

Chapter 27

Prelude to War (1933-1939)

Only 20 years after “The War to End All Wars,” Europe entered a new world war

All the agreements, treaties, and diplomacy didn’t help

Germany ignored the treaty, France and Britain refused to consider possible war, and the US and USSR had their own problems

The Role of Hitler

In his goal of establishing an Aryan empire, Hitler felt threatened by the massive Slavic populations to the east

He believed in *Lebensraum*, expanding German territory to build an empire – territory to the east

He thought Russia weaker since the Bolsheviks, whom he thought were Jewish, took over

Once Germany took over, German peasants would resettle and the Slavs would be slaves

The conservative elites in Germany had long pushed for a German expansion to the south, east, and west

They supported Hitler until 1937, when they realized he was going to go too far

Although occasionally deviating from his plan In *Mein Kampf*, he inevitably returned to it

The “Diplomatic Revolution” (1933-1936)

When Hitler became chancellor in 1933, Germany’s position in Europe was weak

A demilitarized zone on the western border allowed French troops to move in if there were a war

To the east, Poland and Czechoslovakia had defensive treaties with France

The Treaty of Versailles limited the army to 100K, no air force, and a limited navy

Germany had strengths: 2nd largest population (behind Russia), Britain and France wanted to avoid war

If Hitler wanted to rearm, he had to convince Europe that his intentions were peaceful

He withdrew Germany from the Geneva Disarmament Conference to satisfy a domestic audience

German Rearmament

He was convinced that he could rearm, because France and Britain wouldn’t challenge him (to avoid war)

1935: announced a new air force and the introduction of a draft (expanding from 100K to 550K)

France and Britain condemned the developments but didn’t back it up with anything concrete

Later that year, Britain signed an Anglo-German Naval Pact (tacitly accepting the rearmament)

Germany could have 35% of British navy’s ships and as many submarines

Britain began a policy of *appeasement*, giving Hitler anything “reasonable” so he would be “content”

It was partly done because it was felt that Germany was Britain’s protection against the Soviet Union

Occupation of the Rhineland

1936: Hitler sent troops into the demilitarized Rhineland

Because the Western democracies wouldn’t use force to maintain the Treaty of Versailles

France wouldn’t act without British support; Britain thought it was “reasonable”

After all, German troops were entering German territory

The move had been opposed by German generals; now, Hitler thought he knew better than they did

New Alliances

1935: Hitler supported Mussolini’s invasion of Ethiopia (Britain and France had opposed it)

1936: Germany and Italy supported Franco in the Spanish Civil War

They signed an agreement forming that Mussolini called the “Rome-Berlin Axis”

Germany and Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact (Anti-Communist International)

The Treaty of Versailles was essentially dead and Germany had restored its claim to be a “world power”

Hitler had used skill and legal maneuvers to increase Germany’s power

France, Britain hadn’t opposed a weak Germany; Hitler assumed they certainly wouldn’t oppose a strong one

The Path to War (1937-1939)

1937: In a secret meeting with military leaders, Hitler revealed his goal of *Lebensraum* to the east

It was necessary, even if it provoked a war with France and Britain

First, Germany needed secure its eastern and southern flanks by dealing with Austria and Czechoslovakia

Neville Chamberlain, Britain’s prime minister, assured Hitler that a peaceful takeover was acceptable

Austria

1938: By threatening to invade Austria, Hitler managed to get it to let Austrian Nazis run the government

They immediately invited German troops to enter Austria to preserve law and order

The next day, Hitler annexed Austria

Within two months, Hitler revealed his plan to take Czechoslovakia by force

Even though it was allied with France and Russia, Hitler thought they wouldn't really defend it

Czechoslovakia

At first, Hitler asked for the Sudetenland (with its 3M Germans) to be granted autonomy

It also contained valuable industrial resources

Instead, he demanded it be turned over to Germany

1938: at the Munich Conference, it was agreed to allow German troops to occupy the Sudetenland

The British, French, Germans, and Italians agreed –the Czechs or Russians hadn't been invited

Chamberlain thought he had secured “peace for our time” as Hitler said it was his last demand

Within a month, Hitler was drawing up plans to liquidate all of Czechoslovakia

Using the chaos that he created, he occupied Czech lands and Slovakia became a puppet state

Poland

At last, Western states objected; after all Czechs were not Germans: Hitler's promises were worthless

Hitler then demanded the return of Danzig, a seaport that the Treaty of Versailles had given to Poland

France and Britain realized that only the Soviet Union was powerful enough to stop Nazi aggression

Their distrust of communism made a true alliance unlikely

Hitler prepared to invade Poland on September 1, 1939

Knowing it could start a 2-front war, he negotiated a non-aggression pact with Stalin

A secret part of the deal was that Hitler and Stalin would divide Poland once Germany invaded

September 1: Germany invaded Poland; September 17: the Soviets did, too

The Path to War in Asia

Japan had been steadily growing stronger

It defeated China (1895) and Russia (1905), and it took possession of German colonies after WW I

By 1933, its empire included Korea, Taiwan, Manchuria, and the Marshalls, Carolines, and Marianas

Its population grew dramatically, and it needed to produce heavy industrial goods and textiles to pay for it

1930s: to protect themselves in a depression, Western nations established tariffs to protect their own goods

The economic crisis played into the hands of the right-wing politicians and militarists

They pushed for expansion into China and Russia and seizing British Malaya for its raw materials

Japanese Goals in East Asia

1931: Japan seized Manchuria – it had valuable natural resources – and renamed it Manchukuo

The League of Nations condemned Japan; Japan withdrew from the League

Mid-1930s: militarists were in control

The Chinese appeased Japan by granting it control over areas of northern China

But Japan moved south and Chinese resistance grew

1937: after a clash outside Beijing, China stopped apologizing for the resistance

Seizing Nanjing, Japanese soldiers raped and killed thousands of Chinese civilians

Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi) wouldn't give in and moved his government upstream

Japan proposed an Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere

It was meant to be a “Monroe Doctrine for Asia,” with Japan “assisting” its neighbors

It was also meant to prepare for seizing Soviet Siberia with its rich resources

Japan began to cooperate with Germany on the assumption that they would jointly attack the Soviet Union

Hitler's non-aggression pact killed that plan, so the Japanese starting looking at Southeast Asia

The Dutch East Indies (oil), Malaya (rubber and tin), Burma (rice)

That would risk a war with other colonial powers (France, Britain) and new Pacific power, the U.S.

July 1941: When Japan occupied Indochina, the U.S. cut off sales of scrap iron and oil to Japan

Japan decided rather than wait for the next US move, it would preemptively attack the US naval fleet

The Course of World War II

Victory and Stalemate

Hitler set his *Blitzkrieg* on Poland, using *panzer divisions* supported by airplanes

(*panzer divisions* were “panther” divisions consisting of about 300 tanks with accompanying troops and support within 4 weeks, Poland surrendered, Germany and the Soviets divided up Poland

Hitler's Attack in the West

He had to engage the French and British, but he remembered WW I and expected stalemate and attrition
The French were happy to defend itself behind the Maginot Line, so a "Phony War" (without fighting) ensued
Six months later, Hitler employed the Blitzkrieg against Denmark and Norway
May 1940 (a month later): Hitler attacks the Netherlands, Belgium, and France
The attack through Luxembourg was a surprise, avoiding the Maginot Line and splitting the Allied forces
The British forces were pinned against the English Channel at Dunkirk
Hitler didn't press his advantage; 330K Allied troops were rescued by boats (of all kinds) from Britain
June 1940: Germany attacked southern France, and Italy joined the war, hoping to claim French lands
France surrendered three weeks later
German army occupied 3/5 of France and set up a puppet gov't led by WW I hero Henri Pétain
Meanwhile, a French "government-in-exile" fled to Britain

The Problem of Britain

Just as Germany attacked Denmark and Norway, Winston Churchill took over as prime minister
Appeasement was out, taking a tough stand against Germany was in
Through inspiring speeches, Churchill countered Hitler's desire for Britain to make peace
Hitler understood that an amphibious assault of Britain would only happen if his *Luftwaffe* controlled the air
August 1940: the *Luftwaffe* attacked air and naval bases, harbors, communications, and war industries
A smaller British air force, helped by radar, "evened the playing field"
Sept. 1940: Hitler made a mistake: in retaliation for a British raid on Berlin, changed to bombing civilians
It allowed the British to rebuild their air strength, strengthened the resolve of British citizenry
By the end of the month, Hitler had lost the Battle of Britain and had to postpone any invasion plans
Hitler turned to a Middle East strategy: capture Egypt and the Suez Canal, cutting off Britain's oil supply
Initially, he left the fight in North Africa to Italy, but they were easily defeated
He then had to commit German troops to North Africa

The Invasion of the Soviet Union

July 1940: Hitler told his generals to prepare for an invasion of the Soviet Union
His reasoning: Britain needed Soviet support, and if he could eliminate the Soviets, Britain was through
He also felt the "Jewish-Bolshevik" leadership and pitiful army would be quickly defeated
The invasion was planned for spring 1941, but problems in the Balkans required attention, delaying things
June 1941: the invasion began, expecting a settlement before winter
Successful at first, advancing rapidly and capturing 2M Soviet soldiers
Unexpected Soviet resistance and a bitterly cold winter stopped the German advance
December 1941, a bad combination: Pearl Harbor (and declaring war on the US) and a Soviet counterattack
It meant a global war and the probable defeat of Germany

The War in Asia

December 7, 1941: a carrier-based attack on the naval base at Pearl Harbor and assaults on the Philippines
US declared war on Japan the next day, and 3 days later, Germany declared war on the US
Japan's alliance with Germany didn't require it, but Roosevelt went ahead and declared war on Germany
Japan quickly invaded the Dutch East Indies; by spring 1942 it controlled Southeast Asia and the W. Pacific
Japan created a Greater East Asian Co-Prosperty Sphere,
It claimed the territory it had seized and announced its intention to liberate the Western colonies
Japan had hoped the attack on Pearl Harbor to demoralized Americans; instead it galvanized them against Japan

The Turning Point of the War (1942-1943)

The sides were drawn: the Allies (Britain, the US, and the Soviets) vs. the Axis (Germany, Italy, and Japan)
The Allies overcame their skepticism of each other for two reasons
Germany declaring war on the US allowed Americans to trust that defeating Hitler was the primary goal
That allowed the shipment of war supplies to the British and Soviets
The Allies' political leaders agreed to focus on military goals instead of their political differences
Their agreement to seek unconditional surrender cemented the alliance (Hitler couldn't divide them)
In 1942, the possibility of an Axis victory still seemed likely
Japan was highly successful in the Pacific Theater (Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific)
Germany was succeeding in North Africa, with Erwin Rommel pushing British forces back toward Suez

It also fared well in the North Atlantic, its submarines doing extensive damage to shipping to Britain

The Battle of Stalingrad

By 1943, Rommel was stopped in N. Africa, and British and US forces made Germany and Italy surrender
New Allied detection devices were helping destroy more German submarines

The war in Europe turned with the Battle of Stalingrad

After the capture of Crimea, German generals wanted to turn attention to the oil fields in the Caucasus

Hitler overruled them and decided that Stalingrad, a major industrial center, was more important

February 1943: German troops were stopped and forced to surrender (they lost 7 months' advancement)

Hitler knew he couldn't defeat the Soviet Union

The Battle of Midway

The tide turned in the war in the Pacific in 1942, too

May: the Battle of the Coral Sea stopped Japanese advances and protected Australia from invasion

June: the Battle of Midway destroyed all 4 Japanese aircraft carriers; the US Navy was now dominant

The Last Years of the War

1943: after Axis surrender in Africa, the Allies carried the war to Italy: they took Sicily and invaded the mainland

Mussolini was ousted and replaced by the Italians, but the Germans set him back up as a puppet dictator

German troops moved in and occupied much of Italy, making Allied progress extremely difficult

Rome finally fell to the Allies on June 4, 1944 – but that was secondary to the D-Day invasion 2 days later

Allied Advances in the West

The Allies had been planning a cross-channel invasion of France since autumn of 1943

They even managed to trick the Germans into thinking it would happen elsewhere

Under the command of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Allies landed on Normandy Beach

Within three months, they had landed 2M men and ½M vehicles – and broke through German lines

They liberated Paris by August and then were slowed by poor supply and the Battle of the Bulge

By March 1945 they had advanced into Germany; by April they met up with the Soviets

Soviet Offensive in the East

After Stalingrad, Hitler's generals urged a defensive position; instead, he attacked with new, heavy tanks

They were defeated at the Battle of Kursk, the largest tank battle of the war (losing 18 *panzer* divisions)

Soviets advanced steadily, lifting the siege of Leningrad, occupying Warsaw (Poland), and entering Berlin

In January 1945, Hitler moved to an underground bunker, blaming war losses on Jews

He committed suicide on April 30; Germany surrendered on May 7

Defeat of Japan

1943: the Americans went on the offensive and advanced slowly across the Pacific

1945: President Truman (Roosevelt died in April 1945) and his advisers decided to use the atomic bomb

They believed an invasion of Japan would result in too many US casualties

August 6: Hiroshima; August 9: Nagasaki

August 14: Japan surrendered unconditionally

World War II was over – at the loss of 17M in battle and 18M civilians

Perhaps the total was as high as 50M

The New Order

Initial victories in WW2 allowed both Germany and Japan to create new orders in Europe and Asia

The Nazi Empire

For a time, the Nazi Empire stretched from the English Channel to Moscow

Hitler believed that only Germans could “really organize Europe”

Annexed lands (like Western Poland) were made into German provinces

Occupied Europe was administered by German military or civilian officials

The Germans used indirect control or collaborationist governments

German Allies (Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Finland) were independent, but restricted by Germany

Neutrals (Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Sweden, Turkey) remained outside the empire

The *Nazi New Order* treated conquered people differently, depending on racial considerations

Because viewed as “Aryans,” Norway, Denmark, and the Netherlands received more lenient treatment

“Inferior” Latins – such as the French – were given military administrations

In either case, as the war worsened, the Nazis exploited the labor and materials of *every* occupied territory

Plans for an Aryan Racial Empire

Because Hitler's *Lebensraum* to the east was populated by "inferior" Slavs, he quickly began his racial plan
Heinrich Himmler, chief of the SS, was put in charge of resettlement plans

1M poles were moved to southern Poland; ethnic Germans from all over were encouraged to settle there
by 1942, 2M ethnic Germans had settled in Western Poland

Early success against the Soviets prompted Hitler to make postwar plans

Poles, Ukrainians, and Soviets would become slave labor, Germans would move in to settle there too
Himmler told his SS officers that it would cost 30M Slavs' lives

Economic Exploitation

Resources from occupied lands were ruthlessly exploited: raw materials, machines, food
They left local peoples just enough to survive; as the war worsened, they took even more

Use of Foreign Workers

Labor shortages in Germany led to ruthless mobilization of foreign labor

4M captured Soviet soldiers were used, but neglect resulted in the death of 3M of them
by 1944, 7M foreign workers were working in Germany (20% of the German labor force)

Another 7M were working in their own countries on farms, in industries, and in military camps

Germany's brutal treatment of foreign workers also resulted in the strengthening of resistance movements

Resistance Movements

Initially hailed as liberators (by Ukraine and Baltic States), Nazi treatment turned them into resisters

Resistance Movements in Nazi-Occupied Europe

Active resistance led to sabotage, assassinations, anti-German newspapers, and spying on Germany
Some countries established governments-in-exile in London (e.g., the Free French under Charles de Gaulle)
Some resistance groups were strong enough to fight Germany directly (e.g., Yugoslavia under Tito)
After Hitler's double-cross of the Soviets, Communists throughout Europe led resistance movements

However, this sometimes led to clashes between Communist and anti-Communist resistance groups

Women joined, (performing all the activities listed above)

In Norway, women smuggled Jews into neutral Sweden

Resistance in Germany

It was ineffectual and extremely dangerous because of the SS's control over daily life

The White Rose (students and a professor at U. of Munich) distributed pamphlets (arrested, executed)

Communist resistance was crushed by the *Gestapo* (secret police)

One near-success: military officers and conservative politicians believed the only solution was to kill Hitler

1944: a planted bomb exploded but failed to kill Hitler; the plot was exposed, 5K people were executed

The Holocaust

1922: Hitler saw it as an either/or: the Aryans would exterminate the Jews or vice versa

even though he toned down the message when he sought votes, he never dismissed the ideology

anti-Semitism was a recurring theme throughout the 1930s

Early Nazi Policy

1939: Nazi policy stressed "emigration" – until the war began

Madagascar Plan: ship them to Madagascar, an island off the eastern coast of Africa

It was too costly and impractical

The SS and the *Einsatzgruppen*

Himmler, and the SS were put in charge of the *Final Solution*, the annihilation of the Jews

Reinhard Heydrich ordered the creation of a special strike force, the *Einsatzgruppen*

It was to round up all Jews and concentrate them in ghettos established in a number of Polish cities

1941: the *Einsatzgruppen* were now charged with killing Jews

They followed the army's advance into Russia, round up Jews and kill them

They were to be buried them in mass graves, often dug by the victims themselves

SS officers had reservations about their duties; Himmler said that that was only natural and appropriate

The Death Camps

The 1M deaths imposed by the *Einsatzgruppen* weren't enough; they began building death camps

The plan was to round up Jews in German lands, ship them like cattle by train to an extermination center

Using Zyklon B (cyanide), gas the Jews in what looked like a shower and then cremate them

They were in operation by the spring of 1942

Initially, they were for Polish Jews, but soon they were shipped in French, Belgian, and Dutch Jews
By 1943, Jews were being sent from southern France, Italy, Denmark; by 1944: Greece, and Hungary

Even though railroad cars were needed by the military, priority was given to the Final Solution
At Auschwitz-Birkenau, 30% were sent to labor camps, 70% to their deaths

Females' hair was cut off for mattress stuffing, some prisoners were used for "medical" experiments
Between 5M and 6M Jews were killed in the Holocaust; 3M in the death camps

In some places (Poland, the Baltic countries, and Germany) 90% of Jews were exterminated

Overall, about 2/3 of all European Jews died

The Other Holocaust

The Nazis were responsible for the death (by shooting, starvation, or overwork) of at least another 9-10M
40% of European Gypsies – about 400K – died in the camps

Slavic leaders (clergy, intelligentsia, judges, lawyers) were arrested and killed

Perhaps 4M Poles, Ukrainians, and Belorussians died as slave laborers; 3-4M Soviet prisoners of war

Homosexuals were singled out for persecution: thousands were arrested and died in the camps

The New Order in Asia

Japan used its takeover of Asia to meet its needs for raw materials and as markets for its finished goods
It promised occupied territories that they would be independent under Japanese assistance

In fact, the power rested with the Japanese military, answering directly to the army general staff in Tokyo
Resources were used for Japanese needs, natives were recruited to serve in local military units

The Rape of Nanjing was the looting, raping and killing of its citizens

800K Koreans were forcibly moved to Japan, mostly to work as forced laborers

Tens of Thousands of Korean women forced to serve as "comfort women" (prostitutes) for Japanese troops

Prisoners of war used as laborers: 61K Australians, British, and Dutch POW's worked building a railway

Alongside were 300K workers from Burma, Malaya, Thailand, and the Dutch East Indies

Inadequate diet, appalling work conditions, unhealthy climate led to death of 12K POW's, 90K workers

The Home Front

WW2 was more of a total war than WW1: more widespread, more economic mobilization, more civilians killed

The Mobilization of Peoples

Great Britain

It mobilized more efficiently than any other country: 55% of adults were in the military or civilian "war work"

Women were 50% of civil service, "land girls," doing agricultural work doubled

Athletic fields were turned into vegetable gardens

Food rationing (thanks to the success of German submarines) covered bacon, sugar, fats, and eggs

After work, many Britons did wartime activities: planting gardens, Civil defense, and the Home Guard

Increasingly, the economy was "planned": a ministry of fuel and power, a ministry of production

Manufacturing of war materials increased dramatically, often tripling or quadrupling

The Soviet Union

The German-Soviet War was known as the Great Patriotic War

As a planned economy, it took little to shift to war footing: everything was controlled by the Communist Party

Initial defeats led to drastic emergency mobilization affecting civilians

Leningrad was under siege for 900 days; residents resorted to eating dogs, cats, and mice

Factories in the West were dismantled and shipped further east, into the interior

The Soviets finally experienced an Industrial Revolution

War matériel accounted for 55% of national income – it had been only 15% in 1940

But it caused massive shortages of food and housing among civilians: food consumption fell 40%

Women played a large role: about 30% of miners and almost half of oil industry

They were even combatants, as snipers and in aircrews in bomber squadrons, and as pilots

Peasants bore enormous burdens: they were 60% of the military, and they were expected to feed the country

Tractors and trucks were taken to use by the military, so plowing by hand increased

1943's harvest was only 60% of 1940's

The Soviet people were asked to fight for "Mother Russia" rather than for communism

The United States

Americans weren't facing a threat of war on home soil; they were slow to mobilize

The economy was never fully mobilized: some industries were hesitant, fearing a post-war depression

Unemployment didn't fall until mid-1943, so the employment of women lagged

In 1943, production was so high that smaller businesses had to shut down because of overproduction

There were problems, though: boomtowns created a shortage of housing, health facilities, and schools

Rapid urbanization broke down traditional mores (values, conventions and customs)

With 16M in the military, there were another 16M (spouses, girlfriends) who needed to relocate

Over 1M African-Americans moved from the South to the North (including the West Coast)

In some places there were racial riots

On the West Coast 110K Japanese-Americans (65% were citizens by birth) were removed to camps

For "security reasons" although there was no similar treatment for German- or Italian-Americans

Germany

Germans were far less enthusiastic than they had been in 1914

Hitler refused to sacrifice consumer goods for the production of matériel

Blitzkrieg allowed the Germans to plunder the food of conquered territories

After defeat on the Soviet front and the entry of the US, things got much worse

Albert Speer, Hitler's architect, was made minister for armaments – and production tripled

Hitler *still* refused total mobilization of the economy

In 1944, when schools, theaters, and cafés were closed, Speer was allowed to use all remaining resources

It was too little, too late to save Germany from defeat

The Nazis reversed their position on women: as more men left, *some* women took their places at work

Total number of employed women rose from 14.6M to 14.9; middle-class women resisted it

Japan

It was highly mobilized: the government set up a planning board to control prices, wages, labor, and resources

Traditional values of hierarchy and obedience supported, along with the notion that the emperor was "divine"

Code of *bushido*, the way of the warrior, was invoked: loyalty and service, obligation to honor & defend

In the end it called for suicide missions (*kamikaze*, the divine wind)

Women's rights were to be sacrificed for the good of the state

They were to bear more children, but the government tried to avoid their employment

Instead of using women, the government brought in Korean and Chinese laborers

Frontline Civilians: The Bombing of Cities

Bombing was used several ways: against military targets, enemy troops, and civilians

The argument was made in 1930 that bombing civilians was a way to coerce countries into making peace

Luftwaffe Attacks

Contrary to that, the bombing of London and other British cities generally made the people more determined

Certainly in London, where the damage was spread over a very large city

Not so in Coventry, where destruction of the city center *did* produce morale problems (overreaction)

The Bombing of Germany

The British retaliated, but to no better effect

1942: Cologne was attacked by 1000 bombers

With American support, bombing became more damaging

US bombers attacked military targets during the day, the British practiced saturation bombing at night

Germans reacted with fear, terror was added to the circumstance of food shortages

Incendiary bombs created firestorms with temperatures of 1800°F

Hamburg in August 1943, Dresden in February 1944 (which may have killed 100K civilians)

1943: Germany finally began to evacuate women and children to rural areas (where they might not fit in)

Millions of buildings were destroyed, perhaps 500K civilians were killed

Despite the bombing, production actually increased

The Bombing of Japan: The Atomic Bomb

Fearing German development of an atomic bomb, the US sabotaged German efforts and developed its own

Working in secret in Los Alamos, New Mexico, a bomb was developed by the spring of 1945

Because of the destruction of Japan's air force and the flimsy wooden buildings, it was vulnerable to air raids

Heavy bombing had begun in November 1944, and most of Japan's factories had been destroyed

Japan drafted all people 13-60 into a “people’s volunteer corps,” leading to worry about Japanese fanaticism
Truman decided an invasion could cost 1M American casualties, so he authorized using the bomb
Hiroshima on August 6 and Nagasaki on August 9
In Hiroshima, 140K out of 400K died that year, another 50K by 1950 (of radiation)

Aftermath of the War: Cold War

WW2 did not end war; it moved into a new phase: a *Cold War* that lasted for more than 40 years
It highlighted the military, political, and ideological differences between the Soviet Union and the US

The Conference at Tehran

November 1943 (Stalin, Churchill, Roosevelt): it decided the invasion of Europe
Churchill wanted US, British forces to follow up North Africa by attacking Germany through the Balkans
Stalin, Roosevelt wanted an American-British invasion through France in 1944 (they won)
This meant US-British forces reaching Germany from the West while the Soviets came from the East
They agreed to divide postwar Germany

The Yalta Conference

February 1945 (Stalin, Churchill, Roosevelt): assuming German defeat, the question was postwar territory
Soviets wanted “spheres of influence”; US and Britain wanted self-determination
It was agreed that liberated countries were to vote to determine their political systems
With the bomb not yet finished, Roosevelt conceded Japanese land in return for assistance with invasion
He offered Sakhalin and Kurile Islands and two warm-water ports and railroad rights in Manchuria
Creation of a United Nations, with its first meeting in San Francisco in 1945
Created four occupation zones after German defeat (Churchill demanded a French zone)
Poland would get a provisional government with members coming from exiles in London and Lublin (USSR)

Intensifying Differences

The Grand Alliance worked when their overwhelming task was to defeat Nazism; otherwise there were problems
The Soviets thought the Western powers wanted to keep the Soviets weak (wouldn’t make a \$6M loan)
The US thought the Soviets couldn’t be trusted allowing free elections
Its “proof” was the Soviet-backed coup in Romania, which set up a Communist government
The Soviets sabotaged the agreement on Poland by having the London Poles arrested

The Potsdam Conference

July 1945 (Stalin, Churchill, *Truman* – Roosevelt had died): Truman knew the bomb was going to work
[Some historians think that that knowledge made Truman more stern toward Soviet aims]
Truman demanded free elections, Stalin refused, claiming that would result in anti-Soviet governments
Stalin desperately wanted military security, and buffer states sympathetic to Communism were his way
Only a western invasion could alter Stalin’s acts, and that would provoke an unwanted war

Emergence of the Cold War

The Soviets saw their buffer states as protection, not provocation (Hadn’t the West attacked Russia *twice*?)
The West was not sympathetic and it really distrusted Stalin
When the West proposed a 25-year disarmament of Germany, the Soviets rejected it
That was seen in the West as proof that Stalin wanted to turn East Germany into a Communist state
The US responded by announcing that its troops would be needed in Europe indefinitely
It also indicated that an independent West Germany would arise – the Soviets saw that as a threat
The lines appeared drawn: Soviets feared Western capitalist expansion and the West feared Communist expansion