

Reasons for Allied Victory- Defeat of Germany in WWII

1. USA Intervention
2. Germany's Miscalculations
3. Allied Resistance

USA'S INTERVENTION

- Changed the landscape of the war through showing their military prowess and logistical strength
- Able to convert industrial economy to mass production of war weapons so rapidly and effectively → could train their armed forces by exerting massive material superiority
- **Gradual, Indirect Involvement:**
 - After signing the TOV, Woodrow Wilson adopted the policy of isolationism; whereby the USA would have minimal involvement in global affairs, which meant that nations had to battle between themselves without the help of the USA
 - Isolationism began to permeate the U.S. and culminated in the Neutrality Acts in the 1930s → tied the hands of the U.S. to help its allies by refusing to sell resources or loan \$\$ to any war combatants
 - 1937: Roosevelt warned the American public that German aggression was nearing as they signed the Anti-Comintern Pact with Japan → prepared the USA for the possibility of entering a war
 - Sept 1939: When Hitler invaded Poland, Roosevelt persuaded Congress to allow exchange of war materials to allies on a cash and carry basis; rendered assistance without getting involved
 - End of Neutrality Act: When France surrendered to Germany in 1940, Europe was in shambles → convinced they had to get involved before the situation gets worse
- **Arsenal of Democracy:**
 - Meant that USA would actively support democratic nations against the German attacks and fight the Axis Powers
 - When France fell into the hands of Germany, USA sent massive amounts of military equipment and \$\$ to Britain and Russia, instituted a military draft and expanded its naval boundaries
 - Agreed to supply Britain with 50 naval destroyers in exchange for several military bases in the Atlantic and Pacific
 - Lend-Lease Programme was also extended to USSR when it was invaded by Germany in 1941
 - Spent 50 billion on the program by the end of 1945

- **Fireside Chat 'On National Security' (1940)**
 - President addressed the need for the USA to intervene at some point
 - Felt that isolationist mindset would make the USA delusional, and come under serious attack in no time
- **Economic Sanctions**
 - Economic sanctions placed on Axis Powers to deprive them of resources
- **Escort Roles**
 - USA was further sucked towards the conflict when its navy and air force began to 'escort' British convoys which transported Lend-Lease material across the Atlantic, protecting them from German submarines (U-Boats) in late 1941
- **Pearl Harbor Attack (1941)**
 - Roosevelt finally convinced Congress to allow an American response
 - Finally allowed for intervention!!

EXPANSION OF U.S. ROLE

- **Committing the Nation**
 - 16 million Americans served in WWII from late 1941 to 1945, more than 400,000 soldiers didn't return ☹
 - Reverted to war economy quickly → produced guns, ammunition, ships, planes and tanks for war effort
 - Involvement of USA and USSR gradually turned Germany's military campaign into a disaster for the German forces ☺
- **Collaboration with Allies on Military Strategies**
 - Successfully bombed German cities and Axis military sites such as synthetic oil plants and oilfields
 - *Operation Overlord* – D-Day landings on the coast of Normandy, France ended in Germany's defeat, allied code name for invasion of Normandy → involved more than 150,000 men and 5000 ships, and troops under the command of General Eisenhower
 - Roosevelt prioritized the increase the military capacity of American airpower → vital for allied success
 - Bombing of German cities hindered Germany's production of war materials
 - Needed to control Atlantic Sea for shipping supplies and moving the troops over to the Atlantic
 - Challenge: German U-Boat sunk many British envoys carrying military supplies with their bases in German-occupied Norway and France, which made it easier for them to patrol the Atlantic and direct their U-boats to their targets → difficult for Allied aircrafts to cross the vast Atlantic
 - What they did: US Navy took over escort duties from Britain
 - Greenland and Iceland (US occupied) offered British their vital bases in mid-Atlantic
 - Produced long range aircraft to attack U-boats and German planes
 - Mass production of warships by the US
 - Achieved effective control of the Atlantic Ocean ☺

GERMANY'S MISCALCULATIONS

- **Ineffective Command Structure**
 - Hitler insisted on making decisions all by himself → didn't listen to his advisers
 - E.g Battle of Britain: Ordered Luftwaffe to attack Britain's cities instead of focusing on destroying the British RAF → provided time for the British to recover
- **Inappropriate Use of Resources and Military Funds**
 - Military leaders of the army, navy and air force competed with each other for limited funds instead of working together to produce and effective Wehrmacht (combined defense force)
 - When invading Britain, they invested so much in battleships and cruisers instead of the U-boats
 - Lack of unity led to internal competition instead of working together to defeat enemies
 - Lacked workers to produce weapons needed → discouraged women from working, starved laborers
 - Produced too many types of weapons → needed more spare parts // Allies only concentrated on few, effective ones
- **Heavy Reliance on Petroleum**
 - Made Germany vulnerable especially with Allied in control of air
 - Lacked petroleum reserves
 - Invented synthetic oil → bombed by the Allied in 1943 through aerial bombing → almost halted German war machine
- **War on Two Fronts**
 - Western Front: With the downfall of France in 1940, Britain was the only Allied country left in the Western Front to fight Germany
 - Eastern Front: USSR, Hitler broke the NSNAP and invaded USSR on 22 June 1941
 - Hitler was unable to concentrate on a single theatre of war
 - While Hitler was battling with the Soviets, he declared war on the USA, thinking that they would divert their attention to Japan (bc Pearl Harbor) but they didn't ☺

ALLIED RESISTANCE

- **A Stronger USSR**

- *1941: Operation Barbarossa*
Germany broke the NSNAP and invaded USSR
- USSR formed a military alliance with Britain on 12 July 1942, entering the war on the Allies
- USSR was unprepared to handle Germany's Blitzkrieg tactics (lightning speed) which were unstoppable
- Within 3 months, Soviet Union's air and tank forces were almost destroyed and Soviet casualties numbered 4 million
- HOWEVER, German intelligence services underestimated the troop reserves Stalin could bring up
- Stalin also boosted the morale of his Red Army soldiers → 'fight to death mentality'
- Set up new defensive positions, began first ever counter-attacks against the advancing Germans
- With each passing day, Germans began to lose momentum → could no longer easily blow through Russian defenses, had to be wary of counter strikes → German troops lost morale
- Managed to defeat 80% of German troops on Eastern Front
- Tactic errors on the part of the Germans and bitter winters in 1941-1942 gave USSR's troops time to recover and rebuild its economy and military
- Plus USA's Lend Lease aid, Soviets were able to turn the tide against the Germans

Hitler	Stalin
Refused to take advice from his experienced generals, led the battle(s) on his own	Learnt from his mistakes in initial months of German invasion
<u>Wehrmacht</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ill- prepared for extended conflict and harsh Russian winter○ Blitzkreig not suitable for long wars○ Severe shortage of suitable uniform and equipment○ Low morale of troops	<u>The Red Army</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Made use of harsh winters to rebuild and reorganize economy and army○ Improved communications○ Produced effective weapons in large quantities → no wastage○ High morale of troops
<u>Economy</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Inappropriate use of funds and resources for military○ Slow and inefficient military production	<u>Economy</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Industrial plants retreated to central○ All resources devoted to war effort

- **British Resistance to German Invasion**
 - Battle of Britain was solely an air war, fought between a small group of pilots on both sides
 - Sudden tactic switch on German part from bombing coastal bases and RAF air bases towards massive bombing of London (Blitzkrieg)
 - Provided much needed breathing space to repair airfields and radar system → boosted British troops' morale and when Luftwaffe mounted a massive daylight attack on London, a total of 60 German aircraft was shot down, compared with 26 British losses
 - T.P proved that Luftwaffe could not gain superiority in daylight