern Europe as well as its eventual triumph in China, and the global shift in power from Europe to two rival superpowers—the United States and the Soviet Union—that would soon face off against each other in the Cold War. Start your free trial today.

Chapter 4 : The U.S. Home Front During World War II - HISTORY

World War II cost the United States an estimated \$ billion in dollars - equivalent to 74% of America's GDP and expenditures during the war. In dollars, the war cost over \$ trillion. In dollars, the war cost over \$ trillion.

It killed more people, cost more money, damaged more property, affected more people, and caused more far-reaching changes in nearly every country than any other war in history. The number of people killed, wounded, or missing between September and September can never be calculated, but it is estimated that more than 55 million people perished. More than 50 countries took part in the war, and the whole world felt its effects. Men fought in almost every part of the world, on every continent except Antarctica. The United States hoped to stay out. Drawing on its experience from World War I, Congress passed a series of Neutrality Acts between and , which were intended to prevent Americans becoming entangled with belligerents. Americans in general, however, while not wanting to fight the war, were definitely not neutral in their sympathies and the acts were manipulated, to the frustration of genuine isolationists, to lend more support to the Allies than the Axis. Historians do not agree on the exact date when World War II began. Most consider the German invasion of Poland on September 1, , to be the beginning of the war. Others say it started when the Japanese invaded Manchuria on September 18, . War officially began on September 1, , when Germany attacked Poland. Germany then crushed six countries in three months – Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, and France – and proceeded to conquer Yugoslavia and Greece. By early , all major countries of the world were involved in the most destructive war in history. World War II would go down in the history books as bringing about the downfall of Western Europe as the center of world power, leading to the rise of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics U. That, combined with the outcome of World War I , led to major repositioning of world power and influence. That was fertile ground for the emergence of various forms of totalitarian governments in the Soviet Union, Japan, Italy, and Germany, as well as other countries. Many countries had liberal democratic governments following World War I, but dictatorship developed during the s and s, which destroyed democratic rights. The Germans found it easy to blame the harsh Treaty of Versailles for their troubles. Germany set up a republican form of government in . Many Germans blamed the new government for accepting the hated treaty. People who could not find jobs began to drift into the Communist and National Socialist parties. Prior to , Britain, France, and Germany were the industrial and financial centers of the world. Following World War I, those countries lost their positions and the United States filled their place. America dominated the world market of food, minerals, and industry. When the stock market crashed on October 29, , the financial crisis had worldwide consequences and the reaction of nations to the dire financial straits of the Depression had a huge impact. After World War I, Germany, Italy, and Japan – anxious to regain or increase their power – adopted forms of dictatorship. The League of Nations was unable to promote disarmament. When Adolf Hitler came into power, he promised to end the humiliating conditions caused by German defeat in World War I. Economic problems were among the fundamental causes of World War II. Germany, Italy, and Japan considered themselves unjustly handicapped in trying to compete with other nations for markets, raw materials, and colonies. The Depression destroyed the market for imported silk from Japan, which had provided the country with two-fifths of its export income. Military leaders took control of the government, and in , Japan invaded China, looking for more raw materials and bigger markets for her factories. The League of Nations called a conference of 60 nations in Geneva, Switzerland, in . The conference was one in a long line of disarmament conferences that had been occurring since the end of World War I. Germany, whose military power had been severely limited by the Treaty of Versailles , announced that world disarmament had to be accomplished, or Germany would rearm and achieve military equality. France refused to disarm until an international police system could be established. The conference adjourned temporarily and by the time it was back in session, Hitler had become chancellor of Germany and was already preparing to rearm. Germany withdrew from the conference, which ended in failure, without any hope for disarmament. America prepares for war After the war began in Europe in , people in the Americas were divided on whether their countries should take part or stay out. Most Americans hoped the Allies would win,

but they also hoped to keep the United States out of war. The isolationists, wanted the country to stay out of the war at almost any cost. Another group, the interventionists, wanted the United States to do all in its power to aid the Allies. Canada declared war on Germany almost at once, while the United States shifted its policy from neutrality to preparedness. It began to expand its armed forces, build defense plants, and give the Allies all-out aid short of war. Roosevelt called upon the United States to be "the great arsenal of democracy," and supply war materials to the Allies through sale, lease, or loan. The Lend-Lease bill became law on March 11, 1941. During the next four years, the U. S. At the height of its strength in 1945, the United States had six million in the Army; 3, in the Navy; 2, in the Army air forces; 1, in the Marine Corps; and 1, in the Coast Guard. In 1945, the United States had about 2, airplanes and warships. By 1945, it had about 80, airplanes and 2, warships. The United States used draft laws to build their armed forces. Factories in the United States converted from civilian to war production with amazing speed. Firms that had made vacuum cleaners before the war began to produce machine guns. As men went into the armed forces, women took their places in war plants. By 1945, more than two million women were working in American war industries. In shipyards and aircraft plants, Rosie the riveter became a common sight. Officials discovered that women could perform the duties of eight of every 10 jobs normally done by men. Most governments, both Allied and Axis, had to ration the amount of consumer goods each person could use. In the United States, rationed items included meats, butter, sugar, fats, oil, coffee, canned foods, shoes, and gasoline. Congress gave the president power to freeze prices, salaries, and wages at their levels of September 15, 1941. The United States imposed a special excise tax on such luxury items as jewelry and cosmetics. The government also set up a civil-defense system to protect the country from attack. Many cities practiced "blackouts" in which cities on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts dimmed their lights. Ordinarily, the glare from their lights made ships near the shore easy targets for submarines. Every country in the Americas eventually declared war on the Axis, but only Brazil, Canada, Mexico, and the United States actually provided military forces. Great Britain and the United States worked out the broad strategic outlines of the war. They considered Germany the greater and closer enemy. The Allies fought to preserve their countries and stabilize Europe, as well as destroy Nazism and establish democracy. The Soviet aim was to drive out the Nazis and emerge strong enough to continue communization of the world. Germany and its six allies were known as the Axis. The Allies mobilized about 62 million men and women, while the Axis mobilized about half that number. The goal of the Axis powers was simple. Germany intended to build up a powerful empire by occupying territory to the east and south. Then, after overrunning France, it would use air assaults to force Britain to make peace. Hitler had two aims: His ally, Benito Mussolini, had his own aims: Italy hoped to take advantage of German successes to grab territory for itself. Japan had no plans for invading the United States mainland. That was followed by moves into Austria and Czechoslovakia, and finally, on September 1, 1939, German forces invaded Poland. That brought a declaration of war from France and Britain. Some historians believe that the Soviet Union leadership knew in the spring or early summer of that Germany planned to invade Poland in September. Thus, the Soviet Union signed a nonaggression pact with Germany just two weeks before the attack. They also made a secret agreement to divide Poland with the Germans after the conquest. Also, despite having signed a non-aggression treaty with Joseph Stalin, Hitler turned on his ally and prepared to become the master of Europe. Germany and Italy declared war on the United States on December 11, 1941. It was quite important in strategic terms, with the Mediterranean and the British African Empire at stake. It was the only theater in which the Western Allies engaged both German and Italian ground forces. Hitler did not want British planes within striking distance of his one major oil source, the Ploiesti fields in Romania, and in November 1941, he prepared his soldiers to join in the fight. More than 1, German and Italian prisoners of war were taken. Following seesawing control of Libya and parts of Egypt, British Commonwealth forces succeeded in pushing the Axis back. The dispersion of the Axis forces throughout Europe during this time was an important reason why the Allies were able to gain the upper hand in North Africa. Hitler was preoccupied with the Russian front and many divisions of the German army were already committed to it. North Africa was essentially used as a springboard for the Allied invasion of Sicily in July and Italy in September of the same year. Along with worldwide domination, Hitler also aimed to rid the world of various ethnic, religious, national, and secular groups. The Holocaust began in 1941 and continued until 1945. The goal of the

Nazis was to attempt, on an industrial scale, to assemble and exterminate as many people as possible. Concentration camps were established and mass executions carried out. The Jews of Europe were the main targets, but Hitler also targeted Poles, Slavs, gypsies, the disabled, and gay men. By the end of the war, approximately six million people had been killed by the German Gestapo or the SS.

Chapter 5 : Guide to United States Naval Administrative Histories of World War II

Chapter 8 America and World War II, In response to Japanese aggression throughout Asia, the United States placed a trade embargo on the Japanese Empire. President Roosevelt hoped that halting Japan's access to oil would cripple Japan's military and halt its aggression in Asia.

London and Washington both believed in Mahanian doctrine, which stressed the need for a unified fleet. However, in contrast to the cooperation achieved by the armies, the Allied navies failed to combine or even coordinate their activities until mid Tokyo also believed in Mahan , who said command of the seasâ€”achieved by great fleet battlesâ€”was the key to sea power. Therefore, the IJN kept its main strike force together under Admiral Yamamoto and won a series of stunning victories over the Americans and British in the 90 days after Pearl Harbor. Outgunned at sea, the American strategy for victory required a holding action against the IJN until the much greater industrial potential of the U. It is often a misconception that the U. Pacific fleet was "sunk" at Pearl Harbor. It is correct to say that American industrial might was a deciding factor in World War II, and Admiral Yamamoto knew that a prolonged war for Japan was a losing war. Battle of Midway The Battle of Midway, together with the Guadalcanal campaign, marked the turning point in the Pacific. The Japanese fleet lost four aircraft carriers to the U. Military historian John Keegan called the Battle of Midway "the most stunning and decisive blow in the history of naval warfare. Battle of Guadalcanal Guadalcanal, fought from August to February , was the first major Allied offensive of the war in the Pacific Theater. This campaign saw American air, naval and ground forces augmented by Australian and New Zealander forces in a six-month campaign slowly overwhelm determined Japanese resistance. Guadalcanal was the key to controlling the Solomon Islands , which both sides saw as strategically essential. Both sides won some battles but both sides were overextended in terms of supply lines. Enormous effort went into recruiting and training sailors and Marines, and building warships, warplanes and support ships in preparation for a thrust across the Pacific, and to support Army operations in the Southwest Pacific, as well as in Europe and North Africa. Not every Japanese stronghold had to be captured; some, like the big bases at Truk, Rabaul and Formosa were neutralized by air attack and then simply leapfrogged. The ultimate goal was to get close to Japan itself, then launch massive strategic air attacks and finally an invasion. Navy did not seek out the Japanese fleet for a decisive battle, as Mahanian doctrine would suggest; the enemy had to attack to stop the inexorable advance. Battle of the Philippine Sea[edit] The carrier Zuikaku center and two destroyers under attack June 20, The climax of the carrier war came at the Battle of the Philippine Sea. The previous week an even bigger landing force hit the beaches of Normandyâ€”by the Allies had resources to spare. The Japanese launched an ill-coordinated attack on the larger American fleet; Japanese planes operated at extreme ranges and could not keep together, allowing them to be easily shot down in what Americans jokingly called the "Great Marianas Turkey Shoot. It was entirely an air battle, in which Americans had all the technological advantages. It was the largest naval battle in history to date, surpassed only by the Battle of Leyte Gulf in October Japanese strategy[edit] The American 5th Fleet covering the landing comprised 15 big carriers and planes, plus 28 battleships and cruisers, and 69 destroyers. They were outnumbered 2â€”1 and used inferior equipment. Ozawa had anti-aircraft guns but lacked proximity fuzes and good radar. Ozawa gambled on surprise, luck and a trick strategy, but his battle plan was so complex and so dependent on good communications that it quickly broke down. The Japanese ships would stay beyond American range, but their planes would have enough range to strike the American fleet. They would hit the carriers, land at Guam to refuel, then hit the Americans en route back to their carriers. Ozawa counted heavily on the or so ground-based planes that had been flown ahead to Guam and other islands in the area. June [edit] Main articles: Invasion of Normandy and Normandy landings The invasion of Normandy, France, was the largest and most complex amphibious operation of all time. Casualties were remarkably small, with the Germans having hardly any airpower or seapower to combat it. The navies used , British, 53, American, and men from other allies. In addition there were 25, sailors from the Allied merchant navies.

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The opponents of the United States and its allies in World War II. Lend-Lease Act (pg.) An arrangement for the transfer of war supplies, including food, machinery, and services to nations whose defense was considered vital to the defense.

For more information, please see the full notice. Without the remarkable efforts of the Soviet Union on the Eastern Front, the United States and Great Britain would have been hard pressed to score a decisive military victory over Nazi Germany. Nevertheless, in spite of intense pressure to sever relations with the Soviet Union, Roosevelt never lost sight of the fact that Nazi Germany, not the Soviet Union, posed the greatest threat to world peace. Following the Nazi defeat of France in June of 1940, Roosevelt grew wary of the increasing aggression of the Germans and made some diplomatic moves to improve relations with the Soviets. Welles refused to accede to Soviet demands that the United States recognize the changed borders of the Soviet Union after the Soviet seizure of territory in Finland, Poland, and Romania and the reincorporation of the Baltic Republics in August 1939, but the U. Government did lift the embargo in January 1941. Finally, during the Congressional debate concerning the passage of the Lend-Lease bill in early 1941, Roosevelt blocked attempts to exclude the Soviet Union from receiving U. Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles. The most important factor in swaying the Soviets eventually to enter into an alliance with the United States was the Nazi decision to launch its invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. President Roosevelt responded by dispatching his trusted aide Harry Lloyd Hopkins to Moscow in order to assess the Soviet military situation. Although the War Department had warned the President that the Soviets would not last more than six weeks, after two one-on-one meetings with Soviet Premier Josef Stalin, Hopkins urged Roosevelt to assist the Soviets. The United States entered the war as a belligerent in late 1941 and thus began coordinating directly with the Soviets, and the British, as allies. Several issues arose during the war that threatened the alliance. The most important disagreement, however, was over the opening of a second front in the West. In 1942, Roosevelt unwisely promised the Soviets that the Allies would open the second front that autumn. Although Stalin only grumbled when the invasion was postponed until 1943, he exploded the following year when the invasion was postponed again until May of 1944. In retaliation, Stalin recalled his ambassadors from London and Washington and fears soon arose that the Soviets might seek a separate peace with Germany. Harry Lloyd Hopkins. In spite of these differences, the defeat of Nazi Germany was a joint endeavor that could not have been accomplished without close cooperation and shared sacrifices. Militarily, the Soviets fought valiantly and suffered staggering casualties on the Eastern Front. When Great Britain and the United States finally invaded northern France in 1944, the Allies were finally able to drain Nazi Germany of its strength on two fronts. Furthermore, during the wartime conferences at Tehran and Yalta, Roosevelt secured political concessions from Stalin and Soviet participation in the United Nations. While President Roosevelt harbored no illusions about Soviet designs in Eastern Europe, it was his great hope that if the United States made a sincere effort to satisfy legitimate Soviet security requirements in Eastern Europe and Northeast Asia, and to integrate the U. Unfortunately, soon after the war, the alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union began to unravel as the two nations faced complex postwar decisions.

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â€”quoted in *The GI War: EXPANDING THE MILITARY The military's work force B. 17 A. Philip Randolph, The United States in World War II the.*

If the Japanese military could successfully attack Hawaii and inflict damage on the naval fleet and casualties among innocent civilians, many people wondered what was to prevent a similar assault on the U. Visit Website This fear of attack translated into a ready acceptance by a majority of Americans of the need to sacrifice in order to achieve victory. During the spring of , a rationing program was established that set limits on the amount of gas, food and clothing consumers could purchase. Families were issued ration stamps that were used to buy their allotment of everything from meat, sugar, fat, butter, vegetables and fruit to gas, tires, clothing and fuel oil. Meanwhile, individuals and communities conducted drives for the collection of scrap metal, aluminum cans and rubber, all of which were recycled and used to produce armaments. Many of these workers were women. Indeed, with tens of thousands of American men joining the armed forces and heading into training and into battle, women began securing jobs as welders, electricians and riveters in defense plants. Until that time, such positions had been strictly for men only. Soon afterward, Walter Pidgeon , a Hollywood leading man, traveled to the Willow Run aircraft plant in Ypsilanti, Michigan , to make a promotional film encouraging the sale of war bonds. One of the women employed at the factory, Rose Will Monroe , was a riveter involved in the construction of B and B bombers. During the war years, the decrease in the availability of men in the work force also led to an upsurge in the number of women holding non-war-related factory jobs. By the mids, the percentage of women in the American work force had expanded from 25 percent to 36 percent. Just over two months after Pearl Harbor, U. President Franklin Roosevelt signed into law Executive Order , which resulted in the removal from their communities and the subsequent imprisonment of all Americans of Japanese descent who resided on the West Coast. Executive Order was the offshoot of a combination of wartime panic and the belief on the part of some that anyone of Japanese ancestry, even those who were born in the U. Despite the internment of their family members, young Japanese-American men fought bravely in Italy, France and Germany between and as members of the U. By the end of the war, the th had become the most decorated combat unit of its size in Army history. Baseball and the Battlefield In January , Kenesaw Mountain Landis , the national commissioner of baseball, wrote a letter to President Roosevelt in which he asked if professional baseball should shut down for the duration of the war. During the war, 95 percent of all professional baseball players who donned major league uniforms during the season were directly involved in the conflict. Feller, in fact, enlisted in the U. Navy one day after Pearl Harbor. Because baseball was depleted of so many able bodies, athletes who otherwise likely never would have made the big leagues won spots on rosters. One of the more notable was Pete Gray , a one-armed outfielder who appeared in 77 games for the St. Louis Browns in Not all those who served in the military were superstars. Over minor leaguers also were killed. Other players overcame debilitating wartime injuries. One was Bert Shepard , a minor league pitcher turned air force fighter pilot. The following year, he pitched three innings for the Washington Senators in a major league game. The movie-going experience included a newsreel, which lasted approximately 10 minutes and was loaded with images and accounts of recent battles, followed by an animated cartoon. While many of these cartoons were entertainingly escapist, some comically caricatured the enemy. As for the main program, movie theaters showed non-war-related dramas, comedies, mysteries and Westerns; however, a significant segment of feature films dealt directly with the war. Scores of features spotlighted the trials of men in combat while demonizing the Nazis and Japanese who perpetuated the conflict. Many appeared in government-produced training films and morale-boosting short subjects. Others participated directly in the fighting. Clark Gable , the beloved, Academy Award-winning actor, served as a tail-gunner with the U. Army Air Corps and flew combat missions over Germany. James Stewart , another equally adored Oscar winner, had enlisted in the corps even before Pearl Harbor. He eventually became a B combat pilot and commander and also flew missions over Germany. They were riveted by the frontline reports from such legendary journalists as Edward R. Meanwhile, big bands, most famously the orchestra headed by Glenn

Miller , and entertainers such as Bob Hope performed before thousands at military bases. These programs were aired directly on the radio to listeners from Maine to California. Dramatic radio programming increasingly featured war-related storylines. Citation Information The U.

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The devastation of the Great War (as World War I was known at the time) had greatly destabilized Europe, and in many respects World War II grew out of issues left unresolved by that earlier conflict.