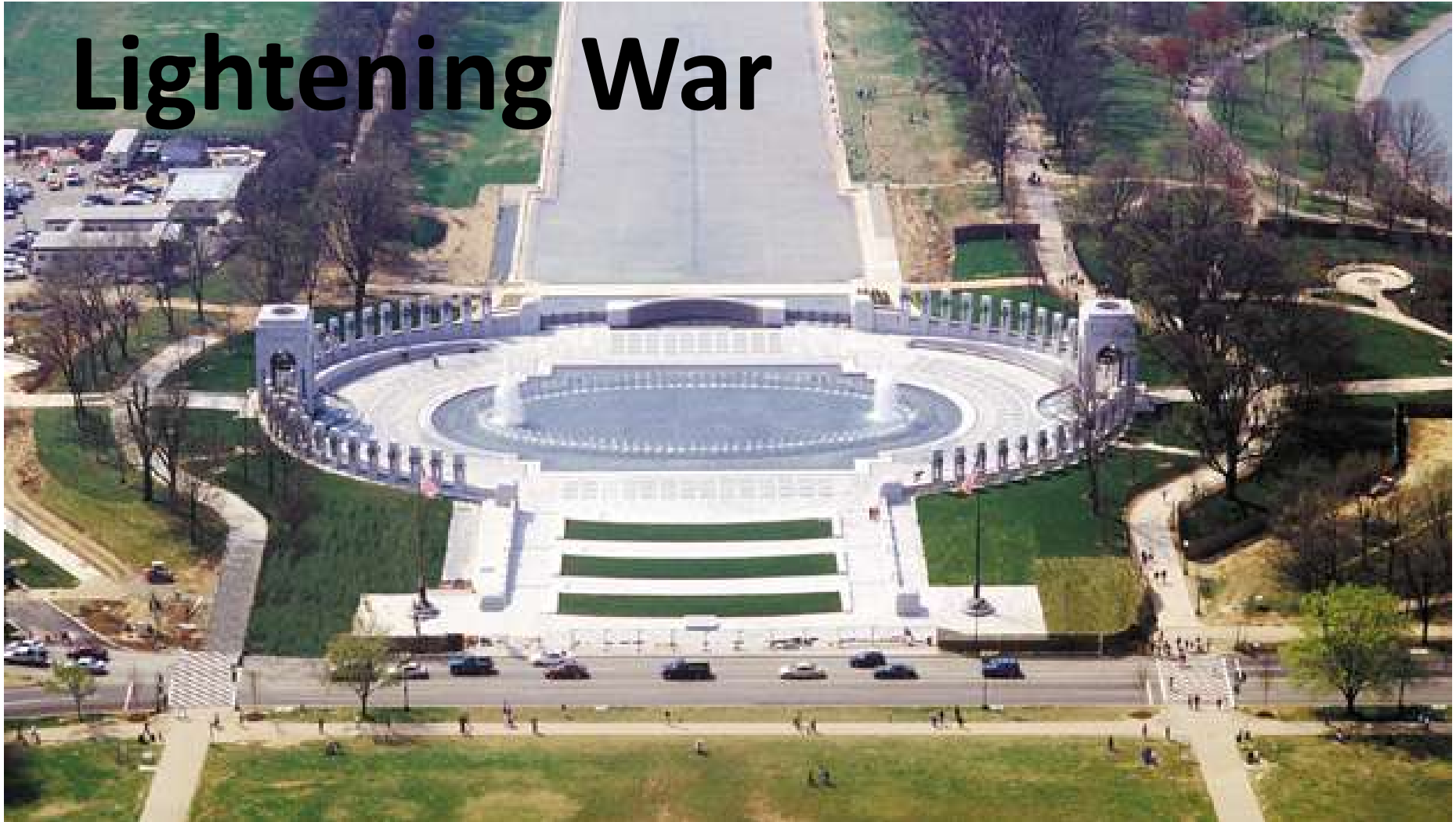


World War II

1939-1945: 16-1 Hitler's

Lightening War



Adolf Hitler's Rise to Power

The Beer Hall Putsch

- Nov 1923, Hitler has 55,000 Nazi followers
- Nov 8, 1923, Hitler hatches plot to kidnap leaders of the Bavarian Government at a beer hall in Munich
- Hitler stormed in and told the leaders the government offices and police barracks were already taken over and they needed to pledge their loyalty to the Nazis (this was a lie)
- After getting the government leaders to agree, Hitler learned that his storm troopers (soldiers) failed to take the barracks so he left the beer hall to assist.
- Again, Hitler failed to convince the police to surrender and returned to the beer hall to find that the three government leaders had escaped
- Hitler's allies turned on him and he was a wanted man.
- Hitler was eventually arrested after a violent clash with the Munich Police

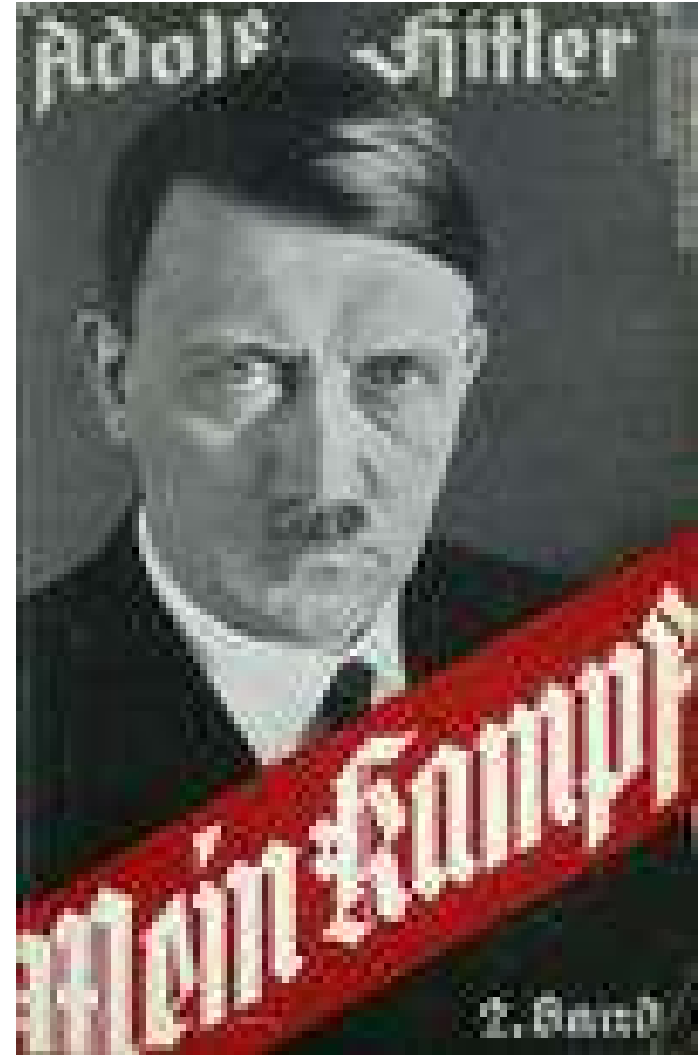


USHMM

The arrival in Munich of troops supporting Hitler.

Mein Kampf 1925

- Hitler did not physically write the book but rather dictated it to Rudolph Hess
- The original title was ***Four and a Half Years of Struggle against Lies, Stupidity and Cowardice***
- Hitler divides humans into four categories based on physical appearance with white Germans (or ***Aryans***) as the master race
- Claims the struggle for world domination is a constant battle between Aryans and Jews
- He accused the Jews of conducting an international conspiracy to control world finances, controlling the press, inventing liberal democracy as well as Marxism, promoting prostitution and vice, and using culture to spread disharmony
- Aryans must acquire more land to spread out and dominate all the races and cultures of the world
- At first the book sold poorly, but after Hitler became Chancellor it was a gift for all occasions: weddings, graduations, etc.







On the night of January 30, 1933, the Nazis organized a massive torchlight parade in Berlin to celebrate the *appointment of Hitler as Chancellor of Germany.*

February 27, 1933

- Nazis burn the Reichstag building, seat of the German government
- This enabled Adolf Hitler to seize power under the pretext of protecting the nation from threats to its security



March 12, 1933: The first Concentration Camp Opens

The camp at Oranienburg was opened to begin housing political opponents of Hitler and Jews. They were arrested and imprisoned without trial or due process.



Other early camps were located in Dachau in southern Germany near Munich, Buchenwald in central Germany near Weimar, and Sachsenhausen near Berlin in the north

Hitler's *Enabling Act*

- March 23, 1933—Newly elected members of parliament meet to discuss passing an enabling act handing over a legal dictatorship to Hitler
The act was officially called the '***Law for Removing the Distress of the People and the Reich.***'
- Of course all of the “distress” had been manufactured by the Nazis
- Nazi storm troopers surrounded the hall where the members were meeting shouting "**Full powers - or else! We want the bill - or fire and murder!!**"
- Hitler made false promises to secure the votes he needed
- Only one man rose in opposition, Otto Wells, stating "*We German Social Democrats pledge ourselves solemnly in this historic hour to the principles of humanity and justice, of freedom and socialism. No enabling act can give you power to destroy ideas which are eternal and indestructible.*"
- Hitler responded by saying "*You are no longer needed! - The star of Germany will rise and yours will sink! Your death knell has sounded!*"
- Thus ended democracy in Germany...

Also in 1933

April 1 – Nazis boycott Jewish owned shops

Their signs read: "**Germans, defend yourselves against the Jewish atrocity propaganda, buy only at German shops!**" and "**Germans, defend yourselves, buy only at German shops!**"

May 10 – Nazis burn “non-Aryan” books

In June – Nazis open Dachau concentration camp

July 14 - Nazi party declared only party in Germany.

Oct 14 - Germany quits the League of Nations.



1934

June 30: “ The Night of the Long Knives”—Hitler and the SS murder military political opponents and take complete control of military forces in Germany

July 25 - Nazis murder Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss.

Aug 2 - German President Hindenburg dies.

Aug 19-Hitler becomes **Fuhrer** of Germany—all public officials swore an oath of allegiance to Hitler



Hitler watching festivities at Nuremberg - 1934.

1935

March 16 - Hitler violates the Treaty of Versailles by introducing military conscription.

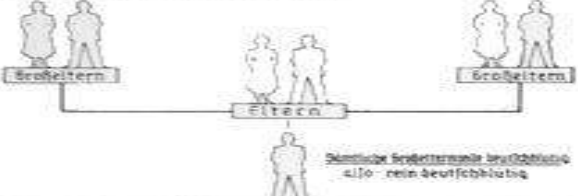
Sept 15—Jews stripped of rights by ***Nuremburg Race Laws***

- Deprived German Jews of their rights of citizenship, giving them the status of "subjects" in Hitler's Reich.
- The laws also made it forbidden for Jews to marry or have sexual relations with Aryans or to employ young Aryan women as household help. (An Aryan being a person with blond hair and blue eyes of Germanic heritage.)
- They were called "**The Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor**" (regarding Jewish marriage) and "**The Reich Citizenship Law**" (designating Jews as subjects).

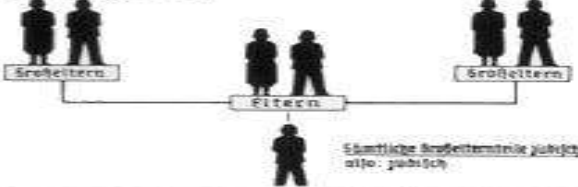
Das Gesetz unterscheidet :



Wer ist Deutschblütiger ?



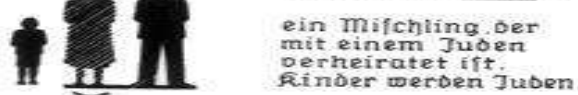
Wer ist Jude ?



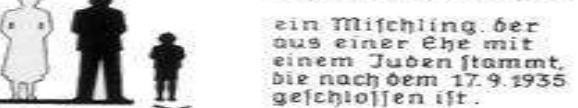
Als Jude gilt auch :



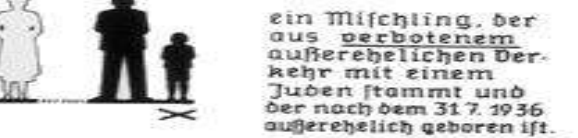
Als Jude gilt auch :



Als Jude gilt auch :



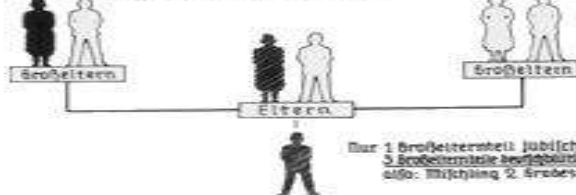
Als Jude gilt auch :



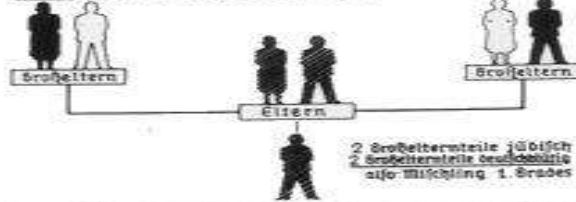
Ebenfalls zur jüdischen Rasse gehörig :



Wer ist Mischling 2. Grades ?



Wer ist Mischling 1. Grades ?



Welche Eheschließungen sind verboten ?

Es ist zu beachten, daß bereits bestehende Ehen unberührt bleiben. Als Rassen deren Blut dem deutschen Blut nicht artverwandt ist, gelten z. B. auch Negere (Fall 4) und Zigeuner.



Explanation of what constituted a Jew



1936

Feb 10 - The German Gestapo (secret police) is placed above the law.

March 7 - German troops occupy the Rhineland.

May 9 - Mussolini's Italian forces take Ethiopia.

July 18 - Civil war erupts in Spain.

Aug 1 - Olympic games begin in Berlin.

Oct 1 - Franco declared head of Spanish State.

November 5, 1937: *The Hossbach Memorandum*

On November 5, 1937, Adolf Hitler held a secret conference in the Reich Chancellery during which he revealed his plans for the acquisition of ***Lebensraum***, or living space, for the German people at the expense of other nations in Europe.

Hitler said military action was to be taken by 1943-1945 at the latest, to guard against military obsolescence, the aging of the Nazi movement, and ***"it was while the rest of the world was still preparing its defenses that we were obliged to take the offensive."***

The primary objective would be to seize Czechoslovakia and Austria to protect Germany's eastern and southern flanks

1938

March 12/13 – Germany announces Anschluss with Austria

Aug 12 - German military mobilizes.

Sept 30 - British Prime Minister Chamberlain appeases Hitler at Munich.

Oct 15 – German troops occupy the Sudetenland; Czech government resigns.



Hitler
announces
Anschluss



1939

Jan 30, 1939 – Hitler threatens Jews during Reichstag speech

March 15/16 - Nazis take Czechoslovakia.

March 28, 1939 - Spanish Civil war ends.

May 22, 1939 - Nazis sign 'Pact of Steel' with Italy.

Aug 23, 1939 – Nazis and Soviets sign pact

Aug 25, 1939 - Britain and Poland sign a Mutual Assistance Treaty.

Aug 31, 1939 - British fleet mobilizes; Civilian evacuations begin from London.

Sept 1, 1939 - Nazis invade Poland.

Sept 3, 1939 - Britain, France, Australia and New Zealand declare war on Germany.

Sept 4, 1939 - British Royal Air Force attacks the German Navy.

Sept 5, 1939 - United States proclaims neutrality; German troops cross the Vistula River in Poland.

Sept 10, 1939 - Canada declares war on Germany; Battle of the Atlantic begins.

Sept 17, 1939 - Soviets invade Poland.

Sept 27, 1939 – Warsaw (Poland) surrenders to Nazis

Sept 29, 1939 - Nazis and Soviets divide up Poland.

Oct 1939 – Nazis begin euthanasia of sick and disabled in Germany

Nov 8, 1939 - Assassination attempt on Hitler fails.

Nov 30, 1939 - Soviets attack Finland.

Dec 14, 1939 - Soviet Union expelled from the League of Nations.

Britain & France ask the Soviet Union (Russia) to join them in stopping Hitler's aggression.

Negotiations proceed slowly because France & Britain do not trust the Communist government of Russia. And Stalin resented having been left out of the Munich Conference.

While Stalin talked with France & Britain, he also bargained with Hitler. Both Hitler & Stalin reached an agreement. They publicly commit to never attack one another. On Aug. 23, 1939, they sign a 10 year non-aggression pact.

Secretly Hitler promised Stalin territory and they agree that they would divide Poland between them. They also agree that the USSR could take over Finland and the Baltic countries (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia)



The signing of the non-aggression pact removed the threat of Germany being attacked by the Soviet Union from the east.

Hitler then quickly moved ahead with his plans to conquer Poland. His surprise attack took place at dawn (4:45 a.m.) on September 1, 1939.

The German invasion was the first test of Germany's newest military strategy – THE BLITZKRIEG





The Blitzkrieg or "Lightning War" involved using fast moving planes and tanks, followed by massive infantry forces, to take the enemy by surprise. Then, blitzkrieg forces swiftly crush all opposition with overwhelming force.

German tanks cross into Poland

To Hitler, the conquest of Poland would bring Lebensraum, or "living space," for the German people. According to his plan, the "racially superior" Germans would colonize the territory and the native Slavs would be enslaved



Shortly after noon on August 31, Hitler ordered hostilities against Poland to begin at 4:45 a.m. the next morning. At 8 p.m. on August 31, Nazi S.S. troops wearing Polish uniforms staged a phony invasion of Germany, damaging several minor installations on the German side of the border. They also left behind a handful of dead concentration camp prisoners in Polish uniforms to serve as further evidence of the supposed Polish invasion, which Nazi propagandists publicized as an unforgivable act of aggression.

In Poland, German forces advanced at a dizzying rate. German warplanes invaded Polish airspace, raining bombs and terror on the Poles. At the same time, German tanks and troop trucks rumbled across the Polish border. The trucks carried more than 1.5 million soldiers into the assault. German aircraft and artillery then began a merciless bombing of Poland's capital, Warsaw. Simultaneously, German warships and U-boats attacked Polish naval forces in the Baltic Sea. The Polish army was able to mobilize one million men but was hopelessly outmatched in every respect. Rather than take a strong defensive position, troops were rushed to the front to confront the Germans and were systematically captured or annihilated. By September 8, German forces had reached the outskirts of Warsaw, having advanced 140 miles in the first week of the invasion.

Hitler claimed the massive invasion was a defensive action, but Britain and France were not convinced. On September 3, they declared war on Germany, initiating World War II.



Many historians point to the invasion of Poland as the beginning of World War II

The Polish people are forced to salute the Germans after the takeover of Poland

The Soviets Make Their Move



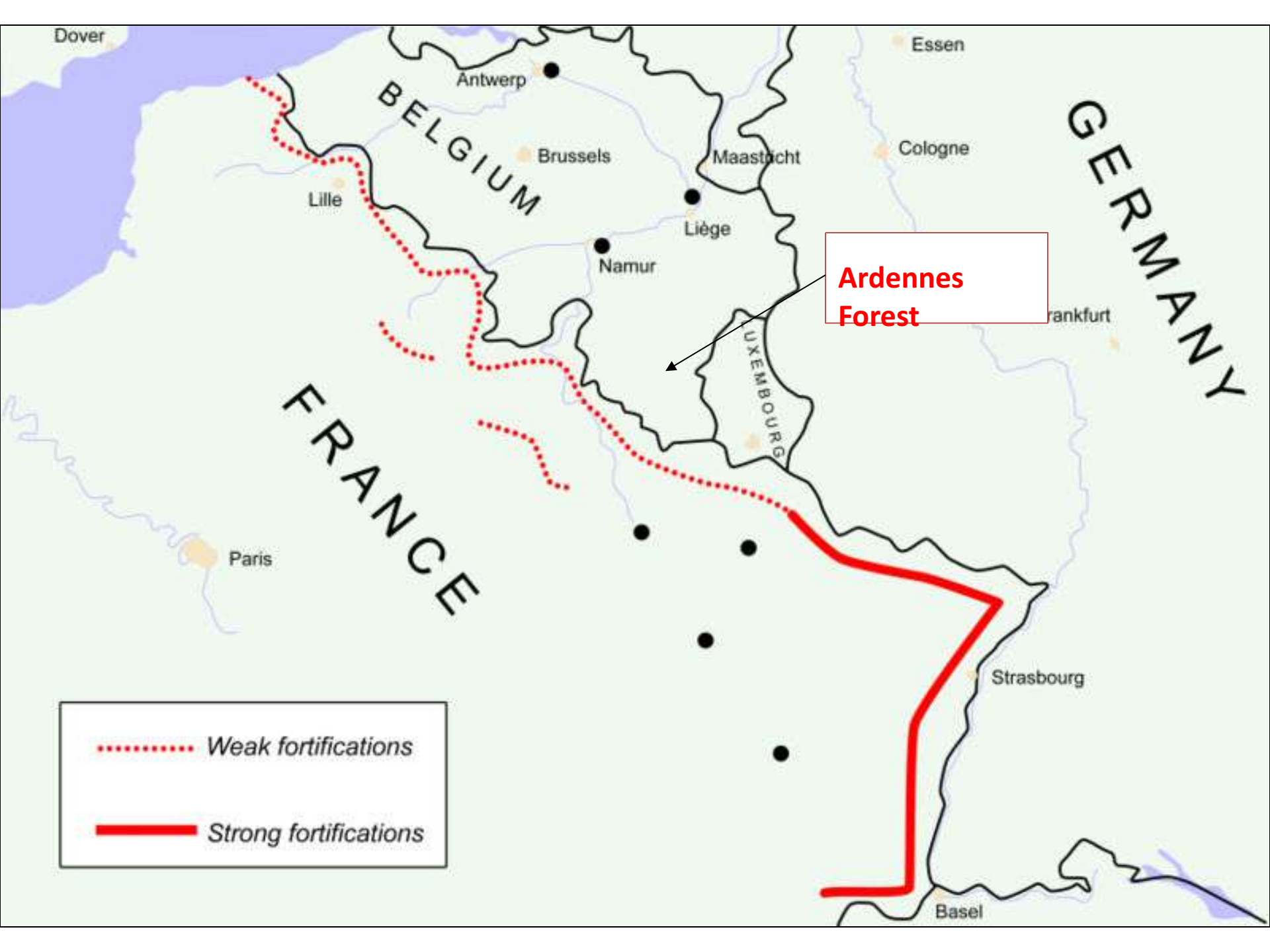
On Sept. 17th, Stalin sent Soviet troops to occupy the eastern half of Poland. He then moved to annex countries to the north of Poland. Lithuania, Latvia, & Estonia fell without a struggle, but Finland resisted. Stalin sends 1million troops into Finland expecting to win a quick victory, but they were not prepared for the winter fighting. This was a crucial mistake.

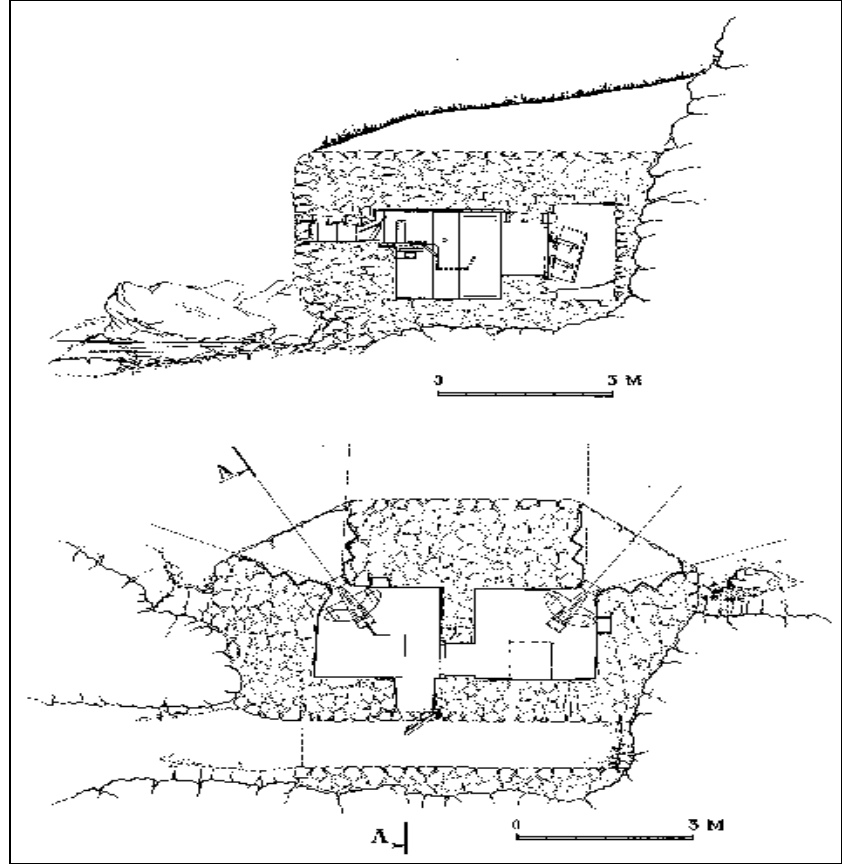
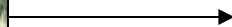
The Finns were outnumbered & outgunned, but they fiercely defended their country. In the freezing weather, soldiers on skis attacked Soviet positions. The Soviets struggled to make progress through the deep snow. The Soviets suffered heavy losses, but they finally won through sheer force of numbers. By March 1940, Stalin had forced the Finns to accept his surrender terms.



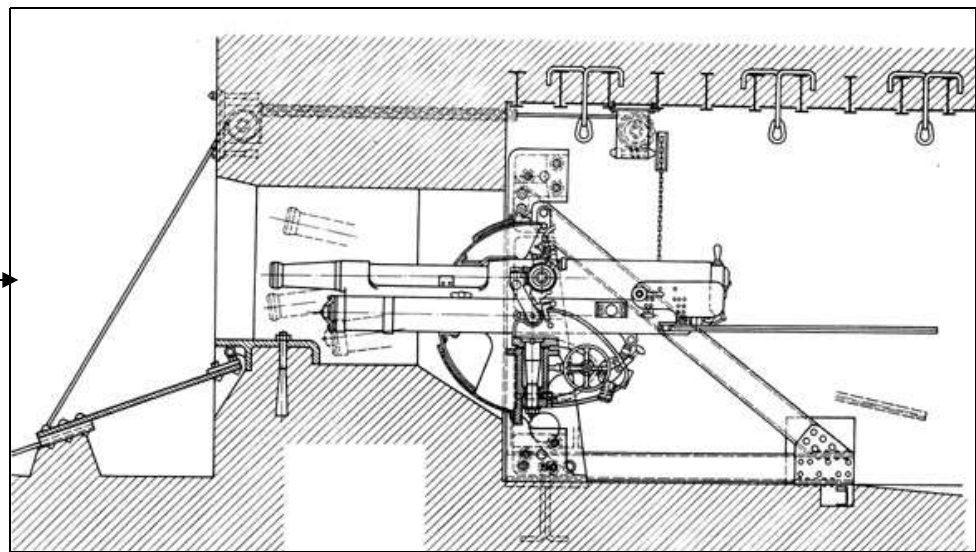


Despite their declaration of war against Germany, Britain and France did little militarily to aid Poland. Britain bombed German warships on September 4, but Chamberlain resisted bombing Germany itself. Though Germans kept only 23 divisions in the west during their campaign in Poland, France did not launch a full-scale attack even though it had mobilized over four times that number. There were modest assaults by France on its border with Germany but these actions ceased with the defeat of Poland. The French and British troops were stationed along the famous Maginot Line- A system of fortifications along France's border with Germany. There they waited for the Germans to attack – but nothing happened. During the subsequent seven months, some observers accused Britain and France of waging a "phony war," because, with the exception of a few dramatic British- German clashes at sea, no major military action was taken.





The Maginot Line



Suddenly, on April 9th, 1940, Hitler launched a surprise invasion of Denmark & Norway. In Just 4 hours after the attack, Denmark fell. 2 months later, Norway surrenders. The Germans begin building bases along the Norwegian & Danish coasts to launch strikes on Britain.

The Fall of France

Next, in May of 1940, Hitler begin a dramatic sweep through the Netherlands, Belgium & Luxembourg to get at France. With the Allies focusing their attention on those countries, Hitler sends an even larger force of tanks & troops through the Ardennes – a heavily wooded area in northern France, Luxembourg & Belgium. Moving through the forest, the Germans managed to squeeze between the Maginot Line. From there they moved across France & reached the country's northern coast in 10 days.



Rescue at Dunkirk – After reaching the French coast, the German forces swung north again & joined with German troops in Belgium. By the end of May 1940, the Germans had trapped the Allied forces around the northern French city of Lille (Leel). Outnumbered, outgunned, and pounded from the air, the Allies retreated to the beaches of Dunkirk, a French port city near the Belgian border. They were trapped with their backs to the sea.

Rescue at Dunkirk Cont:

In one of the most heroic acts of the war, Great Britain set out to rescue the army. It sent a fleet of about 850 ships across the English channel to Dunkirk. Along with Royal Navy ships, civilian craft – yachts, lifeboats, motorboats, paddle steamers & fishing boats-joined the rescue effort. From May 26 to June 4, this amateur armada, under heavy fire from German bombers, sailed back and forth from Britain to Dunkirk. The boats carried some 338,000 battle-weary soldiers to safety.



France Falls:

Following Dunkirk, resistance in France began to crumble. By June 14, the Germans had taken Paris. Accepting the inevitable, French leaders surrendered on June 22, 1940. The Germans took control of the northern part of the country. They left the southern part to a puppet Gvmt. Headed by Marshal Philippe Petain (PayTAN), a French hero from WWI. The headquarters of this Gvmt. Was in the city of Vichy (VEESH



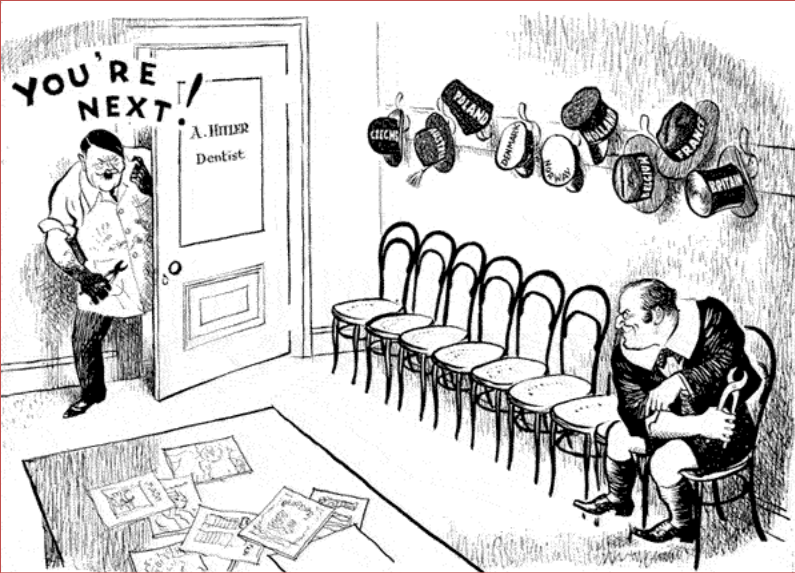
After France fell, Charles de Gaulle, French general, set up a government-in-exile in London. He committed all his energy to reconquering France. In a radio broadcast from England, he called on the people of France to join him in resisting the Germans:

“It is the duty of all Frenchmen who still bear arms to continue the struggle. For them to lay down their arms, to evacuate any position of military importance, or agree to hand over any part of French territory, however small, to enemy control would be a crime against our country.”



The Battle Of Britain

With the fall of France, Great Britain stood alone against the Nazis. Winston Churchill, the new British Prime Minister, had already declared that his nation would never give in.

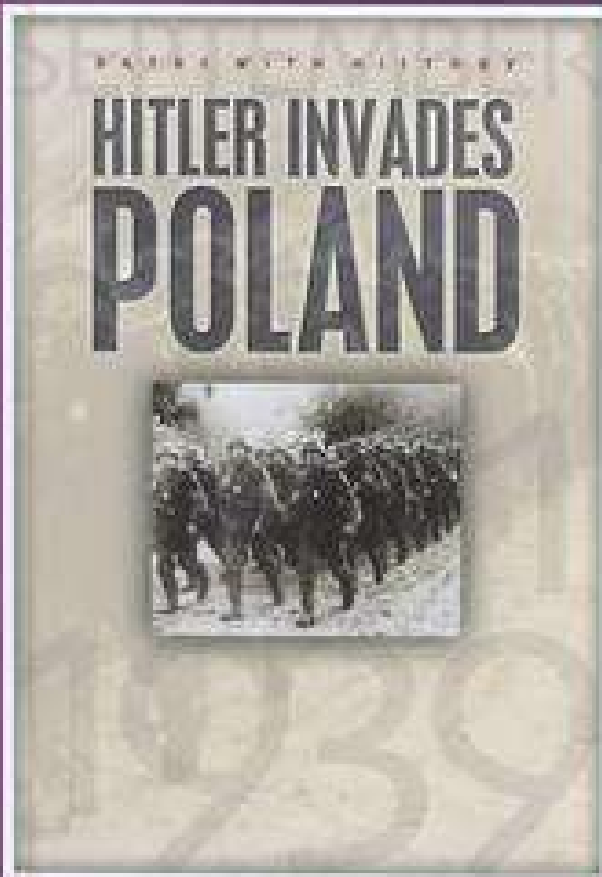


“We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets...we shall never surrender.”

America Moves Toward War

In late Aug. 1939, FDR sends Hitler a cable urging him to settle his differences with Poland peacefully. In response, Hitler invades Poland on Sept. 1.

“Hitler is a madman, and his counselors, some of whom I personally know, are even madder than he is.”



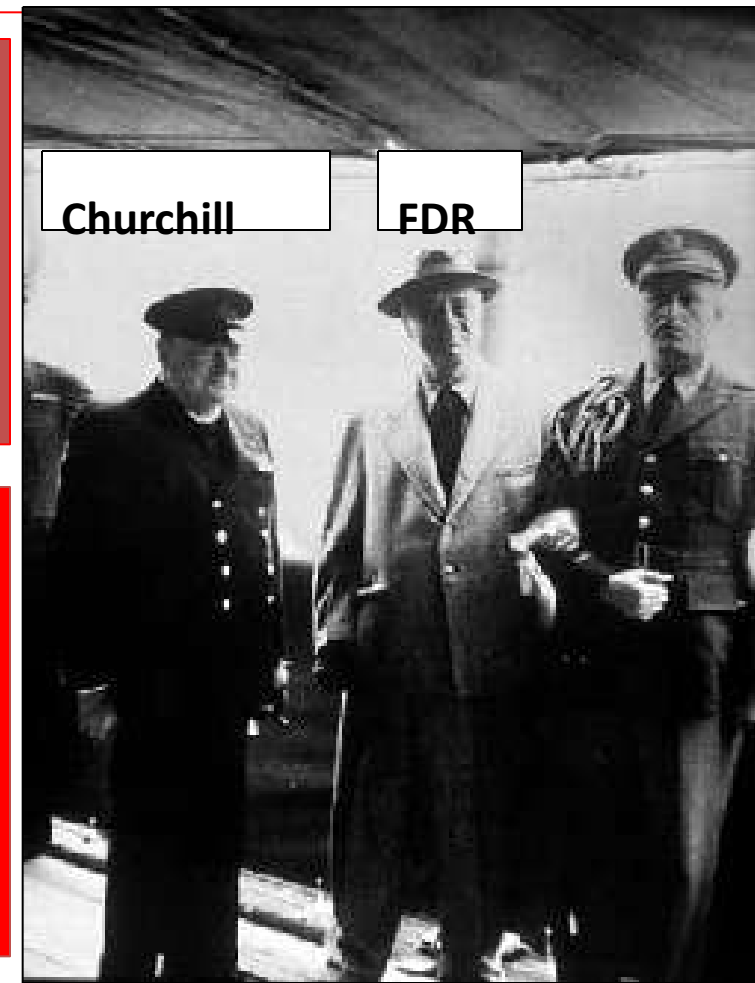
On Sept. 8, 1939, FDR announced that he was calling a special session of Congress to revise the Neutrality Acts. When congress met 2 weeks later, the president asked for a “cash-and-carry” provision, which would permit nations to buy U.S. arms as long as they paid cash & carried the goods home in their own ships. FDR believed that providing arms to Britain & France would be the best way to keep the U.S. out of war.

After 6 weeks of heated debate, Congress passed the Neutrality Act of 1939 & cash and carry went into effect.

When the U.S. received news that Japan, Germany & Italy signed the pact making them the Axis Powers they were in disbelief. They believed that the pact was aimed at keeping the U.S. out of the war. Under the treaty, each Axis nation agreed to come to the defense of the other in case of attack. This meant that if the U.S. were to declare war on any one of the Axis powers, it would face its worst military nightmare...a two ocean war, with fighting in both the Atlantic & the Pacific.

Hoping to avoid a war on 2 fronts, Roosevelt provided the British with all aid short of war. In 1940 the U.S. sent 500,000 rifles & 80,000 machine guns. The U.S. also traded 50 old destroyers for leases on British military bases in the Caribbean & Newfoundland.

After years of isolationism, the U.S. was militarily weak. Critics pointed out that there were 18 countries that had larger armies. So, FDR asked Congress to increase spending for national defense. Congress boosted defense spending in 1940 & it passed the nations first peacetime military draft.



Not long after the election, FDR held another fireside chat. There was no hope of negotiating a peace with Hitler, he told the nation. ***“No man can tame a tiger into a kitten by stroking it.”*** He also warned that if Britain fell, the Axis powers would be left unchallenged to conquer the world, at which point, he said, ***“All of us in all the Americas would be living at the point of a gun.”*** To prevent such a situation, the U.S. had to help defeat the Axis threat by turning itself into ***“The great arsenal of Democracy.”***



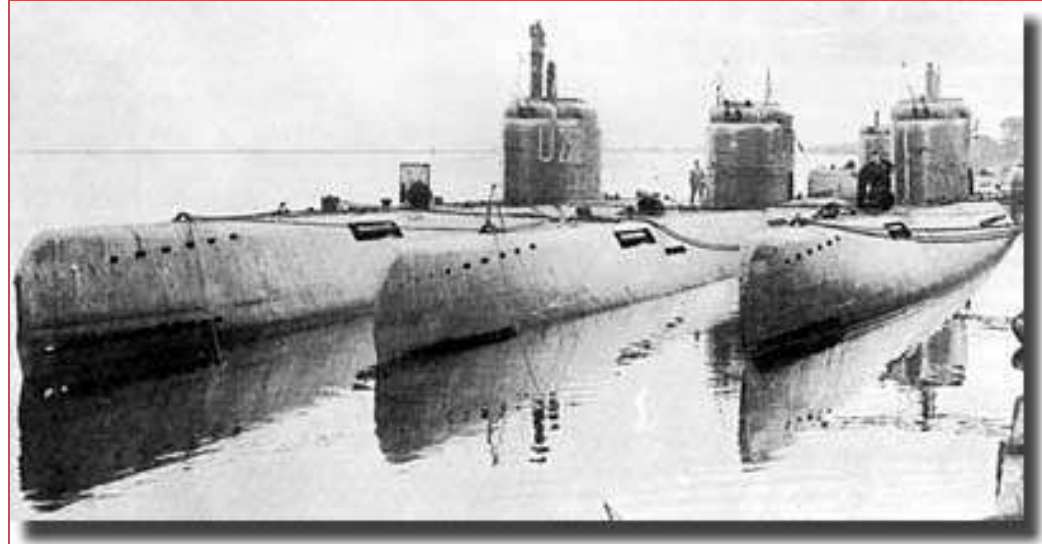
Because Britain had no more cash to spend, FDR suggested replacing cash-and-carry with a new plan that he called lend-lease. Under this plan the president would lend or lease arms and other supplies to any country whose defense was vital to the U.S. After bitter argument, Congress passed the Lend-Lease Act in 1941 & supported it with about \$50 billion.

German Wolf Packs

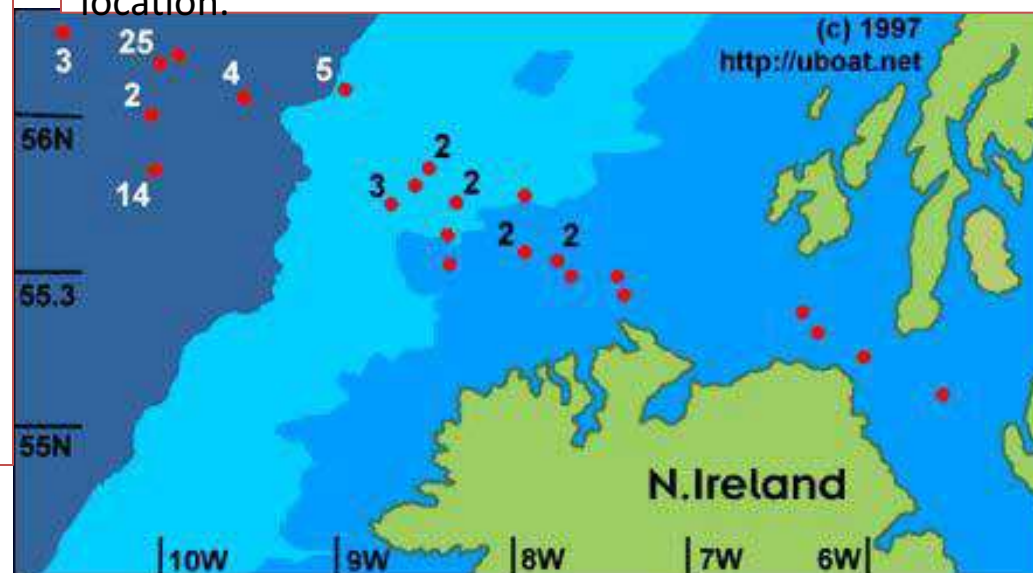
To prevent delivery of lend-lease shipments, Hitler deployed hundreds of German subs or U-boats in the North Atlantic. There, groups of 15 to 20 subs, known as wolf packs, searched shipping lanes for cargo ships.

During 5 weeks in April & May 1941, the Germans sank 1.2 million tons of British shipping. They were sinking ships faster than the British could replace them.

Something had to be done to stop the Attacks, so in June of 1941, FDR ordered the U.S. navy to protect lend-lease shipments as far east as Iceland. He also gave U.S. warships permission to attack German U-boats in self-defense.



Map showing where U-Boats were scuttled in Operation Deadlight; the numbers indicate the U-Boats sunk at each location.



The Atlantic Charter



FDR & Churchill met secretly aboard a warship off the coast of Newfoundland where they settled for a declaration of principles called the *Atlantic Charter*. The charter spelled out the causes for which WWII was fought & what the goals were for opposing the Axis Powers. Later in 1941, the Atlantic Charter became the basis of a new document called "*A Declaration by the United Nations*." The declaration was signed by 26 nations including the Soviet Union & China.

Together observed Churchill, these nations represented 4/5ths of the human race.

"How near is the United States to war?"

That was the question Churchill asked rhetorically after his August 1941 meeting with FDR.

On Sept. 4th, a German u-boat fired 2 torpedoes at the U.S. destroyer Greer. FDR responds with the announcement that the U.S. Navy had been ordered to fire on German ships on sight. 2 weeks later, the Pink Star, a U.S. merchant ship, was sunk off Greenland & in mid-October, the U.S. destroyer Kearny was torpedoed near Iceland killing 11. A few days later, German U-boats sink the U.S. destroyer Reuben James in the same waters, killing at least 100 sailors.



"America has been attacked, Roosevelt announced grimly. "The shooting has started & history has recorded who fired the first shot"

As the death toll mounted, the Senate finally repealed the ban against arming merchant ships. But FDR knew that something far more dramatic than German attacks on U.S. ships would be needed to persuade Congress to declare war.