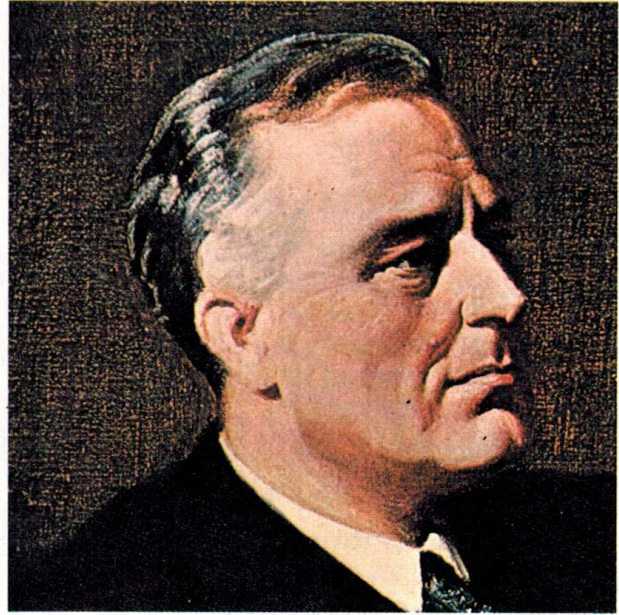


World War II

Germany Conquers

By 1939, Hitler's army had taken over the small countries of Austria and Czechoslovakia. Now Hitler demanded that **Poland** give up a piece of her land to Germany. Poland refused. Troubled by Hitler's desire to conquer, *England and France both warned Hitler that if he attacked Poland, they would help Poland.*

Meanwhile, Germany and Russia made a secret agreement to divide Poland once it was conquered. The Germans then invaded Poland. *England and France kept their word and declared war on Germany. This was the beginning of World War II.* Next, the Russian army marched into Poland. With two powerful armies attacking



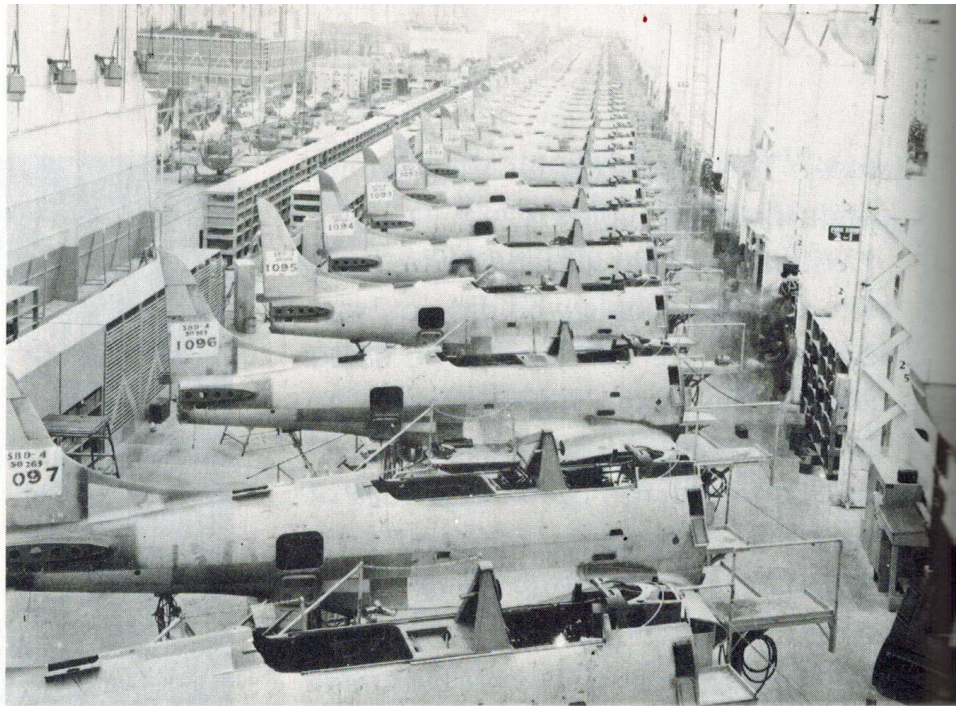
Franklin D. Roosevelt was President during the Great Depression and World War II.

Poland, there was little that England and France could do. In less than three weeks, Poland was defeated and divided between her enemies, Germany and Russia. Another light had been snuffed out in Europe.

In April, 1940, Germany attacked and defeated Norway and Denmark. In May, Germany defeated the three small countries of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. From there, Germany entered France and defeated her.

The free countries of the world were alarmed when France fell under German rule. Now, Great Britain was the only free country left in Europe not occupied by Germany. Great Britain begged the United States for help.

This airplane factory—producing hundreds of bombers for the war—shows why Roosevelt called America the “great arsenal of democracy.”



“The Great Arsenal of Democracy”

At that time, **Franklin D. Roosevelt** was President of the United States. The defeat of France shocked the American people. The cries for “peace at any price” began to die out. Our country’s factories began to make war supplies and our armed forces began to build up our navy, army, marines, and air force. Although we still had not entered the war, we had to be prepared in case of an attack. Many guns and war supplies were either sold or loaned to Great Britain and other countries struggling against the enemies. Because of this, President Roosevelt called the United States “the great arsenal of democracy.”

Germany Attacks England

Since England is an island sur-

rounded by water, Germany could not send its armies marching into her, but Hitler could send his airplanes to drop bombs over England. The Battle of Britain began.

For three months, German planes dropped bombs on England. Each day, Hitler expected England to give up, but the people of England fought hard. England’s air force was finally able to beat back the Germans. Though the war was far from over, the United States was relieved. Great Britain had not been conquered.

Russia Is Surprised

Since both Hitler and Mussolini hated communism, perhaps you have wondered why Russia was fighting on Germany’s side. Do you suppose Communist Russia could trust a dictator who hated communism? For that mat-

ter, do you suppose anyone could have trusted Hitler?

Hitler had been planning a surprise attack on Russia. If Russia was defeated, Hitler could then force Russia to provide Germany with food and supplies. Russian people could be forced to make war supplies for Germany.

In June, 1941, Germany attacked Russia. The Russian armies were surprised, but the Russian people pulled together and fought hard. Joseph Stalin, Russia's dictator, now turned and asked for help from England and the United States. Because Russia was now willing to fight against Nazism, England agreed to help.

However, *it was the cold Russian winter that helped Russia most of all.* It was now December. The German soldiers had no warm winter clothing. Their food froze. Their trucks and tanks froze. Slowly but surely, the Russian army beat the Germans back.

Three Wars in One

Although our attention has been on the fighting in Europe, we must remember that there was fighting on three continents—Europe, Africa, and Asia. Germany's Hitler led the war to conquer Europe; Italy's Mussolini led the war to conquer and control the riches found in Africa; and Japan's military

leaders set out to conquer Asia and the islands in the Pacific.

These three leaders were alike in their selfish goals. *Together, Germany, Italy, and Japan were known as the Axis powers.*

Those countries who struggled against them were called the Allied Powers, or Allies. At that time, the three most powerful Allies were Great Britain, Russia, and China. The United States would soon join the Allies.

If you look at a world map and find the three continents of Europe, Africa, and Asia, you will see how spread out World War II was. This war involved more of the world than World War I had.

Yet this one big war was really three smaller wars—one in Europe, one in Africa, and one in Asia and the surrounding islands. It became clear to the Allies that all three enemies would have to be defeated if World War II was to come to an end.