

WORLD: Can the U.S. Stay Out of World War II?

Europe Fights World War II: U.S. Vows to Stay Out

Washington, D.C.,
September 1939

France and England have declared war on Germany. But the U.S. wants to stay out of the fight.

Many Americans believe in **isolationism** [staying apart from other countries]. Most Americans do not think any good came from helping the Allies in World War I. They do not want any part in the new war.

This war began after Germany invaded Poland. France and England had warned Germany's Hitler there would be war if he marched into Poland. Hitler sent the German army into Poland anyway.

Germany has been secretly building up its army since **Adolf Hitler** became Germany's dictator in 1933. Hitler wants to get back the power Germany lost in World War I. He says he will crush any country that stands in Germany's way.

Hitler got into power because of the depression in Germany. Germans said the Democratic government was not helping them. They voted for Hitler's Nazi party.

Other countries having hard times have also let dictators take over. Italy, Japan, and Russia now have dictator governments.

Why the U.S. Wants Isolationism

Many Americans believe in isolationism. **Isolationism** means having nothing to do with other countries. Many Americans want the U.S. to keep to itself.

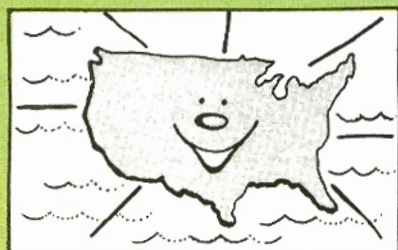
These are reasons Americans give for favoring isolationism:



■ Americans believe wars do not solve problems. Just 20 years after World War I, countries are fighting again.



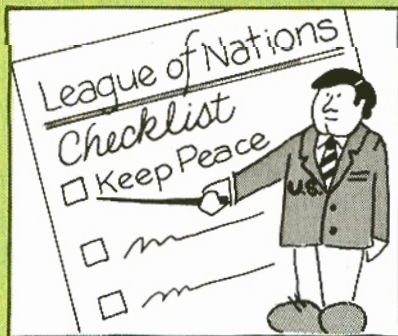
■ Americans say the U.S. has its own problems. The U.S. government should help the poor and jobless at home first.



■ Americans believe the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans will keep the war away from the U.S. The U.S. does not have to worry about wars in Europe and Asia.



■ Some Americans are pacifists [people who believe all war is bad]. The U.S. should never fight in any war.



■ Americans believe the League of Nations should have kept peace. The U.S. should not have to do the League's job.



■ Americans believe the Good Neighbor policy works. The U.S. feels safe with friendly neighboring countries in Latin America.

WHAT IS CAUSING WORLD WAR II?

- Dictators took over countries in Europe.
- Dictators want more land and power.
- Losers of World War I want revenge for unfair peace treaty.

■ Ahead, a look at what happened in Europe so far.

WORLD: World War II to 1941

CHANGING GOVERNMENT:

Berlin, Germany, 1935

Since World War I, many governments in Europe and Asia have changed. Governments run by the people are now governments that run the people

Here is a rundown of changes:

WHAT: Totalitarian government—one person or one small group of persons controlling every part of peoples' lives. Totalitarian governments take away all personal freedom.

WHO: Dictators—leaders of totalitarian governments.

WHY DICTATORS GAINED POWER:

- Countries were ruined by World War I. People looked for new leaders to help them rebuild.

- New leaders (dictators) promised to make countries powerful. Countries ruined by World War I want to be powerful again.

LEADING TOTALITARIAN GOVERNMENTS:

Country: Russia

Began: 1917

Political Party: Communist

Dictator: Josef Stalin

Goal: To spread Communism to every country.

View of Other Countries: Free countries are afraid Russia will take them over.

Country: Germany

Began: 1933

Political Party: Nazi

Dictator: Adolf Hitler

Goal: To take over Europe

View of Other Countries: Most countries believe Hitler will do nothing. They fear Russia more.

Country: Italy

Began: 1922

Political Party: Fascist

Dictator: Benito Mussolini

Goal: To control all the land around the Mediterranean Sea.

Country: Japan

Leaders: Emperor Hirohito and warlords [military leaders] led by **General Tojo**.

Goal: To control the Far East and the Pacific.

The War: Yesterday and Today

A look back at events leading to World War II.

1931

Japan Attacks Manchuria

- League of Nations protests.
- Japan drops out of League.



March 1935 Hitler Builds Up German Army, Navy, and Air Force — Breaks Treaty of Versailles (World War I)

- England and France do nothing to stop him.

October 1935 Italy Attacks Ethiopia

- League of Nations stops trade with Italy.
- Some countries do not listen. They trade with Italy anyway.
- Italy takes Ethiopia in May 1936.

March 1936 Hitler Sends German Troops Into the Rhineland—Breaks Treaty of Versailles

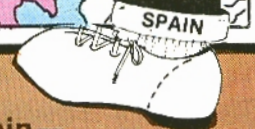
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July 1936

General Franco Starts Civil War in Spain—Wants to Make Spain a Totalitarian State

- Germany and Italy help Franco.
- U.S., France, and England do not help either side.



WORLD: World War II to 1941

October 1936

Germany and Italy Make Pact—
Agree to Help Each Other Take
Over Europe



1935-1937

U.S. Passes Neutrality Laws to
Keep U.S. Out of War

- U.S. will not send guns or loan money to countries at war.
- U.S. can sell nonmilitary goods to countries at war. But these countries must pay cash and carry the goods in their own ships.



July 1937

Japan Goes to War With China—
Japan Wants Land in China

March 1938

Germany Takes Over Austria



September 1938

Hitler Demands German-Speaking
Sudetenland From Czechoslovakia

- England and France give Sudetenland to Hitler in the Munich Pact.
- England and France gave Hitler this land. Now they hope Hitler will not take any more land.
- Hitler says now he will keep peace.

March 1939

Germany Takes Over the Rest of
Czechoslovakia

- U.S., France, and England are angry, but do not want to fight.



April 1939

Italy Invades
Albania



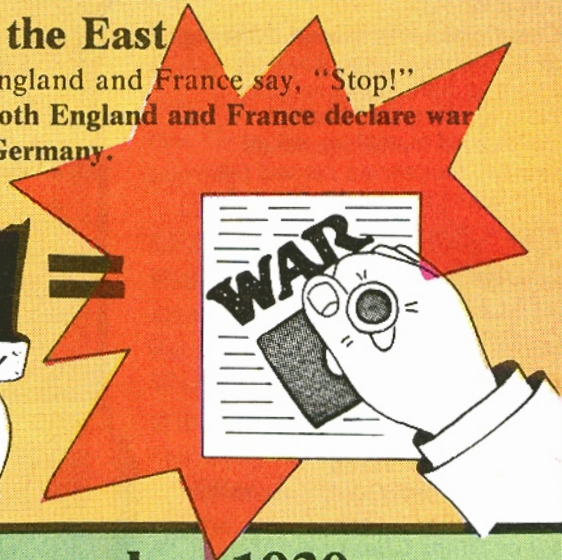
August 1939

Russia and Germany Sign Pact—
Agree Not to Fight Each Other

September 1939

Germany Attacks Poland on the
West. Russia Attacks Poland
on the East

- England and France say, "Stop!"
- Both England and France declare war on Germany.



November 1939

U.S. Changes Neutrality Laws
to Help England and France
Fight Germany

- U.S. can sell guns to a country at war if the country pays in cash and carries the goods on its own ships.

November 1939

Russia Attacks Finland



April 1940

Germany Attacks Denmark,
Norway, Belgium, The
Netherlands, Luxembourg, and
Northern France

- England sends troops to France.



WORLD: Japan Bombs Pearl Harbor, Hawaii

May 1940

Germany Traps English Troops in Dunkirk, a Seaport in Northern France

- England sends ships to rescue the troops.
- English troops leave behind most of their war weapons at Dunkirk.



U.S. Gets Ready for War

September 1940

U.S. Congress Passes Selective Service Act

- All U.S. men between 21 and 35 must sign up for the first peacetime draft into the armed forces.

March 1941

Congress Passes Lend-Lease Act

- England does not have money to pay for war goods. So the U.S. will lend or lease [rent] the goods to them.

June 1941

Germany Attacks Russia—Breaks Pact

- U.S. says Russia can take part in Lend-Lease Act to get supplies.

July 1941

Japan Takes Over French Indochina

- U.S. stops all trade with Japan.

June 1940

France Surrenders to Germany

August 1940

Germany Attacks England

- English navy and air force keep German troops out of England.

World War II

Germany's New Warfare: The Blitzkrieg (Lightning War)

- In a **blitzkrieg**, tanks and guns fire on enemy lines. Dive bombers and fighter planes attack at the same time. German troops then move in as fast as they can across enemy lines.

August 1941

U.S. and England Sign Atlantic Charter

- U.S. President Roosevelt and English Prime Minister Winston Churchill say their countries will work together:
 1. To make the world free from war.
 2. To let people be free to choose their own governments.

Japan Bombs Pearl Harbor—U.S. to Declare War

Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
December 7, 1941

In a surprise attack this morning, 183 Japanese airplanes bombed the U.S. Naval and Air Force base at **Pearl Harbor**. The president will ask Congress to de-

clare war on Japan within 24 hours.

In the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Japanese:

- Killed over 3,000 Americans.
- Destroyed almost all U.S. airplanes at the base.
- Sank or badly hurt most

U.S. ships.

With most U.S. ships and airplanes gone, Japan controls the Pacific Ocean. Now Japan can go on with its plan to drive the U.S. and England out of Asia. Japan wants to take over Asian countries.