



# Curriculum Guide

*Franklin D. Roosevelt and WWII*

## **Freedom from Fear: FDR Commander in Chief Exhibit Guide**

1930's: The Perilous Decade

War in Europe: September 1, 1939

December 7, 1941: America Enters the War

Commander-In-Chief

Germany First

The Course of the War: 1942

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Leading By Example

The Home Front

April 12, 1945

Legacies of War



# FREEDOM FROM FEAR

FDR COMMANDER IN CHIEF







Front Cover: FDR wears his familiar naval cloak as he stands  
on the deck of an American warship, July 14, 1938.  
FDR Presidential Library

Inside Cover: The President returns the salute of men at Fort Lewis, Washington  
during an inspection visit, September 22, 1942.  
FDR Presidential Library



# FREEDOM FROM FEAR FDR COMMANDER IN CHIEF

September 2, 2005 - November 5, 2006

Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum  
Hyde Park, New York





## FOREWORD

For the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, this exhibit has been a long time coming. In the early 1990s, when the rest of the world began commemorative activities to honor the 50th anniversary of the Second World War, all the federal presidential libraries in turn hosted a traveling exhibit on the war—all, that is, except the Roosevelt Library, home of the nation's wartime commander-in-chief. It could not travel to Hyde Park because we did not have a gallery in which to mount the exhibit.

Now, more than ten years later, the Roosevelt Library is pleased to open *Freedom from Fear: FDR Commander in Chief* on September 2, 2005—sixty years to the day of the signing of the formal unconditional surrender with Japan. Renovations for this special gallery were completed at the same time that the new Henry A. Wallace Center was dedicated two years ago. It is named for Ambassador William J. vanden Heuvel in recognition of his leadership in spearheading the public-private partnership that resulted in the Library's beautiful new facilities.

The subject of this exhibit was suggested by Ambassador vanden Heuvel and we were happy to agree. For the Roosevelt Library can offer no more important subject for today's world than continuing inquiry into the lessons learned in the course of the Second World War.

I am proud of the work of our gifted curator, Herman Eberhardt, and the museum and archives staff in creating this extraordinary exhibit. The exhibit is very rich in documents thanks to the hard work of the Library's supervisory archivist, Robert Clark, who was a true collaborator with Herman on document selection, captioning, and installation. Our public programs and education staff have devoted themselves to developing excellent publications, curriculum materials, and programs that extend the message of this exhibit to audiences far and wide, young and old. I am particularly grateful to Lynn Bassanese for her leadership in managing the excellent work of all members of her team of graphic designers, educators, and public programming and media outreach professionals.

All of us at the Library are in debt to Christopher Breiseth and members of the Board of the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute for their generous financial support, and to David Woolner for his meticulous historical review of exhibit texts.

I invite you to enjoy the exhibit and hope that you find it relevant to the choices you make as a citizen today. For as President Roosevelt declared when he dedicated this Library in 1941, our purpose is to make the Library available to people "so to learn from the past that they can gain in judgement for the creation of the future."

**Cynthia M. Koch**

Director

Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum



FDR at the dedication of the Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, June 30, 1941.  
FDR Presidential Library



# INTRODUCTION

World War II was a colossal military struggle in which more than 60 million people were killed, where nations were decimated, where democracy's survival was in the balance. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, as the 32nd President of the United States, was our commander-in-chief. He had led America out of the despair of the Great Depression. In response to the totalitarian threat, he addressed Congress in January 1941 and committed our country to a world premised on the Four Freedoms: Freedom of Speech and Expression, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Want, and Freedom from Fear. In his first inaugural address, he had reassured a shattered nation in words as memorable as those that any President would speak: "We have nothing to fear but fear itself." Now he encouraged all humanity to create a world where freedom from fear would prevail.

The war began on September 1, 1939 with Germany's invasion of Poland. Nazi Germany was the strongest military force that had ever challenged the democracies. In the Far East, militarist Japan had already invaded China. Only the United States remained as an obstacle to Japan's total dominance in Asia. At this point, U.S. military strength ranked as 17th in the world, behind Portugal. With the collapse of France, Great Britain stood alone, finding its voice in the defiant words of Winston Churchill. Freedom's debt to the British can never be adequately expressed. In June 1941, Hitler invaded the Soviet Union. Enduring calamitous casualties, suffering, and devastation, the Russian armies were indispensable to victory. Then came December 7, 1941 and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, which united the nation behind the President and liberated the extraordinary energies of our people to respond to his leadership. He told his countrymen that "we must share together the bad news and the good news, the defeats and the victories. . . ." He understood that truth, that integrity were essential to leadership.

He would not allow Americans to be fearful, even when faced with a disaster like Pearl Harbor. He set about the supreme task of prevailing over our enemies in a mood of quiet, grim resolution, setting out production goals for our factories that many thought unrealistic but all of which were surpassed. He called for sacrifice to

be shared by the entire nation—16 million citizens entered the armed forces, business and labor cooperated to build an industrial capacity that remains a modern miracle, inflation was contained, rationing was accepted, heavy taxes were imposed but our country was never more unified, more determined, more ready to accept the leadership of a commander-in-chief who himself never doubted the outcome, whose fearlessness became the spirit of the nation.

"Peace on earth, good will toward men" were not empty words to Franklin Roosevelt. In the midst of war, he began planning for the years that would follow the victory. The United Nations, the commitment to collective security, the determination to end colonialism, the economic plan for a prosperous world with access to resources and trade assured to all nations—this was his vision. He made America the strongest nation in the world; he was the father of the nuclear age; he challenged us to be the arsenal of democracy; he led the victorious alliance that won the war. He was commander-in-chief of the greatest military force in history. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was the expression of power and purpose, of courage and compassion, of democracy and decency.

As the Casablanca Conference ended in 1943, Winston Churchill persuaded FDR to go with him to Marrakech "to watch the sun go down on the Atlas Mountains." When the time came for the President's departure the Prime Minister went with him to the airfield. Having said goodbye, Churchill turned to the American Consul who had accompanied them and said: "Let us go home. I don't like to see them take off." The sun was breaking through the ground mist and the outline of the mountains was beginning to appear. In the car Churchill put his hand on the Consul's arm. "If anything happened to that man," he said, "I couldn't stand it. He is the truest friend; he has the farthest vision; he is the greatest man I have ever known."

We remember Winston Churchill's words as we visit this special exhibit that allows us to recall a rendezvous with history of which all Americans can be proud.

**William J. vanden Heuvel**  
Co-Chair

Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute





Thick smoke rises from the USS Arizona during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The attack claimed the lives of 1177 members of the battleship's crew.  
FDR Presidential Library



*"Yesterday, December 7, 1941—a date which will live in infamy—the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan."*

*Franklin Roosevelt  
Address to Congress, December 8, 1941*

In the early morning hours of that December Sunday, Japan unleashed a devastating surprise attack on American military installations throughout the Pacific. The Pearl Harbor naval base in Hawaii was the major target. In just two hours, Japanese bombers destroyed or damaged 21 American naval vessels and over 300 aircraft. The attacks killed 2403 military personnel and civilians, and shattered the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

President Roosevelt was lunching with Harry Hopkins in the Oval Study in the White House residence when he got the news. After an afternoon spent monitoring the crisis, shortly before 5 PM, he began preparing a war message for Congress. Though drafted in haste, FDR's words galvanized the nation. For most Americans—then and now—those words and that moment virtually define Franklin Roosevelt as America's wartime commander-in-chief.

The Constitution directs that the President shall be commander-in-chief of America's armed forces. Every president since George Washington has held this responsibility. But perhaps only Abraham Lincoln exercised it under more trying circumstances than Franklin Roosevelt.

Ultimately America and its Allies achieved a hard-fought victory in a global struggle to preserve democracy, uphold the rule of law, and ensure—in FDR's words—"freedom from fear" everywhere in the world.



# THE 1930s: THE PERILOUS DECADE

*"The peace, the freedom and the security of ninety percent of the population of the world is being jeopardized by the remaining ten percent, who are threatening a breakdown of all international order and law. Surely the ninety percent who want to live in peace under law and in accordance with moral standards . . . can and must find some way to make their will prevail."*

Franklin Roosevelt  
Address at Chicago, October 5, 1937

For the United States and other democratic nations, the 1930s was a time of great peril.

Across the globe, economic depression bred mass unemployment and despair. In some nations, financial strife aided the rise of totalitarian leaders who promised prosperity based on military expansion.

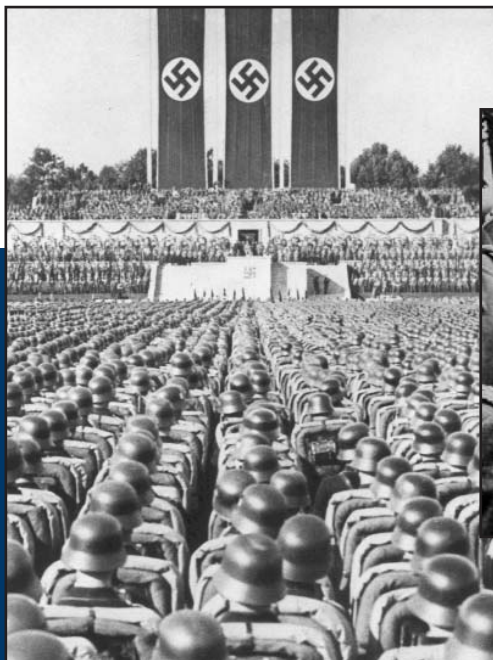
In Europe, German dictator Adolf Hitler and his Italian counterpart, Benito Mussolini, talked of empire and threatened their neighbors. In Asia, the military-dominated government of Japan plotted a path of territorial expansion.

In 1931, Japan occupied Manchuria. Six years later, it began a full-scale invasion of China. In

1935, Italy invaded Ethiopia, while, in Europe, Germany annexed Austria in 1938 and absorbed much of Czechoslovakia in 1938-39. Hitler next set his sights on Poland.

At first, the democratic nations reacted meekly to these acts of aggression. But by 1939, Britain and France were determined to resist Hitler. They pledged to come to Poland's defense if Germany attacked.

Separated by two oceans from these troubles, Americans hoped to avoid involvement in overseas conflicts. Yet, as the decade progressed, some—including President Roosevelt—viewed events overseas with increasing alarm.



Mass Nazi rally at Nuremberg, mid-1930s.  
National Archives, College Park



Adolf Hitler confers with his generals during the battle for Warsaw, September 1939.  
National Archives, College Park



Bedside note written by FDR at 3:05 AM on September 1, 1939, after being informed that Germany had invaded Poland.  
FDR Presidential Library



The President received word at 2:50 a.m. from William Bullitt that Germany has invaded Poland and that some cities are being bombed. The Pres. directed that all Navy ships and Army Air Corps be alerted by radio at once.

In bed  
3:05 a.m.  
Sept 1  
1939

## WAR IN EUROPE: SEPTEMBER 1, 1939

*"Well, Bill, it has come at last. God help us all!"*

Franklin Roosevelt  
to Ambassador William Bullitt 2:50 AM, September 1, 1939

At 2:50 AM on September 1, 1939 the President was asleep at the White House when the phone by his bedside rang. William Bullitt, America's Ambassador to France, was calling from Paris with grim news. The German army was invading Poland. Roosevelt understood immediately that this meant a larger war, for Great Britain and France had pledged to come to Poland's defense if Germany attacked. World War II had begun.

On September 3, FDR went on national radio to speak to Americans about the crisis in Europe. "This nation will remain a neutral nation," he

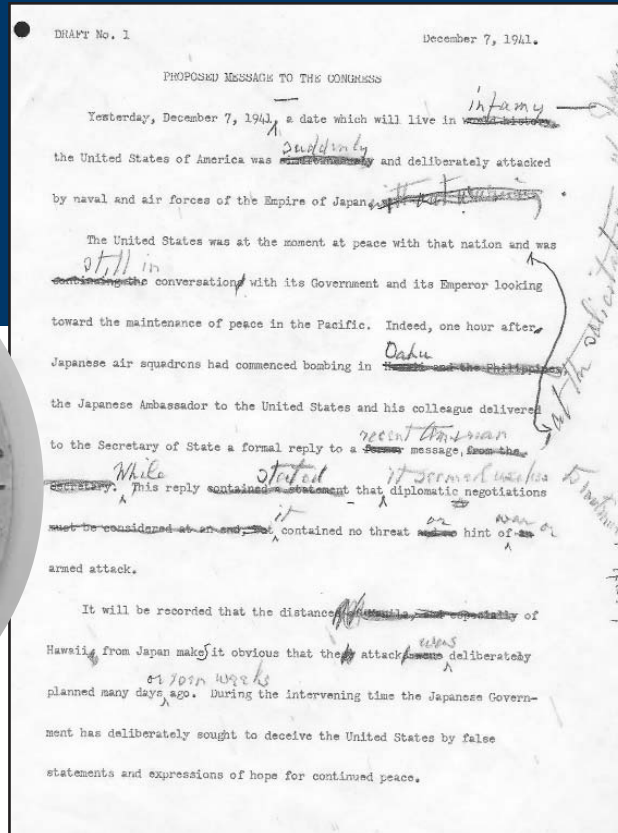
declared, "but I cannot ask that every American remain neutral in thought as well. . . . Even a neutral cannot be asked to close his mind or his conscience."

In the crucial months that followed, the President would demonstrate that his sympathies lay with the victims of Axis aggression. Yet America's isolationist mood limited FDR's freedom to act. In particular, the country's Neutrality Acts prohibited the sale of American weapons to warring nations.



Draft of December 8, 1941 War Message to Congress. FDR's handwritten revisions—visible in this December 7 draft of the speech—made the "Day of Infamy" speech one of the most memorable in American history.  
FDR Presidential Library

Gilbert Maggi of New York City sent the President this hand-painted plaster plaque on March 26, 1942.  
FDR Presidential Library



## DECEMBER 7, 1941: AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

*"We are now in this war. We are all in it—all the way. Every single man, woman, and child is a partner in the most tremendous undertaking of our American history. We must share together the bad news and the good news, the defeats and the victories—the changing fortunes of war."*

Franklin Roosevelt  
Fireside Chat, December 9, 1941

On December 7, 1941, debate over American involvement in World War II ended abruptly when Japan staged its surprise attack at Pearl Harbor and other American military installations in the Pacific. The attacks were part of a larger military campaign to extend Japan's empire and seize oil and other critical natural resources in Southeast Asia. Japan sought to destroy America's ability to combat its aggression.

Four days after Pearl Harbor, Germany and Italy—who were allied with Japan under the 1940 Tripartite Pact—declared war on the United States. In one stroke, by declaring war, Hitler and Mussolini solved a strategic dilemma for FDR, who had long believed that Germany posed the greatest long-term threat to America's national security.



# COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

*"... take out and spread before you a map of the whole earth, and ... follow with me the references which I shall make to the world-encircling battle lines of this war."*

*Franklin Roosevelt  
Fireside Chat, February 23, 1942*

Franklin Roosevelt possessed an instinct for power and a willingness to exercise it. World War II—with its global military operations, complex international coalitions, and economic and social challenges—was a vast stage on which he seized a central role. He was, in every sense, the nation's commander-in-chief.

FDR held the key position in a wartime coalition of twenty-six nations he called the "United Nations." He, Josef Stalin, and Winston Churchill comprised the "Big Three" at the heart of this coalition. But, as the war progressed, FDR increasingly acted as the group's ultimate broker and decision-maker. Throughout the war, the

President emphasized the importance of coalition-building. Diplomacy, as much as military strategy, became a hallmark of his wartime leadership.

The President centralized the work of war mobilization and military information gathering so that he could closely monitor and direct events from the White House. He respected the counsel of his military commanders and was willing to leave battle strategy and detail work to them. But he also prodded and challenged. And, in matters of grand strategy Roosevelt was firm: he would not allow subordinates to shape strategies contrary to his own.



FDR with members of the U.S. Army 6th Ranger Battalion during their March 15, 1945 visit to the Oval Office.  
FDR Presidential Library



FDR reviews American troops during the Casablanca Conference, January 21, 1943  
FDR Presidential Library



# GERMANY FIRST

*"It is of the utmost importance that we appreciate that defeat of Japan does not defeat Germany and that American concentration against Japan this year or in 1943 increases the chance of complete German domination of Europe and Africa."*

Franklin Roosevelt  
to General George Marshall and Admiral Ernest King, July 14, 1942

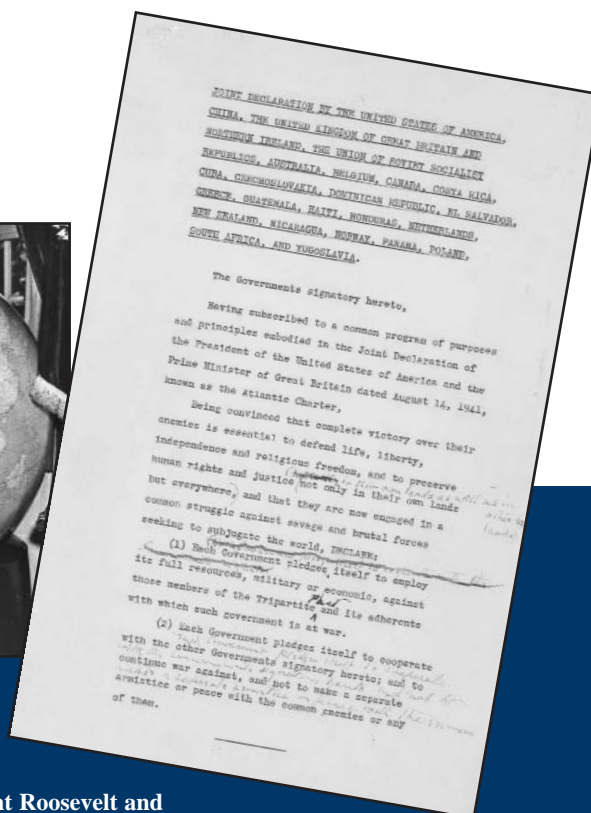
After Pearl Harbor, American anger and energy was overwhelmingly directed at Japan. Yet Roosevelt knew Germany—as the more powerful of the two foes—posed a graver threat to American security. Great Britain and the Soviet Union were under intense pressure from German forces and the President could not risk their collapse. Well before the United States entered the war, he had approved a strategy of defeating "Germany First," should the nation become embroiled in war in both Europe and Asia. The strategy assumed the U.S. would maintain a holding action against Japan until the battle against Hitler was won. During secret meetings in

Washington in early 1941, top American and British military leaders agreed that a "Germany First" policy was strategically sound.

Yet many Americans, including some military figures, opposed the policy. FDR held firm against all attempts to reverse or weaken it, and he overruled some of his own military advisers when he insisted upon a 1942 invasion of North Africa. The invasion was a success. It also achieved FDR's goal of quickly putting America's military into action against German forces to focus public attention on Europe.



FDR examines the massive globe presented to him by General George Marshall in December 1942.  
FDR Presidential Library



In December 1941, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill drafted a joint declaration of principles to be signed by all the Allied nations fighting against the Axis Powers. This early draft bears FDR's handwritten changes.  
FDR Presidential Library



**Left: FDR and Churchill conduct a joint news conference in the Oval Office, December 23, 1941.**

FDR Presidential Library

**Middle left: Soviet troops move through a ruined neighborhood during the German siege of Stalingrad, November 1942.**

National Archives, College Park



**Middle right: A U.S. tank in action in Tunisia during the 1942-1943 North Africa campaign.**

National Archives, College Park

**Right: Marines leap out of their landing boat during the initial American landing on Guadalcanal, August 1942.**

National Archives, College Park



## THE COURSE OF WAR: 1942

On December 23, 1941—two weeks after Pearl Harbor—reporters at the White House were ushered into the Oval Office for a press conference. There they found a smiling FDR and a special guest—Winston Churchill. The Prime Minister had come to Washington to plot strategy. He would remain until mid-January, 1942. The situation the Allies faced at the start of 1942 was bad . . . and getting worse. But during this pivotal year they halted the expansion of the Axis Powers and began moving to the offensive.

In Asia, the strategic situation in early 1942 was bleak. Japan had decimated America's Pacific fleet and attacked British, Dutch, and American strongholds from Burma to Wake Island. During the first six months of 1942, the Japanese dramatically expanded their empire, conquering vast areas of the Pacific and Southeast Asia.

Conditions in Europe were also bad. German armies had pushed deep into the heart of the Soviet Union and were laying siege to Moscow and Stalingrad. In the North Atlantic, German submarines continued their deadly campaign against supply ships bound for Great Britain.

The only good news for Americans in the early months of 1942 was a daring April bombing raid on Tokyo and several other Japanese cities led by Lieutenant Colonel James H. Doolittle. The Doolittle raid was personally approved by FDR as a dramatic way to strike back at Japan and give heart to the American public.

In June, the flood of bad war news finally began to ebb. At the epic Battle of Midway, the U.S. Navy destroyed four Japanese aircraft carriers, ending Japan's expansion in the Central Pacific. The victory resulted, in part, from the work of code-breakers who had penetrated Japan's naval code. In August, American forces in the South Pacific invaded the island of Guadalcanal—the first step in what would be a long advance against the Japanese.

In Europe, the strategic situation also improved. In November, British forces defeated the German Afrika Korps at El Alamein, Egypt. On November 8, a large Anglo-American invasion force landed in North Africa to clear that continent of Axis forces. And, the German advance in the Soviet Union was halted in a series of battles.

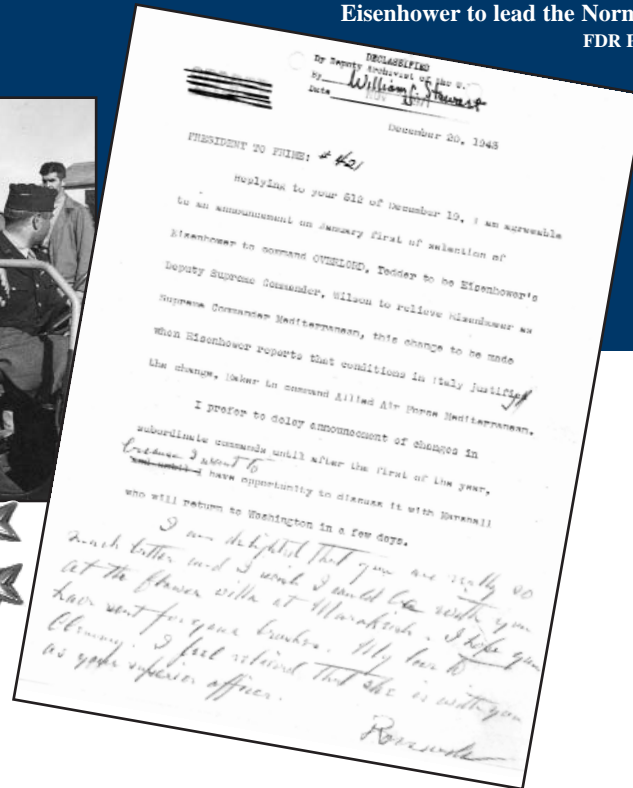


President Roosevelt with General Dwight D. Eisenhower in Sicily, 1943.  
FDR Presidential Library

The General of the Army insignia worn by  
General George C. Marshall.  
On loan from the George C. Marshall Museum, Lexington, Virginia.



Draft Telegram, FDR to Winston Churchill,  
December 20, 1944 naming General Dwight D.  
Eisenhower to lead the Normandy invasion.  
FDR Presidential Library



## LEADING THE GENERALS AND ADMIRALS

*"Planning of major operations was always done in close cooperation with the President. Frequently we had sessions in his study. . . Churchill and Roosevelt really ran the war . . . we were just artisans, building patterns of strategy from the rough blueprints handed us by our respective commanders-in-chief."*

Admiral William D. Leahy  
I Was There (1950)

Franklin Roosevelt commanded an extraordinary group of military leaders during World War II. Sixty years later, their names—including Marshall, Eisenhower, Nimitz, King, Arnold and MacArthur—inspire awe.

A confident commander-in-chief with strong views on strategy, FDR actively involved himself in military affairs. Together, he and his lieutenants virtually created the modern American military. The armed services grew from an unprepared force of 334,473 active duty personnel in 1939 to 12,123,455 in 1945. The army and navy expanded and modernized and,

with FDR's endorsement, American air power increased dramatically. The President also supported new agencies like the Office of Strategic Services (precursor to the CIA) and the Office of Scientific Research and Development.

FDR moved aggressively to centralize strategy and high command in the White House. In 1939, he ordered the Joint Army-Navy Board and several munitions and military procurement agencies to bypass the War and Navy Departments and report directly to him. He created the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1942.



# CASABLANCA: DEBATING THE SECOND FRONT

*"I think it can be said that the studies during the past week or ten days are unprecedented in history. . . . [T]hese conferences have discussed, I think for the first time in history, the whole global picture. It isn't just one front, just one ocean, or one continent—it is literally the whole world. . . ."*

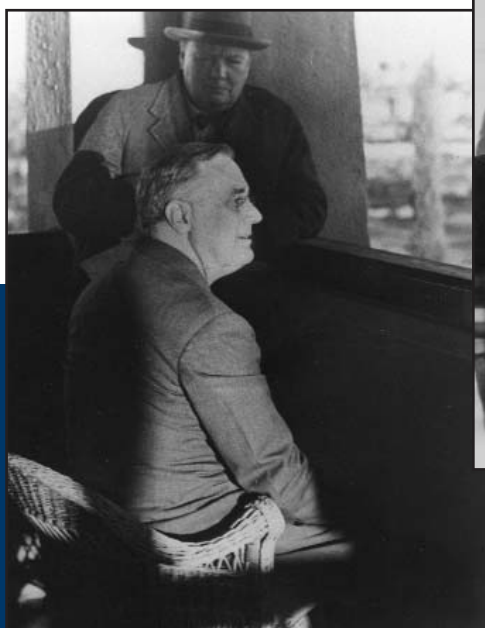
*Franklin Roosevelt  
Joint Press Conference with Prime Minister Churchill at Casablanca  
January 24, 1943*

From 1942 to 1944 one subject dominated Allied strategic debate—the creation of a Second Front in Europe. This thorny issue caused friction between America, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. It topped the agenda of the January 1943 summit meeting between FDR and Winston Churchill at Casablanca, Morocco, held shortly after the Allied invasion of North Africa.

Though Soviet leader Stalin did not attend this meeting, his feelings were clear. For eighteen months, the Soviets had single-handedly resisted a massive German invasion to the east. Stalin demanded that his allies strike quickly at the heart of Hitler's empire in northwestern Europe, establishing a "Second Front" to draw off some German forces from the USSR.

FDR's military advisers favored the earliest possible assault on northwestern Europe. But Churchill argued that a large buildup of forces was necessary to ensure a successful invasion. Because this was unlikely in 1943, he pushed for a more limited, "peripheral" strategy of attack along the edges of the Axis empire, starting with an assault on Sicily. Roosevelt, eager to keep the American public focused on the fighting in Europe, agreed.

To ease Stalin's disappointment, FDR offered a signal of Anglo-American resolve: he announced the Allies would only accept an "unconditional surrender" from the Axis Powers.



**Churchill and FDR pose with top advisers during the Casablanca Conference.**  
National Archives, College Park

**Shortly before FDR's departure from the Casablanca Conference, he and Churchill visited Marrakech.**  
National Archives, College Park



# THE COURSE OF WAR: 1943

During the early years of World War II, the Axis Powers were constantly on the offensive, while the Allies struggled to survive and gather resources for a counterattack. But in 1943 the tide of battle began to turn decisively as the Allies seized the initiative in both Europe and the Pacific.

After suffering terrible losses, the Soviet Union turned back the German invasion and began driving Hitler's armies westward. In the Mediterranean, Anglo-American forces cleared Axis forces from North Africa. In July the Allies invaded Sicily. The invasion led to the overthrow of Mussolini's government.

In September, Allied troops crossed to the Italian mainland. Italy quickly surrendered. But the Allies met stiff resistance from German forces that were rushed into Italy after Mussolini's fall. The Allied advance along the narrow Italian peninsula became a slow and bloody slog that would continue until the war's end.

The Allies met with greater success in their campaign to end the German submarine menace

in the North Atlantic. Only by destroying this threat and winning the "Battle of the Atlantic" could the Allies undertake the giant buildup of men and supplies in Great Britain needed for the decisive invasion of northwest Europe.

Despite the Allied strategy of "Germany First," America was also able to move to the offensive in the Pacific. American forces in the South Pacific secured Guadalcanal after a brutal six-month struggle and, with their Australian allies, began advancing westward through the Solomon Islands and New Guinea. The Americans also began moving westward through island chains in the Central Pacific.

FDR hoped China would play a key role in the Pacific war by pinning down vast Japanese forces. He and his advisers thought China's coastline might also become the site for bases to blockade, and possibly invade, Japan. They also saw China as a potential base for an American bombing campaign against Japan. Roosevelt directed American money and supplies to aid forces under the control of Chiang Kai-shek and ensure their survival.



**Left: U.S. tanks roll through Palermo, Sicily, July 22, 1943.**  
National Archives, College Park



**Middle left: Coast Guardsmen watch as a depth charge explodes in the North Atlantic, April 17, 1943.**  
National Archives, College Park



**Middle right: Marines hit the beach at Cape Gloucester, New Britain, December 1943.**  
National Archives, College Park



**Right: Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek.**  
National Archives, College Park



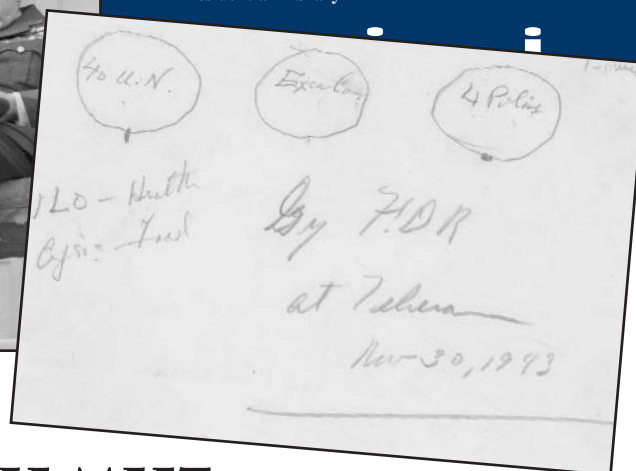
Josef Stalin, Franklin Roosevelt, and Winston Churchill sit for photographers during the Teheran Conference, November 29, 1943.

FDR Presidential Library



This sketch, made by Roosevelt during the Teheran Conference, reflects his early concept of how a new United Nations organization might be structured.

FDR Presidential Library



## TEHERAN: THE BIG THREE MEET

*"... we have concerted our plans for the destruction of the German forces. We have reached complete agreement as to the scope and timing of the operations to be undertaken from the east, west, and south."*

*Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Josef Stalin  
The Teheran Declaration  
December 1, 1943*

In November 1943 FDR journeyed to the Middle East to attend his first wartime conference with Josef Stalin. The "Big Three"—Roosevelt, Stalin and Winston Churchill—gathered at Teheran, Iran. The decisions they made there shaped both the war and the peace that followed.

The issue of a Second Front dominated discussion. Impatient with Anglo-American delays, Stalin demanded a commitment to a date for the invasion of northwest Europe. Churchill favored further delay. But FDR sided with Stalin and the three leaders agreed to a spring 1944 invasion. Stalin then pressed his allies to name the invasion's commander. After the conference, FDR selected General Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Though the war was far from won, the shape of the postwar world was also on the minds of the Big Three. But while talks included discussion of a postwar United Nations organization, Soviet fears of a resurgent Germany led the Russians to demand territorial adjustments in Eastern Europe to establish a larger postwar buffer zone between Germany and the USSR. Churchill and Roosevelt agreed to a westward shift of Poland's borders. But they postponed discussion of other territorial adjustments until later in the war. Roosevelt was also able to leave Teheran with a renewed commitment from Stalin to enter the war against Japan once Hitler was defeated.



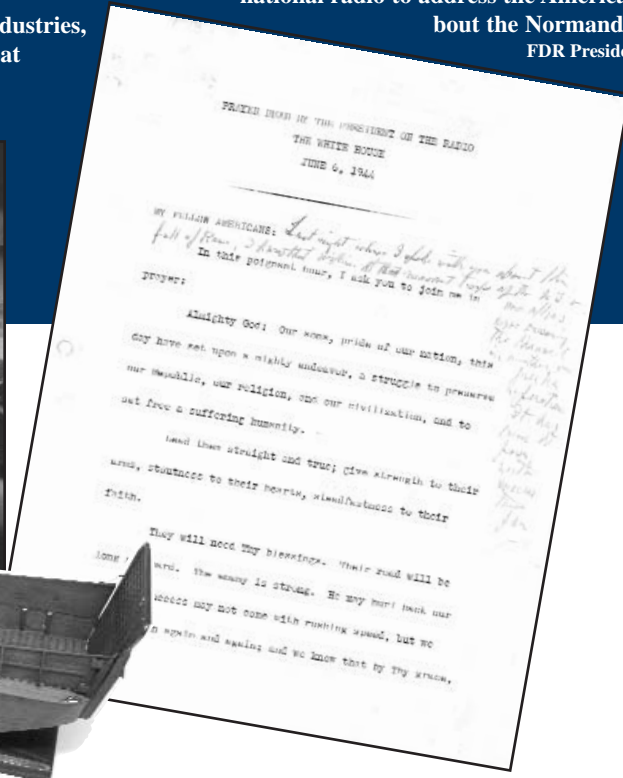
American soldiers struggle ashore under heavy fire at Omaha Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

National Archives, College Park

In 1943, Andrew Jackson Higgins, president of Higgins Industries, presented FDR with this wood model of a tank landing boat manufactured by the firm.  
FDR Presidential Library



Reading copy of the D-Day Prayer that FDR delivered on national radio to address the American people about the Normandy invasion.  
FDR Presidential Library



## D-DAY, JUNE 6, 1944

*"Almighty God: Our sons, pride of our Nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our Republic, our religion, and our civilization, and to set free a suffering humanity."*

*Franklin Roosevelt  
Prayer on D-Day, Radio Address, June 6, 1944*

As dawn broke on June 6, 1944, German soldiers defending the French coast at Normandy beheld an awe-inspiring sight—the largest amphibious invasion force in history massed in the waters of the English Channel. The long-awaited invasion of northwest Europe was underway.

The giant invasion had taken years to organize. Hundreds of thousands of men and millions of tons of weapons and equipment were transported across the Atlantic Ocean to Britain in advance of the operation. The invasion force consisted chiefly of Americans, Britons, and Canadians. Troops of the Free French and many other nations also participated.

During the tense early hours of the invasion, FDR monitored reports from the Front. That evening, he delivered a statement to the American people. It took the form of a prayer, which he read on national radio.

The Normandy invasion established a solid Second Front in Europe. Its success left Hitler's armies trapped in a vise, fighting the Red Army in the East and an expanding Anglo-American-Canadian force in the West.



# WINNING THE WAR IN THE PACIFIC

*"In the Pacific Theater, even while we are fighting a major war in Europe, our advance towards Japan is many months ahead of our own optimistic schedule."*

*Franklin Roosevelt*

*Radio Address from the White House, November 2, 1944*

By 1944, Allied forces had pushed deep into Japan's Pacific empire. While Anglo-American and Chinese troops advanced in Burma, American-led forces moved forward on two fronts in the Pacific. In the South Pacific, General Douglas MacArthur was poised to liberate the Philippines. Meanwhile, Admiral Chester Nimitz had battled his way thousands of miles across the Central Pacific, reaching the Mariana Islands in February.

After the conquest of the Marianas, some argued the U.S. should bypass the Philippines and give priority to Nimitz's Central Pacific Front. General MacArthur opposed such plans. He was single-minded in his desire to liberate the Philippines. A popular figure with friends in Republican circles,

MacArthur was a hard man to ignore.

FDR had to mediate this issue in the middle of a presidential election year. He resolved to continue the advances on both fronts. At a highly publicized July 28 meeting in Honolulu, Roosevelt, MacArthur and Nimitz agreed on the policy.

By fall, the liberation of the Philippines was underway and American bombers had begun a devastating firebombing campaign against Japanese cities from bases in the Marianas. In February, marines landed on the island of Iwo Jima—midway between the Marianas and Tokyo. America was now poised to begin the endgame in the war against Japan.



MacArthur's Field Officer's Cap, Bausch & Lomb sunglasses and case, and corncob pipe.  
On loan from the MacArthur Memorial, Norfolk, Virginia.

Admiral Chester Nimitz.  
National Archives, College Park

General Douglas MacArthur.  
National Archives, College Park



## THE COURSE OF WAR: 1945

As 1945 dawned, Allied armies were closing in on Germany and Japan. But German and Japanese resistance stiffened in the face of defeat. The spring of 1945 would witness some of the most savage and costly fighting of the war.

During the early months of 1945, Soviet armies approached Berlin from the east. To the west, the Anglo-American advance had been briefly halted in December 1944 when Hitler marshaled his forces for a surprise counterattack, driving a "bulge" into the Allied lines. But in January 1945 Hitler's forces were thrown back. After the Battle of the Bulge, Allied armies advanced into Germany.

On March 9-10, American B-29 bombers made their most devastating raid on Japan to date—killing nearly 100,000 people in a firebombing attack on Tokyo. On March 26 the bloody battle for Iwo Jima ended. The island was taken at a cost of nearly 6000 American dead. Six days later, U.S. forces invaded the island of Okinawa, just 340 miles from Japan. The battle for Okinawa would last nearly three months. American casualties there included over 12,000 dead. Only 7000 of the Japanese garrison of nearly 77,000 survived to become prisoners of war.



**An American infantryman reloads his rifle during the Battle of the Bulge.**  
National Archives, College Park



**Marines inch their way forward through the black sands of Iwo Jima, February 19, 1945.**  
National Archives, College Park



Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin during the Yalta Conference.  
National Archives, College Park



Soviet One Chervonitz note,  
Box of Russian cigarettes,  
Fur and leather gloves, given  
to FDR at the Yalta Conference.  
FDR Presidential Library



FDR's distinctive wool and velvet  
naval cloak worn during the  
Yalta Conference.  
FDR Presidential Library



## YALTA: WINNING THE WAR . . . DEBATING THE PEACE

In the winter of 1945 Roosevelt met with Winston Churchill and Josef Stalin for the last time. The setting was the town of Yalta in the Crimea, Ukraine.

At Yalta, FDR received Stalin's firm commitment to enter the war against Japan three months after Germany's defeat. The Big Three also formally agreed to establish what became the United Nations organization. But there were serious disagreements about the future of Germany and the fate of areas occupied by Soviet armies, especially Poland. Faced with the reality of large Soviet forces in Eastern Europe—and unable to contemplate the possibility of going to war with

Russia over the issue—FDR and Churchill acquiesced to Stalin's demand for a sphere of influence in that region. But they also secured Soviet acceptance of the Declaration of Liberated Europe and an agreement on Poland that called for the creation of a government of national unity that would hold "free and unfettered elections."

Sadly, these principles were swept aside in the early days of the Cold War. Today the Yalta Conference occupies an ambiguous place in historical memory. Those who met there witnessed both the cooperation of wartime allies and the rising wariness of future rivals.



Eleanor Roosevelt used this Red Cross uniform and travel purse during her 25,000 mile tour of the South Pacific in August-September, 1943.  
FDR Presidential Library

Eleanor Roosevelt talks with an injured Seabee during her Red Cross tour of the Pacific.  
FDR Presidential Library



The First Lady examines the wreckage of a Japanese plane on Guadalcanal.  
FDR Presidential Library



## COURAGE IS EXHILARATING: ELEANOR ROOSEVELT AND WORLD WAR II

*Dear Lord / Lest I continue My complacent way / Help me to remember that somewhere / Somehow out there / A man died for me today. / As long as there be war / I then must Ask and answer / Am I worth dying for?*

*Poem that Eleanor Roosevelt kept in her wallet during World War II.*

During the war, Eleanor Roosevelt continued the ceaseless activism that had long marked her as America's most public First Lady. However, her activism sometimes led to controversy. Mrs. Roosevelt was outspoken in her support for racial and gender equality. She championed the Tuskegee Airmen, women's entrance into the armed services, and the right of workers to organize.

In 1942, she reluctantly served as unsalaried assistant director of the Office of Civilian Defense. But the nation wasn't ready for a presidential wife as a government official, and she resigned the post. Later that year, she flew to

England to offer support to America's allies and returned with detailed reports for FDR

During her 25,000 mile tour of the South Pacific in 1943 as a representative of the American Red Cross, the First Lady traveled in military transports, putting herself at risk to visit hospitals, military camps, and Red Cross clubs. She saw an estimated 400,000 American servicemen and women.

Despite harsh criticism, she continued to advocate progressive goals, arguing that America could not fight for democracy and equality abroad without also ensuring it at home.



# LEADING BY EXAMPLE

*"The achievement of victory . . . requires the participation of all the people in the common effort for our common cause."*

Franklin Roosevelt

*Message to Congress on an Economic Stabilization Program, April 27, 1942*

Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt purchased war bonds, had blackout shades hung on their windows, and committed the White House to wartime rationing. The couple's four sons all served in America's military. Elliott was an Army Air Corps reconnaissance pilot in the North Atlantic and Europe. Franklin Jr. and John both entered the U.S. Navy. John rose to the rank of

lieutenant commander. Franklin, Jr. became a full commander and was awarded a Purple Heart and Silver Star. James chose combat duty with the Marines and received the Navy Cross and the Silver Star. Daughter Anna was a trusted confidante of FDR and lived at the White House in 1944-45 while her husband served overseas on a military-government assignment.



Left: The Roosevelts shared in the wartime rationing of scarce goods. This ration book was issued to the President during the war. FDR Presidential Library

Middle: President Roosevelt's four sons all served in America's military during the war. FDR kept this framed leather folder with their photos on his Oval Office desk. FDR Presidential Library

Right: FDR—like other American men—registered for the military draft. This is his draft registration card. FDR Presidential Library



# THE HOME FRONT

*"Not all of us can have the privilege of fighting our enemies in distant parts of the world. . . . But there is one front and one battle where everyone in the United States—every man, woman, and child—is in action. . . . That front is right here at home, in our daily lives, and in our daily tasks."*

Franklin Roosevelt  
Fireside Chat, April 28, 1942

To fight a global war, the United States needed to mobilize its entire population along what became known as the "Home Front." This enormous national effort touched nearly every aspect of American life and set in motion economic and social forces that would reverberate for decades.

President Roosevelt was at the forefront of this national mobilization, setting priorities and focusing attention on the goal of total victory. Under his direction, the government assumed unprecedented powers over the economy. Federal defense spending skyrocketed and the public was mobilized to pay the bill. Millions of Americans began paying federal taxes for the first time. War

bond sales raised billions of additional dollars. To control inflation, the government put limits on wages, prices, and rents. And to conserve scarce goods for military use, products ranging from gasoline to sugar were rationed. Civilians drove less, ate less meat, and drank less coffee.

Children organized scrap drives to salvage rubber and metal for war industries, while their parents joined civil defense units, planted Victory Gardens, and purchased war bonds. Government propaganda reminded people to report suspicious activity and Americans joined the Red Cross, the USO, and other service organizations.



A mountain of salvaged rubber from a Midwest rubber drive sits outside a recovery plant.  
FDR Presidential Library



1943 Office of War Information poster featuring Norman Rockwell's *Freedom of Speech*.  
FDR Presidential Library



During the war, Americans saved waste fats and grease for use in ammunition production.  
FDR Presidential Library



Middle: Gifts given to FDR from defense workers during his 1942-43 inspection tour of defense plants.  
FDR Presidential Library

Women workers service aircraft at the Naval Air Base at Corpus Christi, Texas, August 1942.  
FDR Presidential Library



A sixth grade teacher in Washington D.C., instructs her students in how to use war ration books.  
FDR Presidential Library



Despite objections from many New Dealers, the government turned to large corporate leaders to help lead the mobilization effort. "Dr. New Deal," FDR announced, had been replaced by "Dr. Win-the-War."

American wartime production was staggering. The country produced 299,293 aircraft; 634,569 jeeps; 88,410 tanks; 5777 merchant ships; 1556 naval vessels; 6.5 million rifles; and 40 billion bullets. By 1944, the United States was producing 60 percent of all Allied munitions and 40 percent of the world's arms. American factories were simultaneously supplying the U.S. military, producing 10 percent of Russia's military needs, and providing more than 25 percent of Great Britain's war materiel.

War mobilization touched nearly every aspect of American life. Under President Roosevelt's direction, the federal government assumed

unprecedented powers over the economy. Wage and price controls helped keep wartime inflation in check. The government encouraged the growth of labor unions, but also seized factories and mines when union unrest threatened war production.

The need for war workers created economic opportunities for women and minorities, but only after being pressed by black leaders—who had Eleanor Roosevelt's strong support—did FDR act to confront racial discrimination in defense industries. After civil rights leaders threatened to march on Washington, the President issued Executive Order 8802, which barred racial discrimination in war plants. To enforce it, he created the Fair Employment Practices Commission. The opportunities opened for African Americans during the war contributed to the emergence of the postwar civil rights movement.





## APRIL 12, 1945

*"The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today. Let us move forward with strong and active faith."*

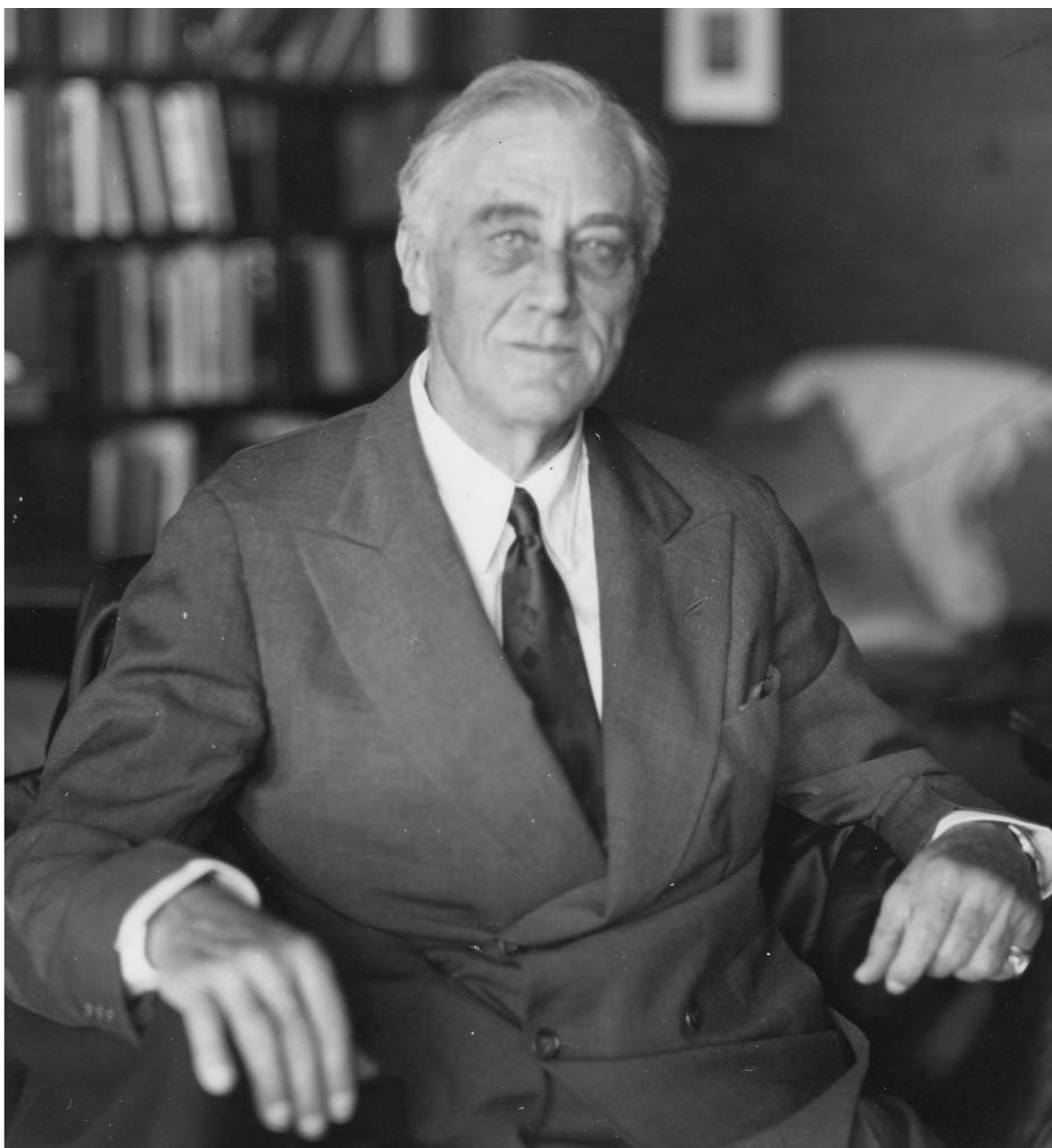
*Franklin Roosevelt  
Final words of a speech he was drafting the day before his death*

On the morning of April 12, 1945, World War II entered its 2051st day.

Over fifty million people were dead. Many millions more had been wounded or left homeless. Adolf Hitler was living in an underground bunker in Berlin as Soviet soldiers prepared to assault the German capital. In Asia, firebombs rained down on Japan's cities, while American submarines blockaded its coasts. On the island of Okinawa, 340 miles to the south, American soldiers and sailors struggled to clear the last stepping stone before the invasion of Japan itself. And at a secret military installation in New Mexico, work continued on a terrifying new weapon that would revolutionize war and peace.

On April 12, 1945 an exhausted President Roosevelt awoke in his cottage at the presidential retreat in Warm Springs, Georgia. Worn down by heart disease and the stresses of wartime leadership, he had come to Georgia for a brief holiday. At 1:00 PM, he was studying papers and sitting for a portrait painter when he suddenly complained of a "terrific headache." Seconds later he collapsed. Within hours the commander-in-chief was dead of a massive cerebral hemorrhage.





Final photograph of Franklin D. Roosevelt taken at the President's cottage at Warm Springs, Georgia on April 11, 1945.  
FDR Presidential Library



# LEGACIES OF WAR

*"I dream dreams but am, at the same time, an intensely practical person."*

*Franklin Roosevelt to Field Marshall Jan Christiaan Smuts  
November 24, 1942*

Franklin Roosevelt lived long enough to know that victory was assured. Less than one month after his death, Germany surrendered to the Allies. And on September 2, 1945, the war formally ended when Japan surrendered in a ceremony aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay. Both surrenders were—as FDR had demanded in 1942—unconditional.

World War II was the most important and the most terrible event of the twentieth century. It profoundly changed global economics, politics, and social relationships and continues to influence the world we live in today.

## **The Atomic Bomb**

On October 11, 1939, economist Alexander Sachs delivered an historic letter from Albert Einstein to Franklin Roosevelt at the White House. In it, the distinguished physicist described the potential for an atomic weapon and warned that nuclear research was underway in Germany.

Roosevelt responded to Einstein's letter by authorizing the formation of a scientific committee to study whether a nuclear weapon was feasible. Later, he approved the creation of the "Manhattan Project," a top-secret effort to build an atomic weapon. At a conference in Hyde Park in September 1944, FDR and Winston Churchill agreed to keep the bomb project—code-named "Tube Alloys"—secret from Soviet leader Josef Stalin. What neither knew was that Russian spies were keeping Stalin informed about its progress.

FDR was prepared to use atomic weapons against both Germany and Japan. But a bomb was not ready for testing until after FDR's death and Germany's surrender. In July 1945, President Harry

S. Truman authorized the use of atomic bombs against Japan. In August atomic bombs were dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

## **The Holocaust**

During the final year of the war in Europe, Allied forces began overrunning camps used by Nazi Germany to carry out its horrific "Final Solution"—the effort to eliminate Europe's entire Jewish population that is known today as the Holocaust. The Final Solution was rooted in Nazi ideology, which held that Jews were inferior beings who, by their very existence, threatened the Nazi concept of racial purity.

This systematic effort by the Nazi state resulted in the murder of approximately six million Jews. The Nazis also murdered millions of Slavs, Sinti and Roma people, political dissidents, homosexuals, physically and mentally handicapped people, and others they considered to be "undesirable."

Immediately after coming to power in 1933, Adolf Hitler began the persecution of Germany's Jewish population. Emigration to the world's democracies—especially after Kristallnacht in 1938—was seen by many as a way out. But American immigration laws were complicated and often harshly administered.

Germany's armed expansion during the late 1930s and World War II led to enormous growth in German-controlled territory that put vast numbers of European Jews under German control and greatly diminished their prospects for escape to safety.

With the outbreak of war, persecution escalated to mass murder, beginning in Eastern Europe, and



eventually involving millions of Jews across the entire continent. What became known as the "Final Solution" to the Jewish Question was a carefully planned and organized effort to maximize the killing and destroy every Jew the Nazis could find. In Soviet territory, beginning in summer 1941, Jews were shot by the tens of thousands. The following year, Jews throughout Europe began to be rounded up and sent by train to distant camps where they were killed by gas. The scale and depravity of the Final Solution was staggering.

Reports of mass killings began reaching the Allies almost as soon as they happened. The response of President Roosevelt and others within American government and society has sparked heated scholarly argument in recent decades. Historians debate whether FDR and other American decision-makers might have done more to admit Jewish refugees and whether they might have undertaken policies—including bombing rail lines to Auschwitz—that could have saved lives.

### **Japanese American Internment**

In the uncertain weeks after Pearl Harbor as Japanese forces expanded dramatically across the Pacific and Southeast Asia, many Americans—particularly those on the Pacific coast—feared enemy attack and saw danger in every corner.

These wartime fears combined with racial prejudice to lead to a great injustice. Early in 1942, civilian and military leaders on the West Coast complained that members of the region's large Japanese American community might be working with the Japanese military to plan acts of sabotage. Though no serious evidence of this existed, they pushed the Roosevelt administration for action.

On February 19, 1942, FDR issued Executive Order 9066, which led to the forced relocation of more than 110,000 Japanese Americans living on the West Coast. They were confined in inland internment camps operated by the military. More than two-thirds of these people were native born American citizens. Abruptly forced to abandon or

sell their homes and businesses, many lost everything they owned. Yet they remained loyal, and some Japanese Americans from the camps served in the nation's military, where they distinguished themselves with extraordinary valor in combat.

The Supreme Court upheld the President's order in two wartime cases. But in the 1980s, the United States Congress acknowledged this violation of the civil liberties of American citizens and voted to provide some financial compensation to individuals confined in the camps. The Supreme Court also vacated its earlier wartime rulings.

Similar wartime fears led Canada and nations throughout Latin America to adopt comparable expulsion measures against residents of Japanese ancestry.

### **Towards Racial Equality**

During World War II, millions of Americans took up arms to fight totalitarianism and racism abroad. Yet, in 1941, America was a deeply racist nation, and the military—like many American institutions—was largely segregated.

Throughout the war, reformers worked to end racial discrimination in the military. With Congress largely controlled by powerful Southern Democrats who staunchly supported racial separation, FDR felt he could not broadly challenge military segregation.

Yet World War II provided FDR with opportunities to take action against discrimination without having to go to Congress and to create an environment in which minorities could advance in the military. In 1940, Benjamin O. Davis, Sr. became the army's first black brigadier general. During the war, blacks were admitted to the Marine Corps for the first time and the Army Air Corps ended its ban on black pilots.

With the strong public support of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, nearly 1000 black pilots were trained at Alabama's Tuskegee Institute. Many of



## **Towards Racial Equality (*cont.*)**

the "Tuskegee Airmen" eventually served in combat in Europe and North Africa in the all-black 99th Pursuit Squadron. None of the bombers escorted by the unit was ever lost to enemy fire.

Americans of Mexican, Latino, and Asian descent, as well as Native Americans, were also given unprecedented opportunities in the nation's military.

## **The Greatest Generation**

Millions of young Americans served under Franklin Roosevelt in America's military during World War II. Most were civilians before the war. They came from every walk of life and every corner of the nation. They included people of all races and ethnic backgrounds and—with FDR's support—350,000 women, who served as nurses and in special service branches created throughout the military, including the WACS, WAVES, SPARS, and WASPs.

FDR believed America owed a special debt to the generation who served in World War II. With his strong support, Congress passed the "GI Bill of Rights" in 1944. It provided millions of veterans with generous educational and medical benefits and subsidized loans for small businesses, farms and homes. The "GI Bill" gave an entire generation the means to enter the middle class, ensuring America's postwar prosperity and global leadership.

## **The Four Freedoms**

Long before America entered the conflict, FDR began to frame World War II in more universal terms—as a struggle to defend freedom around the world. FDR's most enduring expression of this concept came in his January 6, 1941 Annual Message to Congress. "In the future days which we seek to make secure," he declared, "we look forward to a world founded on four essential human freedoms." Roosevelt defined these as: "freedom of speech and expression," "freedom of every person to worship God in his own way," "freedom from want," and "freedom from fear."

## **Franklin Roosevelt and the United Nations**

*"The structure of world peace cannot be the work of one man, or one party, or one Nation. It cannot be just an American peace, or a British peace, or a Russian, a French, or a Chinese peace. It cannot be a peace of large Nations—or of small Nations. It must be a peace which rests on the cooperative effort of the whole world."*

Franklin Roosevelt

Address to Congress on the Yalta Conference  
March 1, 1945

The most important legacy Franklin Roosevelt left the world was the United Nations organization.

From the earliest days of World War II, FDR worked to create a postwar organization dedicated to global cooperation and peace through collective security. On January 1, 1942, he welcomed representatives of twenty-five Allied nations to the White House to sign a declaration pledging each "to defend life, liberty, independence, and religious freedom, and to preserve human rights and justice. . . ." FDR called this wartime coalition the "United Nations" and later led efforts to expand it into a postwar international organization.

His vision combined elements of idealism and realpolitik. Roosevelt imagined an organization of nations dedicated to equality and mutual security. But the institution's backbone would be the "Four Policemen"—The United States, Great Britain, Soviet Union, and China—who would enforce the peace.

FDR died days before he was to address the opening session of the conference that created the United Nations. On the day before his death, he labored over a speech about the postwar world. The "mere conquest of our enemies is not enough," he wrote. Americans had to "cultivate the science of human relationships—the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together and work together, in the same world, at peace."

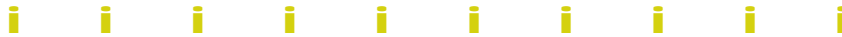


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FIFTH DRAFT

18 178  
-17-

The first is freedom of speech and expression everywhere  
in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in  
his own way everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want — which translated into  
*world*  
~~international~~ terms means economic understandings which will secure  
to every nation ~~everywhere~~ a healthy peace time life for its  
inhabitants. — *everywhere in the world*

The fourth is freedom from fear — which translated into  
*world*  
~~international~~ terms means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such  
a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation ~~anywhere~~ will  
be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any  
neighbor. — *anywhere in the world.*

*A-17A.* That kind of a world is the very antithesis of the so-called  
"new order" which the dictators seek to create *with the crash of a*  
~~at the point of a gun~~  
*bomb* in Europe and in Asia.

To that "new order" we oppose the greater conception ~~the~~  
moral order. A good society is able to face schemes of world domina-  
tion and foreign revolutions alike without fear. It has no need either  
for the one or for the other.