CHAPTER 28

War and Peace

ANTICIPATION/REACTION

Directions: Before you begin reading this chapter, in the column entitled “Anticipation” place a check mark beside any of the following seven statements with which you now agree. When you have completed your study of this chapter, come back to this section and in the column entitled “Reaction” place a check mark beside any of the statements with which you then agree. Note any variation in the placement of check marks from anticipation to reaction and explain why you changed your mind.

Anticipation                      Reaction

1. _____ Stunned by the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the following day Congress declared war on the Axis Powers. _____ 1.

2. _____ Although taxes were increased several times after 1941, most of the expenses for World War II were paid by borrowing—through the sale of war bonds. _____ 2.

3. _____ During World War II, the U.S. armed forces were integrated, civilian employment in defense industries was segregated, and many German, Italian, and Japanese Americans were incarcerated. _____ 3.

4. _____ During World War II, the U.S. marriage, birth, and divorce rates all decreased. _____ 4.

5. _____ When Allied forces overran Nazi defenses and discovered concentration camps in Germany and Poland, Allied leaders ordered the removal of Jewish refugees from the camps and the bombing of rail lines leading to and from them. _____ 5.

6. _____ Before he became president when Roosevelt died, Harry Truman was not aware that the United States was building an atomic bomb. _____ 6.

7. _____ The best explanation for the Soviet Union’s insistence on controlling Eastern Europe in 1945 is that it needed to protect itself from the possibility of future invasion. _____ 7.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading Chapter 28 you should be able to:

1. Explain how and why the attack on Pearl Harbor led the United States into World War II.

2. Show how World War II changed the economy on the American home front.
3. Discuss the impact of the war on American minorities: African Americans, Hispanics, Indians, Japanese Americans, and women.
4. Outline the European and Pacific war strategy and tactics.
5. Evaluate the decision to drop the atomic bomb at Hiroshima and explain how it and the decisions made at the Yalta and Potsdam conferences contributed to the postwar international order.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The Road to Pearl Harbor

The United States’ relations with Japan worsened steadily after Japan resumed its war on China in 1937 and declared the Open Door policy obsolete. Secretary of State Cordell Hull demanded that Japan withdraw from China and refrain from advancing into Southeast Asia. Japan might have limited its annexations in return for the removal of American trade restrictions imposed by Roosevelt. However, Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union in mid-1941 removed the threat of Soviet intervention in East Asia, so Japan felt free to occupy Indochina despite the risk of war with the United States.

Roosevelt retaliated by freezing Japanese assets in the United States and placing an embargo on oil. Japan countered that it would refrain from renewed expansion into Indochina if the United States and Britain would lift their economic blockade and halt aid to China. When the United States rejected these demands, Japan prepared to attack the Dutch East Indies, British Malaya, and the Philippines.

In a preemptive strike to immobilize the United States Pacific fleet, Japan launched a surprise aerial raid on the naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The American commanders there had taken precautions against sabotage but were unprepared for such an attack. On the morning of December 7, 1941, Japanese planes reduced the Pacific fleet to a smoking ruin and killed over 2,300 American servicemen. The next day, Congress declared war on Japan. Then, the Axis powers, Germany and Italy, honored their treaty obligations to Japan and declared war on the United States.

Mobilizing the Home Front

War placed immense strains on the nation’s economy, in part because the roughly 15 million men and women who entered the armed services had to be fed, clothed, housed, and supplied. Congress granted President Roosevelt wide emergency powers and did not meddle in military strategy or administrative problems, but it exercised close control over expenditures.

Roosevelt attempted to pay a large part of the costs of the war by collecting taxes rather than by borrowing. He moved to base taxation on the ability to pay, to ration scarce raw materials and consumer goods, and to regulate wages and prices. The war stimulated economic growth, especially in the South and Southwest; wartime spending proved that government spending would spark economic growth. Though eight million were unemployed in June 1940, unemployment disappeared after Pearl Harbor.
The War Economy

Supreme Court Justice James F. Byrnes resigned from the Court and assumed the role of an “economic czar” as manager of the Office of War Mobilization, which set priorities and prices. Rents, food prices, and wages were strictly regulated; items in short supply were rationed. Wages and prices soared during 1942 but stabilized in 1943.

Increased factory output and conscription caused a labor shortage, which augmented the bargaining power of organized labor. Union membership soared and strikes declined, but some work stoppages did occur. The National War Labor Board arbitrated disputes and stabilized wages.

The standard of living for most workers improved during the war, although gasoline rationing made pleasure driving nearly impossible. Plastics replaced metals in many items; rationed items were given in amounts adequate for the needs of most. Heavy borrowing was undertaken to underwrite government spending, which doubled between 1941 and 1945. More than 40 percent of the cost of the war, however, was met by taxation.

To ensure collection of taxes, Congress adopted the payroll-deduction system under which employers withheld the taxes owed by workers from paychecks and turned the money over to the government. Sharply-graduated tax rates combined with the increase in workers’ and farmers’ incomes to produce a substantial shift in the distribution of wealth in the United States—the rich collected a smaller portion of the national income.

War and Social Change

The war vastly increased the mobility of the American people. Not only were service personnel transported around the country and the world, but also new defense plants drew workers from east to west and from the rural South to northern cities. The populations of some western states grew by more than 50 percent in the 1940s, and, owing to a backlog from the thirties and wartime anxieties, marriage and birth rates rose sharply during World War II.

Minorities in Time of War: Blacks, Hispanics, and Indians

African American leaders stressed the inconsistency of minorities fighting for democracy abroad while being denied civil rights at home. The treatment of African Americans in the military improved compared to the situation in World War I, and the first African-American general was commissioned during the war. However, segregation was maintained in the armed forces and African-American soldiers, especially in the South, were often given inferior facilities in army camps.

More than five million African Americans moved from rural areas to cities between 1940 and 1945 and, though often discriminated against, found work in defense industries. African-American leadership became more militant and A. Philip Randolph organized a march on Washington in 1941 to demand equal opportunity for African Americans. Roosevelt responded with an order prohibiting discrimination in plants with defense contracts. Prejudice,
discrimination, and mistreatment of minorities did not cease, however. In 1943, a bloody race riot broke out in Detroit. In Los Angeles whites attacked Hispanic “zoot suiters.”

African-American attitudes toward the war hardened, leading some conservatives to go so far as to demand that African-American editors critical of Roosevelt be indicted for sedition. Roosevelt misjudged the depth of African-American anger and urged African-American leaders to hold their demands in abeyance until after the war.

The war encouraged assimilation of Native Americans, more than 24,000 of whom served in the armed forces. Thousands more left their reservations to work in defense plants in cities all over the country.

**The Treatment of German and Italian Americans**

Americans of German and Italian ancestry opposed the Hitler and Mussolini governments and were sufficiently assimilated into the population and were well enough organized to protect themselves from intolerance and repression during the war. Because they held fewer illusions than the generation of 1917, Americans found it easier to tolerate dissent and avoid scapegoating in World War II.

**Internment of the Japanese**

Japanese Americans were not so fortunate. Intolerance and racism resulted in the relocation of West Coast Japanese to internment camps in Wyoming, Arizona, and other interior states. About 112,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were sent into such camps against their will and despite the fact that they had committed no crime nor expressed any disloyalty to the United States. The internment camps were established in a climate of racism and fear stemming from the attack on Pearl Harbor. The Supreme Court upheld the relocation order in 1943, but near the end of the war, in *Ex parte Endo*, it forbade the internment of loyal Japanese American citizens.

**Women’s Contribution to the War Effort**

The need for women workers mushroomed when servicemen went to war. By 1945, more than 19 million women were employed. Thousands more served in the Women’s Auxiliary Air Corps and in naval, marine, and air corps auxiliaries. Although some men objected to their wives taking jobs, labor needs and employers’ eagerness to hire women prevailed—women could be paid less and were not subject to the draft.

Women took wartime jobs for the money, out of patriotism, and for the excitement and independence employment offered them. Women worked as riveters, cab drivers, welders, machine-tool operators, and in other occupations formerly the domain of men. They also faced the prejudices of many of the men they worked with.

The war also affected the lives of women who did not take jobs. Families moved to cites with war plants where housing was in short supply and crime and juvenile delinquency were problems. “War brides” also faced the problems of limited housing and day-care facilities, and
the loneliness created by their husbands being away. Hasty marriages helped increase the divorce rate during the war.

**Allied Strategy: Europe First**

1942 was a good year for the Axis powers. Hitler’s armies, which had reached Moscow, prepared for an assault on Stalingrad in 1942. German divisions under General Erwin Rommel began a drive across North Africa to the Suez Canal. U-boats were taking a toll in the North Atlantic, and Japan was overrunning the Far East.

Allied military strategists chose to concentrate first on Europe because Japan’s conquests were in remote regions and because if the Soviet Union surrendered, Hitler, without an eastern front, might find manpower enough to invade Britain. American and Soviet leaders wanted to open a second front in France, but Churchill’s plan to first bomb German industry and drive the Germans from North Africa prevailed.


Meanwhile, the Allies invaded Sicily from Africa and proceeded to the Italian mainland. Despite Mussolini’s fall from power, the campaign in Italy required months of fighting German armies across the rugged Italian peninsula. Rome did not fall until June 1944. Though it weakened the enemy, the difficult Italian campaign was discouraging to the Allies.

**Germany Overwhelmed**

The Allies landed along the coast of Normandy, France, on June 6, 1944 (D-Day), thereby opening the second European front of the war, though much later than Stalin had hoped. This liberation of France was a striking success. The American Third Army under General George S. Patton moved from Brittany and then veered eastward toward Paris. By September the Allies were fighting on the edge of Germany.

On December 16, the Nazis launched a counterattack, hoping to break through to Antwerp, Belgium, and split the Allied armies in two. The Germans drove about 50 miles into Belgium, but once the element of surprise had been overcome, their advance collapsed. This Battle of the Bulge delayed Eisenhower’s offensive, but it exhausted Germany’s last reserves.

The Allies pressed to the Rhine, and thereafter, German cities fell almost daily. Americans then overran Nazi concentration camps where some six million Jews had been slaughtered. Roosevelt had not ordered the removal of refugees and refused to bomb the death camps, such as Auschwitz in Poland, on grounds that the destruction of German soldiers and military equipment took priority over any other objective. With Soviet shells reducing Germany to ruins, Hitler took his own life. On May 8, 1945 (V-E Day), Germany surrendered.
The Naval War in the Pacific

The navy’s aircraft carriers had escaped destruction at Pearl Harbor. Without them, the Pacific war would have been different. Commanders soon discovered that carrier-based airplanes were more effective against warships than the heaviest naval artillery because of their greater range and concentrated firepower.

In the Battle of the Coral Sea in May 1942, Japan tried to cut off Australia from American aid, and though Japan damaged the American carrier *Lexington* and sank two other ships, her troop transports were forced to turn back. Japan then proceeded to Midway Island, where control of the central Pacific was decided entirely by airpower. Americans destroyed four Japanese carriers and some 300 planes, but lost only the carrier *Yorktown* and a destroyer. The tide had turned, and the initiative in the Pacific war shifted to the Americans.

General Douglas MacArthur, America’s egocentric commander in the Philippines, had fought the Japanese at Manila in 1941 until Roosevelt had him evacuated to escape capture. Thereafter, MacArthur led an American army from New Guinea back to the Philippines. A second drive under Admiral Chester Nimitz was undertaken across the central Pacific toward Tokyo.

Island Hopping

America proceeded to push the Japanese from the Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands to protect Australia from attack. In August 1942, a series of land, sea, and air battles raged around Guadalcanal Island, and once again American air power was decisive. Meanwhile, Nimitz led the campaign to liberate the Gilbert, Marshall, and Mariana islands, where Japanese soldiers fought fiercely for every foot of ground. Resisting surrender, the Japanese had to be blasted and burned from tunnels, but in every case Nimitz’s forces prevailed. From Guam, land-based bombers were within range of Tokyo.

Meanwhile, MacArthur leapfrogged along the New Guinea coast toward the Philippines and landed on Leyte in the Philippines. There, U.S. naval forces destroyed Japan’s sea power and reduced its air force to a band of suicidal *kamikazes*. MacArthur liberated Manila in February 1945. Iwo Jima and Okinawa fell to the Americans in the summer of 1945, but Japan still showed no willingness to surrender.

Building the Atom Bomb

In 1944, Roosevelt was elected to a fourth term, easily defeating New York Republican Governor Thomas E. Dewey. The Democrats nominated Missouri Senator Harry S Truman for vice-president, rejecting the controversial incumbent, Henry Wallace. Then, when Roosevelt died of a cerebral hemorrhage in April 1945, Truman was thrust into the presidency.

Government-sponsored atomic research under the direction of J. Robert Oppenheimer had been underway since 1939. Some $2 billion was spent before a successful bomb was exploded at Alamogordo, New Mexico, on July 16, 1945. Truman believed that using the bomb would bring the war to an end and in the long run save both American and Japanese lives. He was also
influenced by a desire to end the Pacific war before the Soviet Union could intervene effectively and thus claim a role in the peace process.

On August 6, the superfortress *Enola Gay* dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima. When Japan still hesitated to surrender, a second bomb blasted Nagasaki three days later. Thus ended the greatest war of history. Close to 20 million soldiers had been killed, including nearly 300,000 Americans. American resources, human and material, had made victory possible.

Despite the destruction, the postwar years seemed promising because fascism had been vanquished, the communists promised cooperation in rebuilding Europe, and isolationism had vanished in America. The war had produced new technologies and new medicines, and introduced the power of the atom, which might free humanity from poverty and toil. Moreover, the great powers signed the United Nations charter, drafted at San Francisco in June 1945, to theoretically accomplish what the League of Nations could not.

**Wartime Diplomacy**

The media had downplayed differences between the United States and its Soviet ally during the war. Former Ambassador Joseph E. Davies even claimed that Stalin was committed to Jesus’ teachings on the “brotherhood of man,” and Wendell Willkie’s “One World” hailed the Russian people and their “effective society.”

At a conference in Yalta in 1945, the Americans, British, and Soviets agreed to meet to draft a charter for the United Nations. The locus of authority in the new organization lay in the eleven-member Security Council, on which would sit the great powers, any one of whom could block UN action through the power of the veto. The UN, which America joined in 1945, paid lip-service to the Wilsonian ideal, but it ironically incorporated most of the same limitations that Henry Cabot Lodge had proposed in his 1919 reservations to Article 10 of the League of Nations covenant.

**Allied Suspicion of Stalin**

Much of our understanding of postwar history depends on how one views the postwar Soviet Union. In one view, Americans felt compelled to halt the spread of communism out of fear that the Soviets were intent on world domination. An alternative view maintains that the Soviets, who endured unprovoked assault by the Nazis and suffered the greatest human and material losses of the war, sought to protect themselves against another possible invasion. Stalin never concealed his determination to have friendly governments on his borders.

Roosevelt admitted privately during the war that the Soviet Union would annex territory and possess preponderant power in Eastern Europe, but publicly he held out hope that the Soviets would permit the formation of free governments there.
**Yalta and Potsdam**

At the Yalta Conference, Roosevelt and Churchill agreed to Soviet annexation of large sections of eastern Poland in exchange for the unfulfilled promise of free Polish elections. Roosevelt feared that Polish Americans would be furious if the Soviets took over their homeland. Shortly before his death, Roosevelt conceded that he could not “do business” with Stalin, who continued to hold Eastern Europe in his grasp.

In July 1945, President Truman met at Potsdam, Germany, with Stalin and Clement Attlee, who had succeeded Churchill. The Allies agreed to try the Nazi leaders as war criminals and approved the division of Germany and Berlin into four occupation zones held by the Americans, the French, the British, and the Soviets.

It took time for the American public to realize that the war had caused a fundamental change in international politics, relegating Britain and France to the status of second-class powers, while setting the Americans and Soviets at center stage. As “superpowers,” these two nations were destined to compete for power and influence in the coming decades.

**PEOPLE, PLACES, AND THINGS**

Identify the following:

“economic czar”

______________________________________________________________________________

payroll-deduction

______________________________________________________________________________

collaborationist

______________________________________________________________________________

“zoot suit”

______________________________________________________________________________

kamikazes

______________________________________________________________________________

island hopping

______________________________________________________________________________
Describe the following:

*Ex parte Endo*

Afrika Korps

D-Day

Battle of the Bulge

Iwo Jima

*Enola Gay*

Hiroshima

Potsdam/Yalta Conferences

Identify the following:

James F. Byrnes

A. Philip Randolph

Charles de Gaulle
Erwin Rommel

Henry A. Wallace

Joseph Stalin

Winston Churchill

Map Exercise

Refer to the Pacific map on the next page. Place the correct letter beside the choice that represents the location of the following:

Refer to the European map below. Place the correct letter beside the choice that corresponds with the location of the following:

Self-Test

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. When the commanders at Pearl Harbor were alerted against possible action by Japan, they
   A. prepared for a surprise aggressive move in any direction.
   B. failed to take action of any kind.
   C. attempted to move the Pacific fleet out of the harbor.
   D. took precautions against Japanese sabotage.

2. Roosevelt is most notable as a wartime leader for his
   A. careful protection of civil liberties during the wartime emergency.
   B. effective design of military strategy.
   C. skilled administration of the wartime economy.
   D. ability to inspire people for the war effort.

3. At the outset of World War II, President Roosevelt decided to do all of the following EXCEPT
   A. pay a large part of the cost of the war by collecting taxes.
   B. centralize authority in order to speed economic mobilization.
   C. regulate prices and wages.
   D. ration scarce raw materials and consumer goods.

4. Economic expansion associated with wartime mobilization was most evident in the
   A. Northeast.
   B. South.
   C. Northwest.
   D. Midwest.

5. Under President Roosevelt’s leadership, economic mobilization for World War II did all of
   the following EXCEPT
   A. keep wages and prices in a fair balance.
   B. add significantly to the strength of organized labor.
   C. adversely affect the standard of living of the average citizen.
   D. fail to affect a substantial shift in the distribution of wealth in the United States.

6. During World War II, 1941-1945, the _____ declined.
   A. marriage rate
   B. divorce rate
   C. unemployment rate
   D. birth rate

7. During World War II, all of the following were true of African Americans EXCEPT
   A. urban African Americans became more important politically.
   B. the armed services were desegregated.
   C. African American migration was from rural areas to cities.
   D. President Roosevelt prohibited discrimination against African Americans in industries
   with defense contracts.
8. The most glaring case of suppression of civil liberties during World War II was the
   A. imprisonment of alleged communist spies.
   B. internment of Japanese Americans.
   C. jailing of opponents of the draft law.
   D. deporting of Italian Americans.

9. A. Philip Randolph planned a march on Washington, D.C. to demand
   A. U.S. entry into World War II.
   B. release of all those interned in wartime work camps.
   C. equal opportunities for African American workers in defense plants.
   D. desegregation of public schools in the South.

10. Women who worked in wartime industry most often met prejudicial male attitudes from all
    the following EXCEPT
    A. unions.
    B. their husbands.
    C. the men they worked with.
    D. employers.

11. In planning war strategy, Winston Churchill differed with Roosevelt and Stalin over _____,
    but ultimately had his way.
    A. dropping the atomic bomb on Hiroshima
    B. opening a second front through Sicily and Italy before invading France
    C. “island hopping” in the Pacific
    D. adopting the “Europe first” strategy

12. In 1942, the major Allied offensive was
    A. on the Normandy coast.
    B. in North Africa.
    C. on the Italian peninsula.
    D. in the central Pacific.

13. When news of the Nazi death camps reached Roosevelt, he decided
    A. to bomb only the Auschwitz camp.
    B. to make no decision regarding the camps.
    C. to bomb the camps and the rail lines leading to them.
    D. not to bomb the camps or the rail lines leading to them.

14. The destruction of Japanese sea power in the Pacific was completed at the Battle of
    A. Leyte Gulf.
    B. the Coral Sea.
    C. the Bulge.
    D. Midway.
15. The capture of _____ Island was significant because from there, land-based bombers were within range of Tokyo.
   A. Wake
   B. Guam
   C. Midway
   D. Guadalcanal

16. The code name for the building of the atom bomb was
   A. Bhagavad Gita.
   B. D-Day.
   C. Blitzkreig.
   D. Manhattan Project.

17. President Truman’s decision to use the atomic bomb at Hiroshima was motivated by all of the following EXCEPT
   A. ending the war more quickly.
   B. strong public demand for using the bomb.
   C. keeping the Soviets from intervening in the Pacific war.
   D. hatred of the Japanese.

18. New technologies produced by World War II included all of the following EXCEPT
   A. penicillin.
   B. television.
   C. radar.
   D. atomic power.

19. As a member of the wartime Allies, Stalin resented
   A. the British-American delay in opening a second front in France.
   B. the British-American refusal to allow the Soviets to annex sections of eastern Poland.
   C. the American army’s decision to occupy Warsaw.
   D. President Truman’s decision to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima without first informing the Soviets.

20. At the postwar conference at Potsdam, the three leaders of the Allies agreed to all of the following EXCEPT to
   A. try the Nazi leaders as war criminals.
   B. monitor free elections in Poland.
   C. demand reparations from Germany.
   D. divide Germany into four zones occupied by the Allies.

Essay Questions

1. Show how the breakdown of diplomacy between the United States and Japan culminated in the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Explain why the United States was unprepared for this disaster.

2. Explain how World War II finally pulled America out of the depths of the Great Depression. Describe how the home front was mobilized.
3. Give specific examples of problems faced by minority groups during World War II.

4. Explain the importance of the Normandy invasion to the outcome of World War II.

5. Evaluate the strategic role of the atomic bomb in bringing a conclusion to World War II.

CRITICAL THINKING EXERCISE

Students sometimes confuse the two world wars. Place a Roman numeral “I” beside each statement that refers to the Great War (World War I) and a “II” beside each statement that refers to World War II. Place the letter “B” beside each statement that refers to both wars. Place the letter “N” beside each statement that refers to neither war.

_____ 1. American battle losses were more severe numerically than those of the European allies.

_____ 2. Germany wound up on the losing side of the war.

_____ 3. Poison gas was used.

_____ 4. An international organization was proposed to establish permanent peace after the war.

_____ 5. The American president spoke of “peace without victory.”

_____ 6. America declared war only after an attack on her territory.

_____ 7. Italy switched sides during the war.

_____ 8. Mexico maintained neutrality in the war.

_____ 9. Switzerland maintained neutrality.

_____ 10. Japan switched sides during the war.

_____ 11. Spain remained neutral.

_____ 12. The French government at Vichy failed to obtain American and British recognition.


_____ 14. Japan was an enemy of China.

_____ 15. Enemy armies overran Sweden.