

From Isolation to Global War

- ❖ **What was the impact of isolationism and peace movements on American politics between the two world wars?**
 - ❖ **How did the United States respond to German aggression in Europe during the late 1930s?**
 - ❖ **How did events in Asia lead to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor and America's entry into the global war?**
- **American politics moved from domestic to foreign affairs due to war**

Postwar Isolationism

The League and the United States

- **From Wilson to Roosevelt, there was relative isolation from foreign entanglements**
 - Voters yearned for isolationism
 - Harding disposed League of Nations
 - Higher tariffs, Red scare, and restricted immigration also signified isolationism
- **United States could not ignore its own global interests**
 - Overseas possessions, global business connections, foreign investments
 - "unofficial observers" at League headquarters in Geneva
 - Conferences on illegal drugs, arms, criminal traffic, women, children, economy, culture

War Debts and Reparations

- **War debt issue heightened American isolationism most**
 - Allies were unable to pay for American military supplies
- **Most Americans expected debt to be paid back**
 - Most American money went toward purchases for military supplies in the US
 - America had repudiated debt to British after Revolution, never paid France for their alliance
 - **Real issue was practical problem of repayment**
 - To get dollars, Europeans had to sell goods to the US but tariff wall impeded this
- **French and British insisted they could pay after collecting reparations from Germany**
 - Entire structure collapsed during the Great Depression
 - Hoover negotiated moratorium on German and Allied debts
 - After US connected reparations and war debt, Allies canceled German reparations
 - **Johnson Debt Default Act:** prohibited even private loans to any government that defaulted on its debts to the United States

Attempts at Disarmament

- **Many Americans thought limitations of arms would bring lasting peace**
 - Britain and America both enlarged naval armaments due to common concern of Japanese threat
 - Americans had no desire for large standing army
- **Japanese-American relations were strained after the war**
 - United States objected to Japanese encroachments in Asia

- **Twenty-one Demands:** issued by Japanese cabinet, brought China under Japanese control
- **Lansing-Ishii Agreement:** Secretary of State Lansing entered agreement that recognized Japanese possessions
- American's were unhappy about Lansing-Ishii Agreement, but seemed only way to preserve appearance of friendship
- **Japanese-American relations worsened**
 - Harding invited 8 foreign powers to **Washington Armaments Conference**
 - Charles Hughes announced that only way to end arms race was "to end it now"
- **Delegates from US, Britain, Japan, France, and Italy signed Five-Power Treaty: incorporated Hughes' plan for tonnage limits on navies and moratorium for ten years during which no battleships would be built**
 - Agreement to refrain from fortification of Pacific possessions
 - Partitioned the world: US naval power became supreme in Western Hemisphere, Japanese power in the western Pacific, British power in the North Sea to Singapore
- **Two other significant agreements emerged from the Washington Armaments Conference**
 - **Four-Power Treaty: US, Britain, Japan, and France agreed to respect one another's possessions in Pacific**
 - **Nine-Powers Treaties: signers pledged Open Door policy**, allowed all nations to compete for trade and investment opportunities
 - Promise to respect territorial integrity of China
 - China, Belgium, Portugal, Netherlands
- **Harding boasted diplomacy and relieved citizens**
 - Agreements were without obligation, were not enforced
 - Tonnage limits were only set on capital ships (battleships and carriers)
 - Expansionist Japan withdrew from agreement in 1934
- **Twelve years after Washington Conference, naval disarmament dream died**

The Kellogg-Briand Pact

- **Ideal of abolishing war captured American imagination**
 - Wealthy Chicagoan founded **American Committee for the Outlawry of War**
- **Glorious vision of abolishing war culminated in Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928**
 - Started with French foreign minister Briand, Secretary of State Kellogg
 - Was a clever ploy to draw the US into the French security system; would inhibit US from seeking reprisals in response to French intrusions on neutral rights
- **Kellogg turned the tables on Briand**
 - Countered with a scheme to have all nations sign the act
 - **Pact of Paris:** it's official name, declared that **signers condemned war**
 - Senate included reservation declaring preservation of Monroe Doctrine necessary for self-defense

The "Good Neighbor" Policy

- **In Latin America, spirit of peace helped relieve resentments against "Yankee imperialism"**
 - Harding administration agreed to pay Colombia \$25 million for Panama canal rights
 - Troops left the Dominican Republic
- **Marines left Nicaragua, returned at outbreak of civil war**
 - Coolidge brought both parties into an agreement for US supervised elections

- Marines stayed until 1933
- **Troubles in Nicaragua increased strains between US and Mexico**
 - Mexican threat to expropriate American oil properties
 - US ambassador negotiated agreements to protect American rights
 - **Expropriation did occur in 1938 but Mexicans reimbursed American owners**
- **Coolidge travelled to Havana to open Pan-American Conference**
 - Charles Hughes headed delegation
 - Announced US intention to withdraw marines from Nicaragua and Haiti
- **Hoover toured Latin America, reversed Wilson’s policy of refusing to negotiate bad regimes –recognized governments in power, regardless of actions**
 - **Clark Memorandum** denied that Monroe Doctrine justified intervention in Latin America
 - Hoover never endorsed but never intervened
 - Steps taken to withdraw marines
- **Roosevelt embraced policy of the “good neighbor”**
 - **Seventh Pan-American Conference:** US supported resolution declaring that no nation had right to intervene in internal efforts of another
 - **Under Roosevelt, marines completed withdrawal from Nicaragua and Haiti**
 - **Platt Amendment was nullified**—no more right to intervene in Latin America
 - **Eighth Pan-American Conference** declared outside aggressors will be defended against, mutual safety, mutual good

War Clouds

Japanese Incursions into China

- **Actual conflict erupted first in Asia**
 - China’s clashes with Russia convinced Japanese that their own extensive investments in Manchuria were in danger
- **Japanese occupation of Manchuria began with Mukden incident of 1931**
 - Japanese army blamed Chinese for railroad explosion, justified occupation
- **Manchuria incident violated Nine-Power Treaty, Kellogg-Briand Pact, and Japan’s pledges in League of Nations**
 - China asked League and US to help—neither responded
 - Hoover was willing to install sanctions
 - **Stimson Doctrine: US would refuse any treaty or situation that violated treaty rights, Open Door, territorial integrity of China, or violation of Kellogg-Briand Pact**
 - No effect on Japanese action
 - Japan occupied Shanghai
- **Indiscriminate bombing in Shanghai aroused Western action**
 - League of Nations condemned Japan aggression
 - Japan withdrew from League
 - Hostilities in Manchuria eventually ended in truce

Italy and Germany

- **Fascist dictators in Italy and Germany**

- **Benito Mussolini** seized power of Italy
 - Organized fascist movement
 - Nationalism and socialism = fascism
 - Mussolini's promise to restore order and pride
 - Wide appeal
 - Once in power, Mussolini abandoned socialist component of his platform, suppressed opposition
- **Adolf Hitler was German counterpart of Mussolini**
 - National Socialist German Workers' (Nazi) Party duplicated efforts of fascism
 - Impotence of Weimar Republic offered Hitler an opening
 - Won dictatorial powers from subservient Reichstag, assumed absolute emergency powers
 - Persecution of Jews, socialism, defiance of Versailles Treaty, pulled Germany out of League of Nations
 - European democracies lacked will to resist

The Mood in America

- **Most Americans retreated into isolationism during early 1930s**
 - Roosevelt renounced support for League of Nations
 - Secretary of State **Cordell Hull did not want isolationism**, believed that free trade among nations would advance understanding and preserve peace
 - In 1934, **administration supported Hull**
 - **Trade Agreements Act**: authorized president to lower tariff rates for countries that made similar concessions on American products
- **Another effort to build foreign markets involved diplomatic recognition of Soviet Russia**
 - Japanese expansionism in Asia gave Russia and US a common concern
 - Russian commissar Maksim Litvinov promised that Russia would not promote Communism and US, would extend religious freedom to Americans in Soviet Union, and reopen question of unpaid czarist debts

The Expanding Axis

- **Catastrophic chain of events in Asia and Europe sent world hurtling toward disaster**
 - Japan renounced Five-Power Treaty
 - Mussolini commenced Italian conquest of Ethiopia
 - Hitler reoccupied formerly demilitarized Rhineland—violated Versailles Treaty
 - French failed to oppose German force
 - Spanish Civil War led to fascist dictatorship
- **Japanese and Chinese troops clashed, developed into war**
 - Japan joined Germany and Italy in **Anti-Comintern Pact**: directed against Communist threat
 - **Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis**
- **By 1938, peace of Europe was challenged**
 - Hitler formed union of Austria and Germany: *Anschluss*
 - Hitler took Sudeten territory in Czechoslovakia, Britain and France abandoned Czechoslovakia
 - Hitler violated his pledge, saying this was the last of his conquests
 - Hitler seized remaining territory in Czechoslovakia, seized Lithuania
 - Mussolini conquered Albania

- Hitler invaded Poland
- Hitler signed nonaggression pact with Soviet Russia
- Britain and France honored their commitment to go to war if Poland was invaded

Degrees of Neutrality

- **Western democracies seemed paralyzed**
 - Hoped that concessions would appease the fascist dictators
 - Americans retreated into isolation
 - Senate committee of Gerald Nye concluded that bankers and munitions makers made scandalous profit during war
- **United States moved toward complete isolation during the 1930s**
 - Roosevelt signed five neutrality laws intended to keep US out of war
 - **Neutrality Act of 1935** forbade sale of arms to all warring nations
 - Americans who travelled on belligerent ships did so at their own risk
- **Just weeks after neutrality legislation, Italy invaded Ethiopia**
 - **the key problem was neither weapons tariff or passenger travel but trade in material not covered in the Neutrality Act**
 - Italy did not need to buy arms, but bought raw materials like oil—oil not covered by Neutrality act
 - **Sanctions of the act had no deterrent effect on Mussolini**
- **Congress extended arms embargo and forbade loans to nations of war**
- **Spanish army led by Franco revolted against democratic government in Madrid**
 - Roosevelt became even greater isolationist
 - Roosevelt accepted French and British position of nonintervention
 - Additionally, there was a pro-Franco bloc of Catholic Americans—feared atheistic Communist influence in Spain
 - Spanish Communist proved to be divisive, Soviet Union provided aid to the republic, but Germany and Italy provided assistance to Franco
- **Conflict in Spain led Roosevelt to seek another “moral embargo: on arms trade**
 - Neutrality laws extended to civil wars
 - German and Italians supported **overthrow of Spanish democracy, completed in 1939**
- **Isolationism peaked in spring of 1937**
 - Fourth neutrality law passed: maintained restrains on arms and loans, forbade American travel on belligerent ships, prohibited arming of US merchant ships trading with those nations
 - President also won authority to require that goods other than arms exported to warring nations be sold on a **cash-and-carry** basis—purchaser would have to pay cash and then carry goods away on its own ships
 - **Trade remained profitable without risk of war**
- **Japanese and Chinese forces clashed at Marco Polo Bridge—test of neutrality**
 - Neither side declared war—Roosevelt was unable to invoke neutrality law
 - Roosevelt’s inaction when trade of munitions to China flourished challenged isolationism
- **Japanese planes bombed and sank American gunboat *Panay***
 - **Japan also attacked three American oil tankers**
 - Japanese government paid reparations and apologized, but American animosity toward Japan increased
 - **Private boycott of Japanese goods, but isolation remained strong**

- **Isolation was demonstrated by support of Ludlow amendment:** required a public referendum for a declaration of war except in case of attack on US territory
- **After German occupation of Czechoslovakia, Roosevelt could no longer remain isolationist**
 - Hitler violated Munich pledge
 - Roosevelt was convinced that Hitler was a international gangster
 - Roosevelt struggled to educate American public on fascist menace
 - Roosevelt urged Congress to repeal embargo and permit US to sell arms on cash and carry basis—failed
 - **After Hitler attacked Poland, Roosevelt proclaimed neutrality but didn't encourage Americans to think neutrally**
- **Roosevelt asked for amendments to the Neutrality Act**
 - He regretted the Neutrality Act
 - Under **Neutrality Act of 1939**, Britain and France could send their own ships to the US and buy supplies with cash
 - American ships were excluded from ports of warring nations
 - Baltic Sea and waters around Great Britain were declared war zone
- **American public opinion eventually supported measures of short war to help their cause**
 - War in Europe settled to stalemate—**phony war**

The Storm in Europe

Blitzkrieg

- **Sitzkrieg erupted into Blitzkrieg lightning war**
 - Nazi troops occupied Denmark and landed on Norwegian coast
 - Denmark and Norway fell
 - Hitler unleashed bombers on Belgium and Netherlands
 - Germans reached English Channel
 - French and British soldiers defended
- **German forces outflanked forts on France's eastern border, Maginot Line**
 - Germans took Paris, French submitted surrender

America's Growing Involvement

- **Britain stood alone, Winston Churchill resisted Germany**
 - It would take time for America to create viable military force
 - Roosevelt called for military buildup
 - Churchill appealed for military supplies, War and Navy Departments followed Roosevelt's orders to release arms, munitions
- **World crisis transformed Roosevelt**
 - Revitalized by war in Europe
 - Was willing to exert authority on behalf of Britain
 - Set up **National Defense Research Committee** to coordinate military research, effort to develop atomic bomb
 - To bolster national unity, Roosevelt named two Republicans to defense posts in cabinet: **Henry Stimson as secretary of war and Frank Knox as secretary of the navy**

- **Summer of 1940: Battle of Britain in which Royal Air Force outfought German Luftwaffe**
 - Germans plans were postponed
 - Submarine warfare strained resources of Royal Navy
 - US destroyers sent to Britain in return for 99 year American leases on naval and air bases in British territories
 - Roosevelt disguised the action as necessary for defense
 - **Roosevelt signed peacetime conscription in American history**
- **Vigorous debate between “internationalists” and isolationists**
 - Internationalists wanted to help Britain for sake of safety
 - Isolationists thought war was needless
 - **Internationalists organized nonpartisan Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies**
 - **Drew strongest support from East, West, and South**
 - **Isolationists formed the America First Committee**
 - Included Hoover and Lindbergh

FDR's Third Term

- **Isolationist sentiment was strongest in Republican party, but Republican candidates were not sufficient**
 - **Robert Taft lacked appeal, Thomas Dewey was unseasoned**
 - Political amateurs promoted dark-horse candidate **Wendell Willkie**
- **Willkie seemed at first like an unlikely choice**
 - Former Democrat, fought the TVA, supported aid to Allies (unlike Republicans)
- **Nazi victory in France ensured Roosevelt's nomination**
 - If war hadn't continued, Roosevelt would stop after 2 terms
 - Roosevelt was silent about war intentions
 - Southern conservatives supported his foreign policy
- **Roosevelt assumed role of man busy with urgent matters**
 - Pan-American agreements, destroyer-bases deal, visits to defense facilities
 - Willkie was reduced to attacks on New Deal red tape and promises to run the new federal programs better
 - Willkie eventually attacked Roosevelt's foreign policy
 - Both knew the risks of all-out aid to Britain, which they both supported
- **Roosevelt won, his narrowest victory**
 - Roosevelt's declining stature

The “Arsenal of Democracy”

- **Roosevelt moved quickly for greater measures to aid Britain**
 - Direct American loans would lead to war-debt defaults
 - **Johnson Debt Default Act forbade loans, Roosevelt bypassed through lend-lease program**
 - “great arsenal of democracy” due to threat of Britain's fall
 - **Lend-lease bill proposed authorizing the president to sell, lease, dispose arms to any country whose defense was vital to US security**
- **Debate over lend-lease bill**
 - Isolationists saw it as a point of no return
 - Administration supporters denied that lend-lease would lead to war

- **Lend-lease became law, but would increase risk**
 - All dissenting votes were Republican
- **War expanded**
 - Italy entered as Germany's ally
 - Mussolini launched attacks on Greece and Egypt
 - German forces under Rommel joined Italians in Libya, British withdrew
 - Nazis overwhelmed Yugoslavia and Crete
- **Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria joined Axis**
 - Germans fell upon Soviet Russia, Russian soldiers rallied at Leningrad, Moscow, Sevastopol
 - Nazis lost to the Russian winter
- **Churchill decided to offer British support to Soviet Union**
 - Roosevelt adopted same policy
 - American aid was indispensable to Europe's defense
 - Lend-lease led to deeper American involvement
 - Ships had to dodge German U-boat wolf packs
 - US Navy extended patrols to Iceland
- **Roosevelt and Churchill had secret meeting, drew up statement of principles known as Atlantic Charter**
 - Called for self-determination, equal access to resources, economic cooperation, freedom of seas, international security
 - Many nations, including Axis nations, endorsed it
- **Roosevelt led US into joint statement of war aims with the anti-Axis powers**
 - First attack on an American warship: German submarine sunk *Greer*
- **Kearny sustained damage from German torpedo**
 - *Reuben James* was destroyed
 - Congress made changes to Neutrality Act—repealed bans, gave up neutrality gradually
 - Decision to go to war would be in response to Pearl Harbor

The Storm in the Pacific

Japanese Aggression

- **US relations with Japan took a turn for the worse**
 - Japanese eyed French Indochina in south Asia
- **Japan and US began series of moves that led to war**
 - Japanese constructed airfields in French-controlled northern Indochina
 - US responded with loan to China and **Export Control Act**, which authorized president to restrict export of American arms to Japan
- **Tokyo government signed Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy—pledge to declare war on any nation that attacked any of them**
 - Japan signed nonaggression pact with Soviet Union
- **Japan announced protectorate of French Indochina**
 - **Roosevelt took three steps in response:**
 - Froze all Japanese assets in US
 - Restricted oil exports

- Merged armed forces of Philippines with US Army, MacArthur was in charge
 - oil restrictions became embargo
 - Japanese planned attacks on Dutch and British colonies
- **US and Japan were on a collision course**
 - Secretary of State Hull demanded that Japan withdraw from Indochina and China
 - More flexible position may have strengthened moderates in Japan
 - Japanese military leadership continued aggression, even without government approval
- **Japanese warlords misjudged US**
 - Japanese could have conquered Dutch and British colonies if US hadn't entered

Tragedy at Pearl Harbor

- **Americans were focused on war in the Atlantic—Pearl Harbor was a fatal surprise**
 - Japanese officials approved attack on Hawaii
- **Japanese emperor's concern about risks of an attack afforded one last chance at compromise**
 - Konoe urged War Minister to consider withdrawal, but keep some troops to save face
 - War Minister proposed that all Japanese troops would pull out if US stopped aiding China
 - Konoe resigned, war party assumed control
- **War Minister Tojo's final proposal: Japan would occupy no more territory in Asia if US would cut off aid to China, restore trade, help Japan get supplies from Dutch East Indies**
 - Tojo expected US to refuse
 - Japanese ships secretly sailed to Pearl Harbor
- **Officials in Washington knew war was imminent**
- **Japan broke off diplomatic negotiations**
 - Communication delays
- **Many ships and planes destroyed, 2400 killed**
- **Surprise attack fulfilled dreams of its planners, but fell short of total success in two ways:**
 - Japanese ignored onshore facilities and oil tanks
 - They missed aircraft carriers
- **Japanese forces invaded Philippines, Guam, Midway, Hong Kong, Malay Peninsula**
 - Japanese ended American neutrality
 - Hitler joined Asian allies, Germany and Italy declared war on US