Slide 1

Text: Trials of the “Greatest Generation:” The Great Depression and World War II (1929-1945)

[Photo of people standing in line in front of a pro-American advertisement]

Audio: If you had to pick the most difficult 15-20 years or so of continuous stress upon the American people, it would be an easy selection. The years of the Great Depression, the most monumental economic catastrophe to hit this country, followed by World War II, a global conflict against fascism. And to this day we tend to celebrate that generation of American adults who dealt with these challenges. Sometimes they’re called the World War II generation and then long-time NBC anchor Tom Brokaw wrote a book called The Greatest Generation in tribute to these men and women and so that name has stuck, as well. In his book, he had a series of interviews with notable Americans, although they were everyday people who became notable through their character, through their hard work, through their perseverance. So what I would like to do with this lecture is to take you through these tumultuous years that really, in the end, showed the best of the American character. What I have here in this slide is a bit of an irony. During the booming period of most of the 1920’s, it would be typical to see advertisements like this one, encouraging Americans to buy automobiles, to get out on the highway and travel across country. As a matter of fact, during much of the 1920’s, that’s exactly what plenty of Americans were doing. But once the Great Depression hit, ironically you had scenes like this. This is actually a long line at a soup kitchen standing in front of a billboard that promotes happier times.

Slide 2

Text: Onset of the Great Depression

[Image of the London Herald front page covering the Wall Street crash]

Audio: To preface my comments on the Great Depression, let me say that World War I, which America had joined 1917 and which came to an end the following year, had really shocked the western world like probably no event before it. And there was a great deal of escapism; there was a widespread sense of denial, over all of the ugliness that not only the war itself had produced through the carnage on the battlefield but also distasteful features of life at home related to the American war effort, the way that civil liberties were threatened in this country, there were race riots. To make a long story short, basically the First World War had brought to the surface all sorts of contradictions and serious problems in American life and that of the western world in general. So, for those of you who perhaps have read The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald or have had other impressions of the 1920s shortly after World War I came to an end, there was a great deal of emphasis on sort of partying like there is no tomorrow, living for the moment, leading deliberately shallow lives to try to somehow put the horrors of World War I behind you. And this was certainly an important feature of American life. What I would like to do now to sort
of build towards the onset of the Great Depression and is seen here with your slide, we generally think of the start of the Great Depression as taking place in October of 1929, when the US Stock Market began to crash. At least in this country, that’s the pivotal moment. Again the Depression was a global event. Various overseas economies were already in bad shape by 1929. But for Americans who tended to be focused on their neck of the woods, this was the key moment for them.

**Slide 3**

**Text:** Major Features of Depression

- Unemployment rate as high as 25% (which does not even count underemployment)
- Bank failures in the thousands with deposits lost
- Wave of home foreclosures
- Dust Bowl devastating Southern Plains states
- Massive transient population, including hobos and “Okies”

**Audio:** So how bad did things get during the Great Depression? During its first few years, 85 billion dollars were lost in American financial markets. The unemployment rate reached as high as 25%, which does not even take into account underemployment, which is where workers have to settle for jobs far below what they are used to making and what they have been trained to do. During the first few years of the Great Depression, there were over 5500 bank failures and in the process, people’s deposits were lost forever. It’s one reason why it’s not uncommon to find older Americans who talk about being distrustful of banks and stuffing the money underneath their mattresses and so forth. There was a wave of home foreclosures, and to make matters worse, just by poor timing, there was an ecological disaster taking place in the Southern Plains states. Places like Kansas, Oklahoma Texas, Colorado, and New Mexico where there was a series of intense dust storms that basically took away the topsoil in area because there was poor erosion prevention techniques. And so a portion of the plain was turned into what was called the Dust Bowl where you could no longer effectively grow anything. And so growing out of the Dust Bowl and these other economic features, the United States ended up with a massive transient population, of people moving generally west in search of greater economic opportunity. California often became their ultimate destination because the Great Depression hit that state somewhat later than the rest of country so there was this illusion, if you will, that California could be the Promised Land. For any of you who have read the great novel by John Steinbeck *The Grapes of Wrath*, among other things it introduces you to what were called “Okies.” Because Oklahoma was a state that produced quite a bit of this transient population, the term sort of originated there but was applied more broadly to many of these now homeless Americans heading west. And they would often pack up whatever they could into rickety vehicles and try to make their way across Route 66, which ran along an east-west axis through the southern plain.
states, the American Southwest and they’d try to get to California on Route 66. And these Okies would try to maintain a sense of community amongst one another while often being ridiculed by other Americans as lazy because they were poor. There were often assumptions that these people were violent, they were prone to various criminal acts, but many of these Okies were trying to head west to California. There was also a sizable hobo population. Hobos were sort of an economic indicator of the times. I mean, they dated all the way back to shortly after the Civil War. But these were Americans who regularly rode the rails, looking for jobs and sort of experiencing what is called wanderlust. I mean, many of them actually liked being able to move about constantly, not putting down roots anywhere. But in bad economic times, typically your hobo population would explode and certainly during the Great Depression that was the case. So you have all of these features coming together as indicators of just the extent of devastation across this country.

**Slide 4**

**Text:** A Nation Coming Apart at the Seams

[Photo of a sign reading, “Jobless men keep going. We can’t take care of our own.” Chamber of Commerce]

**Audio:** I should add to the information from the previous slide that not only were there over 550 bank closures, but there were 100,000 businesses of one sort or another that were unable to keep their doors open during the Great Depression, especially in its earliest years. That’s when most of these closures were taking place. It very quickly became apparent that the entire network through which Americans supported one another was breaking down. Churches and other sources of charity had nowhere near enough funds to deal with this level of economic devastation. So, the traditional institutions that you might go to if you were a little down on your luck – they didn’t have the money for you. It was not uncommon to see billboards like one. As you have a large transient population, moving around, looking for economic opportunity, communities had to put up signs and sometimes they were none too subtle about it, telling you, “Don’t even bother stopping in here, looking for work. We can’t help you.” Often the police that used to try to chase hobos off of railway cars for riding them illegally, now the police would try to make sure that when a railway stopped in their community that the hobos stayed on the train because they wanted the train to take the hobos on to the next community – let it be someone else’s problem. Now they don’t want you getting off because they know their communities can’t really support you. As this situation deteriorates, beginning in 1929, America’s President is going to end up taking a great deal of the blame. To some extent it wasn’t really fair. Presidents always get more credit than they deserve when the economy is going well and more blame than they deserve when it’s not. But America’s President at this point was both partially to blame and partially just being piled on by the American people because he happened to be the unfortunate individual in office when the Great Depression began. This President was Herbert Hoover. One way that we can recognize how much he was blamed is that as the great Depression took shape, when homeless Americans would set up little unofficial camps, typically on public property – maybe if there was an abandoned lot or public park somewhere – when homeless
individuals would gather up whatever corrugated metal and other materials find to make a makeshift hut or makeshift tent, they called them Hoovervilles. When people could no longer afford their vehicles or afford gasoline to put in their cars and they had to ride around on horse-drawn transportation again, they called them Hoover carts. When people went to sleep on park benches, perhaps using newspapers as the only way to try to keep themselves a little bit warm, they called them Hoover blankets. You get the picture here. Herbert Hoover had very poor political skills. He was absolutely tone deaf to how bad things were getting here. As a matter of fact, at one point, he allowed himself to be photographed on the White House lawn feeding red meat to his dog. This at a time when plenty of Americans were going to bed hungry. As the election year of 1932 approached, Herbert Hoover had a very steep mountain to climb to try to get a second term as President of the United States. I think that you can see the writing on the wall that that isn’t going to happen for him. His fundamental message, as he had built his political career, was that American individualism and self-reliance had been keys to our greatness. And up to a certain point, he was absolutely correct. The problem is that this country had never seen a breakdown of our entire economic system the way things were taking shape here beginning in 1929. Nobody had seen anything like this before and the traditional answers just were not getting the job done. Hoover for a time was sort of stuck on just repeating his traditional message because Americans had grown up with this idea that government doesn’t get very involved in the economy and you can just basically pull yourself up by your bootstraps. Your own work ethic will be enough. That just wasn’t getting it done here in the Great Depression.

Slide 5

Text: Bonus Army March – 1932

[Photo of police fighting with protestors]

Audio: During the Presidential campaign of 1932, there was one incident in the nation’s capital that really captures the depths of the Great Depression and was also the ultimate nightmare for an incumbent President like Herbert Hoover trying to win a second term. To try and set the stage a little bit, going back to shortly after World War I, Congress had passed legislation establishing a bonus for veterans of that conflict. The catch was it wouldn’t be paid out until 1945. But it was a way of thanking men who had served our country. And so, as the Great Depression hits, many of these veterans would like to get that money early. They’d like to get it when they most need it. Many had said they’d be happy to get a reduced amount from the original legislation as long as they could get it early. They began a movement to try to press the U.S. government to reconsider that original legislation and change it so that this bonus could be paid early. And when it becomes clear that Congress is in no hurry to act, this group eventually decides to march on Washington, D.C. to make their point more forcefully. They start calling themselves, and the press starts calling them, a Bonus Army because they do have a sort of quasi-military structure about them. So in the summer of 1932, about 20,000 of these veterans, including some of their wife and kids, in some cases entire families came along. Basically about 20,000 of these people descend upon the nation’s capital and they basically set up camp in abandoned buildings and in parks. So obviously they are this very prominent fixture now in our nation’s capital. Congress decides to go on recess without taking up the whole question of the bonus. So now you have this...
frustrated population that knows that the U.S. government is not going to do anything for them anytime soon. So, it’s basically a tense situation, it’s a tinderbox waiting for a spark. President Hoover eventually decides that he cannot allow this situation to fester. He brings the police and even the U.S. Army into play to try to disburse this Bonus Army. Now, the Army’s chief of staff, in other words, its top general at this time, was a man named Douglas MacArthur who was about to become an important figure in the Second World War. He was already a highly decorated veteran of the First World War. Douglas MacArthur is the top man in the Army but he gets his instructions from Herbert Hoover that these veterans and their families are to be disbursed but they are to be treated carefully. They are to be treated respectfully. Hoover didn’t want this to turn into an incident. But MacArthur had his own agenda. He didn’t like being in charge of the Army at a time when there was massive belt-tightening across the country, when budgets were being slashed. He wanted to use this episode as a way to demonstrate the power of the U.S. Army. What ends up happening is that both the Army and the police force crack down on these protestors in a way that becomes one of the ugliest scenes in American history. I have chosen just one photograph to show you. Now in this case, this is a police episode, but please keep in mind there were thousands of Army troops in the nation’s capital involved, as well, using tear gas, using armored vehicles to disburse protestors. In this case, you see the police getting into it with them and you’ll notice one of these protestors has a U.S. flag. That was very common. The Bonus Army wanted to make it very clear that they were patriotic, they were not anti-American. They were not, for example, communists. As a matter of fact, any time communists were detected among these protestors, typically members of the Bonus Army would rough them up a little bit and kick them out of there. But what ends up happening is that there is a wave of violence as these protestors were evicted from the nation’s capital. A number of them were killed. There was a certain amount of gunplay. It was just an ugly episode, some of it captured by the media. So obviously for Herbert Hoover’s reelection campaign, it was the ultimate nightmare. He came off looking very badly because, even though he had given the proper instructions to his people, they had their own agendas and Hoover felt that, as President he didn’t want to make excuses and so he basically took responsibility for the whole thing. It was, again, highly detrimental to his presidential campaign. If I could just jump ahead for a moment, it is going to be Franklin Roosevelt, a democrat from New York, who triumphs in the 1932 presidential campaign. I’m going to talk about him quite a bit. In the summer of 1933, a certain number of these Bonus Army protestors came back to the nation’s capital because they still didn’t have an early payment of their bonus. So once again, they camped out and now there was a real danger that there’d be another incident and now it would be on Franklin Roosevelt’s watch. But instead of sending in the police and the Army, President Franklin Roosevelt, in all seriousness, just sent in his wife Eleanor. Now she ended up walking among these camps, talking to people, and she didn’t promise them anything. In fact, there was no early payment of this bonus, but just by going in there, treating these people with respect, basically giving them a chance to vent, Eleanor Roosevelt, or the President through his wife Eleanor, diffused the situation in 1933 that had gotten completely out of control back in 1932.

Slide 6

Text: Election of 1932
Herbert Hoover vs. Franklin Roosevelt

[Political cartoon of Herbert Hoover and Franklin Roosevelt in a vehicle together]

Audio: When the American people went to the polls in November of 1932, the result was a landslide victory for Franklin Roosevelt and his democratic party. Not only did he take the presidency by a substantial margin, but his democratic party racked up huge majorities in both houses of Congress. Franklin Roosevelt is going to be the dominant figure in U.S. politics for the next 15 years or so. Let me introduce him to you a little bit. This political cartoon here I think captures the campaign of 1932 perhaps better than any other one I’ve seen. FDR, who was often known for his sort of toothy grin, was this incredibly buoyant, optimistic individual. For those of you who follow the presidential campaign of 2008 recently, you can sort of think of Franklin Roosevelt as the original hope and change candidate. He was just indefatigable in his spirit – I probably mispronounced that word a little bit -- he was a former governor of New York. He just connected with the American people, which was ironic because he came from about as aristocratic a background as you could for an American in this era of history. He was extremely wealthy. He was actually related to former President Theodore Roosevelt, both by marriage to Eleanor but also his own family tree. Despite his very blue blood patrician upbringing, Roosevelt was able to connect with average people. He’d also, by the time he had been elected President, no longer had the use of his legs. As a younger man, he had suffered an attack of polio that left him crippled for the rest of his life and many people had at least a vague sense that this was true, but there was sort of a gentleman’s agreement with the press that they did not typically photograph him in a way that would reveal the fact that he had braces on his legs and would often not photograph him sitting in a wheelchair. It was kind of a general sense out there but it wasn’t exactly in your face either. This political cartoon was supposed to run in the New Yorker magazine, showing on inauguration day, you’ve got outgoing Herbert Hoover on the left who looks incredibly glum. Meanwhile, here’s the buoyant FDR. However, there had recently been, between the time of the election and inauguration day, there had been an assassination attempt on Franklin Roosevelt. He had been down in Miami. He was in a motorcade with the mayor of that city, who actually ended up being killed as part of this. There was an attempt a gunman, so because the mayor of Miami had lost his life and the whole thing had obviously been pretty ugly, The New Yorker magazine decided it would be inappropriate to run a political cartoon like this in the aftermath of an assassination attempt. But I do think this image very much captures the spirit of the moment. So FDR takes office in early 1933. Of course the American people are waiting to see what he has in mind to deal with the Great Depression. During the presidential campaign, he has made reference to the fact that he has what he calls a new deal for the American people. The press sort of leapt on that and that became the slogan or the buzzword, if you will, for FDR’s campaign. So of course, everyone is asking themselves, what is this new deal going to be? My next few slides, my comments for a little bit here, are going to deal with that set of government programs.
Slide 7

Text: The New Deal

[Political cartoon of Franklin Roosevelt and his New Deal]

Audio: Before I begin covering the New Deal, let me say one more thing about Franklin Roosevelt’s political style. One nickname that he acquired during his career was that of being a chameleon in plaid. Let me explain what was meant by that. FDR had this incredible ability to sort of blend into whatever political environment in which he found himself. It was quite remarkable, especially once he became President, how groups with very different agendas could both feel as though they had an ally in the White House. They could both meet with the President, not simultaneously, and both walk away feeling as if he was on their side even if they had very different goals from one another. For example, let’s take two groups that couldn’t be more diametrically opposed to one another: Southern Segregationist politicians versus African-American leaders. Both of those groups came to feel as though FDR pretty reliable on their side. Now certainly, African-American leaders were more excited about it than the Segregationist politicians, but he stayed on pretty good terms with both of those groups at a time when there was a real battle in the former Confederate states between segregationists who wanted to maintain Jim Crow laws and the widespread disenfranchisement of blacks versus African-American leaders in all parts of the country who were fighting for equal rights and really eliminating the color line in this country. FDR was the ultimate politician. He knew how to connect with people. He knew how to compromise. He knew how to build consensus. The problem with being someone labeled a chameleon in plaid, however, is that after a while people do wonder what are your core values. What do you really stand for? And if it seems like you keep hemming and hawing, and tacking and maneuvering here and there – What do you really stand for? Do you have core values? So, FDR’s strength also, to some extent, led to certain criticisms, led to concerns about him. But I guess I would put it to you this was: One thing that any President or any important national leader has to ask him or herself is, “Am I more concerned about being right or getting things done?” Let me explain what I mean by that. By being right, I mean always staying 100% true to whatever your political or moral convictions happen to be. And sure, it may be easy to sleep at night when you know that every day you haven’t compromised your values one little bit. But this can also lead you to being a not terribly productive president in terms of getting legislation passed and solving problems. If you are always fixated on getting my particular solution 100%, the solution that fits my values, then that may mean at times that you walk away from negotiations empty handed. Conversely, if you are a president who is more concerned about getting things done, recognizing that there has to be some kind of a product to meet a particular problem and that product may be very imperfect – they say there are two things you never want to see: you never want to see how sausages are made and you never want to see how laws are made – because with all of the backscratching, the
compromising, the deal making, it can seem very distasteful. But, that’s how our process works. And FDR, especially compared to certain other Presidents who have been more ideological, been more focused on being “right,” FDR was more about getting things done. It’s all relative. Certainly at times it looks a little bit seedy, it looks distasteful, but FDR was a highly productive President. As illustrated here in this political cartoon, by the time that he is through, there are going to be a host of government programs. They are typically referred to by their acronyms. You see many of them laid out there on that table. It does make studying the New Deal difficult because you’ve got to memorize all of these names of programs. I’m just going to hit a few of the highlights in my own comments here. What FDR is going to be very productive in is getting these government programs created, with the help of Congress – he was very good at working with Congress- and these programs basically encapsulate what we call the New Deal. I’m going to talk in more detail in a moment about how they worked and what the New Deal was all about. But I would like you to appreciate for now that FDR was very flexible and he was an experimenter. Although his own views – he is remembered today as being very liberal because he did really accelerate the creation of a welfare state in this country, of a government safety net, of using government power proactively, and growing the size of the federal government.

Slide 8

Text: Dimensions/Goals of New Deal

- Relief: Most immediate, short-term goal; attend to basic needs of public such as food and shelter; least controversial, but many Americans were initially reluctant to accept charity
- Recovery: Moderate-term goal of bringing the economy out of a depression; entailed Keynesian policies of using government spending to stimulate economic growth; included many public works programs to employ Americans; downside is that it requires running budget deficits and relying upon government bureaucracy that may not be as efficient as private sector

Audio: The New Deal simultaneously operated on three levels or dimensions. Another way to think about it is that the New Deal simultaneously pursued three goals. I’d like to lay them out for you as an overview of what Franklin Roosevelt had in mind. These dimensions or goals are basically the three “R’s.” You often see them in textbooks. Relief, recovery and on the next slide I will talk about reform. Let me run through them. I’d like you to appreciate that, as I go through the list, each successive goal is more controversial than the one before it. In other words, relief was the easiest to sell. Reform will be the toughest.

Let’s start with relief. This was the most immediate short-term goal. In other words, relief was about attending to the most fundamental needs that the public had during the Great Depression. For example, creating soup kitchens and there were some government camps set up. They certainly weren’t fancy, but a place where you could count on having some kind of roof over your head, even if it was just a tent. There’d be water, the opportunity to take a shower. You just had a little basic stability in your life. This is one dimension of the New Deal and this was the easiest one to sell frankly because so many Americans were in a desperate plight that they didn’t
necessarily have a great deal of choice. Even though relief was the least controversial of the goals, I would like you to appreciate that it was still very difficult for many Americans to accept the idea that they couldn’t take care of themselves. You have to understand that for generations, especially for American men but Americans in general, had been raised to believe, proverbially speaking, that you carried your own water. You solved your own problems, and it was highly embarrassing to have to ask someone else for help. One thing that’s interesting – the White House was flooded with letters over the years from Americans in hard times who were asking the President, and in some cases the First Lady, for help. But often times they would do things like send a family ring or some other heirloom and say, “Look, I need some help right now with buying clothes for my kids or whatever but here’s a ring that’s been treasured in my family. Please accept this as collateral because I want to pay you back someday. In other words, people didn’t like the idea of taking charity. Even if they were pushed to the point of having to ask the government for help, they didn’t like to see it as just getting something for nothing. It’s important to keep that in mind. People only slowly were acclimating themselves to the idea that in certain situations “I need some kind of a safety net from the government and I may not be able to pay them back for it.” So that’s relief.

The more intermediary or moderate-term goal, the next level of the New Deal to cover is what we call recovery. Now, this was more about trying to bring the American economy out of the Great Depression. I don’t want to get into all sorts of technical details, but basically a depression is when the business cycle bottoms out. A depression is the ultimate economic slow-down. Its opposite would be hyperinflation. That’s when the economy gets incredibly overheated. Hyperinflation is every bit unhealthy as depression. We’ve just never really had hyperinflation in our nation’s history. But a depression is the ultimate economic downturn, the ultimate slowdown. FDR was also concerned about how to jumpstart the economy to get it moving in the opposite direction. Among other things, he would draw upon the work of an English economist John Maynard Keynes. Back in the 1930s, Keynesian economic policies were really seen as the wave of the future. They were the cutting edge. Today people argue that those policies were really long in the tooth and the approach needs to be adjusted, but back in FDR’s time, it was the latest and greatest thing coming from certain economic minds. The essence of Keynesian economics is that if you have a moribund, stagnant economy, what you do is inject a great deal of government spending into that economy, creating things like public works programs to create jobs for Americans. I’m going to give you some examples of those programs in a few moments. Basically, you use a massive amount of government spending as a way to pump prime the economy and then, according to someone like Keynes, once your economy is really up and running, then you cut back on that spending. As a matter of fact, Keynesian economics also said that if you have an overheated economy, you actually reduce government spending to bring it back into line. But politicians won’t really take the second part of that prescription very seriously. What that means then is that the governments got to come up with a great deal of money to make a Keynesian policy work. During the Depression the problem is – sure, you could theoretically raise taxes on the American people as a way to get that government spending in place. But in a depression, where so many people are operating on substantially less income, raising their taxes isn’t going to get you very far. That’s why FDR barely touches tax rates while he was president. So how are you going to get money if you’re not going to do much with taxes? Well, you could just print more money, but that’s what leads to inflation. Inflation is the situation
where the real value of currency actually decreases. Just because you own the printing presses, it’s not a good idea to just start printing more money. That has its own disaster all over it. So where does that leave you as a government? It leaves you with having to borrow money and that’s basically what the U.S. government does. It begins running budget deficits because it’s got all this new spending and it’s got to borrow to do it. Once you start running deficits, you’re running up a national debt that’s going to accumulate from one year to the next. So of course there’s more controversy attached to recover than to relief because, many people will say and not without some merit, that you can’t live beyond your means. If individual households are being asked to tighten their belts and to make sure that they are not spending more than they are taking in, then shouldn’t the government be held to the same standard?

This form of recovery is also controversial because as you are engaged in all this government spending and creating government programs, you’re naturally enlarging the size of government. You are putting the government into the management of the economy like never before. That means that the private sector, to some extent, is having to take a back seat now to government bureaucrats. Depending upon your point of view, you might argue who is the most efficient, the most innovative in keeping an economy moving. It’s not necessarily going to be government bureaucrats. It’s going to be entrepreneurs and other managers in the private sector. So there is, of course, a whole debate about these policies and that debate continues today. But I just want you to appreciate that for FDR, he really saw Keynesian policies as just a relatively temporary measure to try to bring the U.S. economy out of the Great Depression. He was not arguing that year after year, for decades on into the future that this always needed to be the case. True Keynesian economics basically involved using this kind of approach only when your economy was really slowing down and moving toward a depression or in a depression. Other politicians since FDR have interpreted or utilized this approach very differently. I just want you to appreciate FDR in the context of his own time.

Recovery is going to be very much about creating jobs and making the government a more intimate, day-to-day manager of the economy.

Slide 9

Text: Dimensions/Goals of New Deal (continued)

• Reform: Longest-term goal of making structural changes to U.S. economy to prevent future depressions; most controversial because it more permanently places government in the business of managing the economy

Audio: A final New Deal dimension or goal, and certainly the most politically controversial, was reform. This was about making more permanent changes to the U.S. economy and the way that the government interacts with the economy so that ideally a depression like this would never happen again. I’ll give you a couple of quick examples of how the reform agenda fit into the New Deal. When you walk into your average bank or credit union, you’re probably going to see somewhere on the glass doors or windows the acronym FDIC, which stands for Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. What FDR initiated and has continued ever since is that the government
now insures your bank deposits up to a certain amount. Originally it was $100,000, which was obviously going to cover the holdings of a great number of Americans. So if that bank goes under, you are guaranteed to get back up to that amount that the FDIC has insured for you.

Another example, the Securities and Exchange Commission, being created as a watchdog organization to help to insure that finance related laws are being obeyed by players on Wall Street so that investors are not being bilked out of their money; they’re not getting a false impression of the true health of the markets.

As I will be getting to in a few moments, possibly the most controversial of all New Deal programs, the Social Security Act, which was a huge step in creating a government safety net for American citizens.

**Slide 10**

**Text:** Civilian Conservation Corps

[Picture of a monument for the Civilian Conservation Corps]

**Audio:** Now that you have an overview of the New Deal in terms of the three R’s of relief, recovery and reform, I’ve chosen several of these government programs that I think are most emblematic of FDR’s overall approach to the problems of his time. One of these programs was the Civilian Conservation Corps, or CCC. This was a public works program. It ultimately put to work over three million men, as indicated here on this monument. The CCC concentrated its efforts on the national parks system in this country, as well as areas that had been hit hard by the Dust Bowl. One of the nicknames for the CCC was that it was FDR’s “tree army.” Ultimately, workers within this program planted more than three billion trees nationwide, but especially in those areas hit hard by the Dust Bowl as an erosion prevention measure. They also spruced up the national park system in terms of building pools and restrooms and other public facilities that would make the park experience more enjoyable. They cleared roads. They were involved in a wide variety of activities, much of it generally outdoors. It was a rigorous way of life. The CCC normally only took relatively young, single men because you had to go off and live in camps. Now, they did make some exceptions for veterans because they wanted to allow some special treatment for those who had sacrificed for their country, but again you would have to live often times in out of the way locations. There were more than 500 camps nationwide, set up by the CCC. There was a quasi-military lifestyle when you live and worked in these CCC camps. Part of the reason was that there was a concern that people needed some discipline in their lives again, that after all of the chaos of the Great Depression, that it was important to get people back into a routine, to have them focused on a mission and focused on their self-improvement. One of the things that were very astutely recognized by FDR about public works programs like the CCC was that it wasn’t just a paycheck that was ultimately going to matter. Obviously that would allow you, and if you had a family, to take care of yourselves. It was also restoring the basic dignity that came from knowing that you were doing an honest day’s work again; that you were putting yourself back on your feet; that you were on the road to self-improvement. It was a very abstract, intrinsic value to this labor beyond a paycheck that you took home; beyond what
improvements to the national park system and erosion control would do for other American citizens. It was also about building up your own self-esteem and making you feel like a productive citizen again. The CCC was one of the earliest programs. It was initiated in 1933, the first year that FDR came into office. Ultimately it made a major impact towards that goal of recovery, as one of the three R’s of the New Deal agenda.

Slide 11

Text: Works Progress Administration

[Photo of men working construction]

Audio: Another example of a public works program, in this case begun in 1935, was the Works Progress Administration. By the time it was through, it employed almost three and a half million Americans in a wider range of projects than we saw with the CCC. There was some work on the national park system from the WPA, but this organization concentrated more in urban areas, for example refurbishing all sorts of public buildings. Today you might walk into a municipal or state level government office and it would not be surprising to find the WPA somewhere. This organization put unemployed artists to work painting murals in public buildings and there are some beautiful examples of their work around the country. They also worked quite a bit on roads, highways, and dams, including some of our major dams out west are largely a product of WPA efforts. They helped to refurbish and expand airport facilitates. Virtually any type of public building could potentially have the WPA involved in it in one way or another. I want to give you a quote from the administrator who ran the WPA for most of its existence. As he put it, his name was Harry Hopkins; he was one of FDR’s top advisers before he took over this job. As he put it, “If you give a man a dole – in another words a dole is just a handout – If you give a man a dole, you save his body, but you destroy his spirit. If you give him a job, you save both body and spirit. That gets back to what I said in the previous slide about the value of the Civilian Conservation Corps, as well. Now the WPA did employ women because they were not in the far off locations where cultural mores would have dictated that you didn’t want single women working out in the middle of nowhere with single men. There were women employed by the WPA, not nearly as many as men. I have to say that one of the prevailing assumptions behind New Deal programs, and it shows us the limitations of gender thinking at the time, was that if you gave a serious job to a woman that you were really denying that serious job to a man. There was this expectation that the man was to be the primary breadwinner, the man is to be the head of the household. There is going to be this gender bias and, as I will get to later, there is going to be racial bias that’s going to be built into these government programs because frankly it was built into the society of the time. In terms of creating jobs and significantly improving economic infrastructure of this country, the WPA by and large has to be considered a success.

Slide 12

Text: Social Security Act

[Ad for Social Security]
Audio: The New Deal legislation that generated the most political fireworks was the Social Security Act passed in 1935. And as a lead into it, I'd like to use a little bit of pop culture. I know the show has been off the air except for reruns for quite a while now, but many of you are probably familiar with the NBC sitcom, Friends with one of its major characters being Jennifer Aniston playing Rachel. And if you go all the way back to season one of that show when Rachel, who had grown up rather spoiled suddenly has to go get her first job as an adult. And she was working in that coffee shop downstairs from their apartments. And some of you may remember the episode where she comes home with her first paycheck and she's very excited and she rips open the envelope and she's stunned. And as she puts it, "Who's this FICA guy and why is he talking all of my money?" Well, FICA refers to the deduction from your paycheck for Social Security to help to fund that program. And even back in the 1930s this was a source of controversy at least in the minds of some Americans because what Social Security does is that as long as your particular line of work qualifies, and please keep in mind when Social Security was first created, there were some major occupations that were left out and I'll get to that in a moment. So it certainly was not a universal program. But if your occupation qualified for Social Security, any time that you're paid a certain amount of your income is automatically deducted and goes into government coffers to be available to you once you reach the age of 65 and you're going on into retirement. Meanwhile, your employer is also taxed through your employer's payroll to make a contribution on your behalf every time that you're paid. So both employers and employees are feeding into this program. And again ideally, by the time you're reaching your senior years this will give you some guaranteed income. Now, let me attach a couple caveats to Social Security as it first went into effect. Number one, FDR and others who supported the program and its administration never said that Social Security should be counted on as your only source of income, you know, once you were into your golden years so to speak. There was never an expectation that you should just spend frivolously throughout your life and just count on Social Security to get you through your final years. No expectation there. Secondly, at the time that FDR had this program put into effect, the average lifespan of Americans was about 62 to 63 years old and yet I just told you that the age at which you could collect retirement benefits was 65. So FDR and fellow administrators in the White House and Congress were counting on the fact that many Americans who were paying into this program were, quite frankly, not going to be around by the time that the benefits would arrive. So the program looked much more solvent when it was first created in 1935. What was not completely anticipated and what I think many of you are aware of, is that once the post-World War II baby boom generation begins to enter our national population, this creates this huge demographic bulge if you will in the American people. And now today as those baby boomers are hitting retirement age, there's a real concern that there's not enough income from the rest of us still in our prime working years to ultimately see to it that there'll be enough funds available for the retirement of these baby boomers. Now -- and again, please keep in mind the Social Security program has been modified quite a bit since FDR's time. I mean most of my comments are going to focus on these early years. But again, keep in mind the average life expectancy back in the mid 1930s was less than the age at which you could start getting Social Security benefits. FDR also was never suggesting to the American people that you just count on Social Security as your primary or sole means of income. Another feature of early Social Security that I'd like you to appreciate is how many Americans were actually left out of it. Now one group was government workers, but that was a special case because they had a really great pension of their own, so the fact that they weren't involved in Social Security, not a
big surprise. But there were two other very sizable groups that were omitted from this program. Those were agricultural workers and domestic servants. Agricultural workers and domestic servants, your maids, butlers, et cetera. And you might be wondering well, why was that the case. And this really gets back to FDR as the master politician, as a very calculating individual, as somebody who focuses on getting things done. He knew that for employers across the country, the Social Security Act was going to mean a certain amount of pain. After all, you are being taxed for the size of your payroll and, you know, this could discourage employers from hiring larger work forces. This was obviously going to be a certain drain on their profits. So FDR made the calculation along with his team of how, you know, much pain could the American society really absorb to make Social Security go into effect and which Americans would be in the least advantageous position to complain if they were left out of Social Security. And if you look at agricultural workers and domestic servants, a very large percentage of them were people of color and a sizeable percentage of at least the domestic service population also happened to be women. And so you're talking about groups that are pretty much on the margins of political power in American society. I mean sure women had the vote by the mid-1930s, but, you know, you certainly don't see a large number of women holding public office at this time. And as I've said, there's still -- I mean it's being challenged every day, but there still is this prevailing notion that women should concentrate in the domestic sphere, maybe get involved in some reform causes. But, you know, they're not really looked upon as your most active vociferous political citizens. So, you know, if there are groups that you might be able to get away with leaving them out of Social Security, those groups are probably going to be people of color and women. And so by choosing two lines of work where you see large numbers of women and people of color without technically violating the constitution because you haven't explicitly said that this law is based on race or gender. But when you target lines of work where you find large numbers of women and African-Americans, and other minorities, obviously you've made a political calculation. And so this again shows us the more realistic and pragmatic, and, you know, depending upon your outlook, the most distasteful side of FDR. But this was the initial Social Security program and it does resemble more left-wing political systems. You know, for example, over in Europe, having some kind of a government-sponsored pension was far less unusual by this point than you'd see in America. So again, for people who were afraid that the New Deal was a step toward socialism or communism, the Social Security Act obviously heightened their fears and frankly, I mean FDR had not been in a hurry to do this. The fact is a major reason why he put this legislation forward is that other figures on the American political scene were pushing for an even more aggressive means of giving older Americans some guaranteed income. And so FDR felt like he had to do something to respond to that call. So he didn't go as far as some of his left-wing critics, but he certainly moved in a leftward direction with the Social Security Act. If any of you were to look up some key historical figures like Senator Huey Long, at one point governor of Louisiana, eventually senator of Louisiana, he was pushing for more aggressive steps for guaranteed government income, especially for older Americans. Father Charles Coughlin who has a major radio following; he was a frocked Roman Catholic priest who became a very controversial figure by getting involved in politics through his radio program. There was a Dr. Charles Townshend who also was a major advocate for various types of old-age pensions. So when I said a few slides back that FDR was taking as much heat from those on the left for the New Deal not being more aggressive, as he was taking heat from those on the political right for it being dangerous. I just want to use Social Security as one example of that political dynamic.
Text: New Deal Setbacks/Limitations

- Gender differential in pay
- Much segregation in New Deal programs
- Certain amount of “goldbricking” or “shovel leaning”
- Conservative Supreme Court justices struck down several FDR initiatives

Audio: As common sense would dictate in the case of any massive government operation, the New Deal was far from perfect. And I'd like to highlight a few of its setbacks and limitations here. Number one, as part of a broader problem in U.S. society in general, oftentimes women were making less for doing the same labor as men in these New Deal programs. So there was a gender bias or differential in pay that was built right into many of these programs. I mean it was not -- it was not hidden [chuckle]. It was quite obviously the case and it goes back to some of those attitudes that I mentioned earlier. Secondly, there was a fair amount of segregation in New Deal programs. For example, most of those hundreds of CCC camps that I referred to a few slides back were racially segregated. And so, you know, FDR, his general feeling again being the pragmatic politician, was that in the spirit of trying to promote economic recovery, he didn't want to rock the boat too much on social issues. So he didn't really push it. So in many of these cases you do see that racial bias built into the New Deal. Also, and I'm reminded of the impression I think many of us have even today, if you drive by a construction site on the highway, it often seems like there is many people standing around as there are seem to be working. When you have these massive public works programs, which, you know, are not always very carefully supervised, you're going to have a certain amount of idling or the common expressions we use gold bricking or shoveling. You know, people who are just sort of going through the motions trying to put in the minimum amount of effort and still collect their paycheck. So given natural, human nature, of course some of this happened with New Deal public works programs. But when you look at the physical accomplishments, you know, the sheer volume of the work that was done, you certainly can't say that what transpired there was nothing but gold bricking or shoveling. I mean obviously, on the whole, there was a great deal of productive labor, but again, you know, to be fair, to be honest and candid, naturally there was some waste that went into this as well. And finally, FDR ran into a supreme court at the time that was dominated by relatively conservative justices who saw that his use of executive power and his use of federal power in general, were in their minds, overstepping constitutional boundaries. So a number of the acts that FDR had sponsored and that had been passed by Congress were actually struck down by the Supreme Court as unconstitutional. And this was very frustrating for FDR. One of his more famous private quotes, he said that you know, he wouldn't mind being a dictator at least for a day or two [background noise] because, you know, we do have this impression that because dictators don't have to worry about the rule of law and going through complex legislative and legal channels to get things done, there's this impression that dictatorships might actually be more efficient than democracies and republics. Now, if I had wanted to take the time to go into this deeper, I'd say that often turns out not to be the case in Nazi Germany that I'll be covering here shortly was a good example of that. But we at least have this impression that if you're a dictator, if you have some kind of absolute authority, you can cut through all the red tape and get things...
done. And FDR was quoted at times, privately, as sort of wishing and not being 100% serious about it, but of course there's an element of seriousness that at times he felt frustrated by the limitations of our constitutional system. And he would have liked to have found a way to streamline it. And so this last setback or limitation is a lead-in into the next slide when I'm going to talk about the greatest political blunder that FDR ever made and he didn't make many by the way. Normally, he had excellent finely-attuned political instincts, but I am going to talk about his biggest mistake, one in which even many of his normal supporters felt that he had gone too far.

**Slide 14**

**Text:** FDR's “Court Packing” Plan – 1937

[Political cartoon about the Supreme Court]

**Audio:** So let's turn to FDR's greatest blunder. By 1937 he was frustrated that a number of his initiatives had been struck down by the Supreme Court so FDR sponsored a bill before Congress that would have overhauled the nation's judicial system. It was called the Judiciary Reorganization Bill of 1937. From now on I'm going to refer to it by its more popular name in the press, which was the Court Packing Plan, and I'm going to talk in a moment about what's meant by that title. What it basically said was that for the U.S. Supreme Court as well as each federal district court across the country, any time a sitting justice reached the age of 70 and was not willing to retire, the President could then appoint an additional justice to that same court. And part of the reason why the law is worded this particular way is that it was really the older justices more set in their ways, more conservative about the use of government power who were giving FDR the most trouble, so of course he wanted them to retire. And so this law is saying, if these older justices, you know, once you hit the age of 70, if they're not willing to retire, then the President is allowed to appoint an additional justice to whatever court that you're looking at in that particular case. Now, on the Supreme Court, which has nine members, because of the ages of the justices in 1937, had this law gone into effect, that means that FDR would have been able to appoint six justices all at once. Why is this important? Well, it's important for reasons that are suggested by the political cartoon in front of you here. Going back to the founding fathers and the way that they set up our three branches of government -- and I did mention this a one of the other lectures -- there was a real concern that there always has to be accountability, for every individual in government, for every institution in government. And so there are various ways that different branches of government counterbalance one another and keep the system, at least ideally, free of corruption. So you know, it's one thing if you happen to be President and a Supreme Court justice passes away, or a Supreme Court justice who maybe likes your political ideology decides, well, I'm going to retire now, rather than waiting for the next election cycle which might bring in someone I don't like; because if I retire now, then you, the President, get to appoint my successor. And again, of course, if somebody just happens to pass away, you, the President, gets to appoint that new justice. Well, that's one thing because retirements and deaths are obviously a pretty natural course of events, and so, you know, we don't see it as politically or Constitutionally inappropriate if because someone has died or retired, the President then gets to fill that spot. But if you're suddenly passing a law that allows you to effectively create your own majority on the Supreme Court because, you know, you've put together a law that guarantees now that you're going to be able to put six relatively friendly people into place on the Supreme
Court -- and I say "relatively friendly" because, you know, once a Supreme Court justice appointed, they're virtually impossible to remove, and some of them in our history have served on into a point in their lives when they're senile, when they're not particular competent. So, I mean, you never know ultimately what you're going to get with a Supreme Court justice, but what you try to do before you appoint that individual is look into their background, of course meet with them, and you know, you can't say to them, well, I'm not going to appoint you unless you promise to agree with all my policies, or you know, make some other sort of pledge. But you do try to scope these people out as much as you can and get a sense of what they're all about, and chances are, if you're going to appoint that person as a President, it's somebody you feel pretty good about looking years down the road that this person is going to look favorably on my policies. So if a President suddenly gets to appoint six new justices, odds are those are going to be six pretty consistent votes for that President's policies when the appropriate case comes before the Supreme Court. So in the eyes of critics, what FDR was trying to do was to stack the deck, or pack the court as indicated by this cartoon; that in effect you're trying to put in a bunch of yes men or today you'd say also yes women who are going to be very amenable to your policies, so now you are upsetting the Constitutional balance of power. And so I have to say, again, this was FDR's biggest blunder, not only, of course did plenty of Republicans think this was a bad idea -- Republicans often felt that FDR was overstretching the boundaries of his office -- but plenty of Democrats as well could not get behind this. They just felt there were broader Constitutional principles that were at stake. So FDR's bill went nowhere in Congress. It never became the law of the land. It never overhauled the judicial system. But the fact that he was willing to try this does say something about FDR's willingness to try to push the boundaries of his office, push the boundaries of his power. Now, ironically, although his bill was killed, just by luck, due to retirements and fatalities, the Supreme Court did become more friendly by the time that FDR's presidency was over, but it happened naturally rather than being the result of some sort of artificially constructed law. So this episode tells us a little bit more about FDR, the "chameleon in plaid," FDR, the ultimate politician.

**Slide 15**

**Text:** Consequences of New Deal

- Brought the U.S. economy out of the worst depths of the Great Depression, but did NOT by itself produce a recovery.
- Helped shift the focus of the American public onto the executive branch as the driving force in the government.
- Solidified the notion that the federal government should provide some degree of a safety net for its citizens.

**Audio:** The New Deal does not really have a precise ending point. But with the onset of World War II. And especially, once the United States directly entered that conflict. F.D.R.'s focus and that of much of the country would change. And so we generally don't think about the New Deal beyond the late 1930's. And I'd like to, in terms of just some bare bone details, to try to summarize the consequences of these government programs. First of all, to try to be as fair as
possible to the controversial political and economic issues that surround the New Deal. Just about every responsible scholar. Whether they're normally sympathetic to the New Deal or not. Will admit that by itself the New Deal did not bring the U.S. economy out of the Great Depression. In other words, that recovery goal was not entirely achieved by the New Deal. You can certainly say that there was a degree of recovery taking place thanks to the New Deal. So the absolute worse features of the Great Depression had been mitigated to some extent. But, no. By itself, the New Deal did not achieve that goal. What is really going to finish the job of recovery from the Great Depression will be the demand created for U.S. industrial products. Especially, war materials. By the controversial international politics that produced the Second World War. In other words, as orders begin to come in for the United States to provide military materials for countries resisting fascism around the world. And then eventually, of course, once America's brought into that fight itself. That is really going to be what puts many Americans back to work permanently. And it's going to jump-start the American economy. So whatever else you want to say about the New Deal. I think you'll find that plenty of its critics. But also plenty of its supporters will acknowledge that, no. By itself, it did not magically bring the U.S. economy out of the Great Depression. In terms of another consequence in today -- this seems so natural that you might wonder why I even say it. But again, keep in mind, in earlier periods this wasn't the case. But in part due to F.D.R.'s personality. And in large part due to his policies. The New Deal will help to shift and reorient the way that the American people think about the government. Especially, the federal government in their lives. And increasingly now, the President is going to be seen as the central figure. And Presidents are going to be expected to have more of an agenda when they come into office. In other words, pre-F.D.R. Especially if you go all the way back to the 18th and 19th centuries. For the most part, Presidents thought of themselves just as caretakers. And so when they campaigned for the office, to the extent that some of them even did campaign. They didn't normally have a broad set of programs in mind and a broad set of goals. But if you look at the more modern post-F.D.R. U.S. Presidency. It is far more typical now that voters and, frankly. On both sides of the aisle are looking for a President to have more of an agenda. Because now the President is seen as the focal point. The executive branch by extension, but particularly the President himself. Or someday, perhaps someday very soon, herself. And another way in which the New Deal has an important consequence on American society is that it really does solidify the notion that the government. Especially, the federal government. Should provide some degree of a safety net for its citizens. And, you know, there will continue to be major debates over what exactly that safety net looks like. But in general, the idea that rugged individualism by itself can no longer be a foundation for success. That there has to be something else in place. That idea is really here to stay. Once the Great Depression is over. Once the New Deal is run its course. In other words, the New Deal really shifted the terrain of political debate over the role of government in the economy. And the role of government in American life in general. To put it another way, after the New Deal. Even when Republicans had majorities in Congress. And when republicans occupied the White House. Very few of them were ever
seriously suggesting that the entire New Deal just needed to be eliminated. That all of those New Deal programs, some of which were still around. Nobody was really suggesting that America needed to go back to the era of Herbert Hoover in 1932. And completely reverse and undo everything that F.D.R. had brought along. Now, sure, Republicans and conservatives might pick out certain New Deal programs and certain features of the New Deal. And say look we've got to reform this. We've got to eliminate this. But nobody is suggesting turning the clock all the way back to before F.D.R. became President. Everybody recognizes that at least some degree of a safety net is here to stay. So in that respect, F.D.R. dramatically changed the terrain of the political debate. Over how the government manages the economy and manages life in general.

Slide 16

Text: Rise of Fascism

[Photo of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini]

Audio: The rest of this lecture is going to attempt to summarize an incredibly complex event. And that's the Second World War. And I almost shudder at the thought of trying to do this in the better part of an hour. But let me work the best I can with the material. I've already mentioned that what really brings the Great Depression to an end in the United States is the rise of international tensions that produce a demand for U.S. industrial products. Especially, products that can support a war effort. Because nations with which America is either friendly or at least we have a common enemy are eager for U.S. assistance. So the industrial orders come in. And as America itself is drawn closer to being a part of World War II, that helps as well. And that's really what jumpstarts the economy. So let me step back to the end of World War I and set the stage for the Second World War. Those nations that triumphed in World War I were relatively democratic in their political systems. And so the peace settlement and the new international political climate after the First World War was to a large extent associated with democracy. The problem was the democracies that had won this war were in various ways exhausted by doing so. Especially, Britain, France, and Europe. But also to -- in its own respect, even the United States. Despite the fact that this country suffered nowhere near the same casualties as European countries. But in its own way America was weary and in a state of denial after World War I. So what I'm trying to get at. And this might seem a little surprising by our modern perspective. Is that if you were living in the early 1920's. And on through that decade. And on into the 1930's. The political wave of the future to you might not have seemed to be democracy. In fact, democracy was largely discredited by the way in which World War I had dragged on. In the way in which its peace settlement and its subsequent conditions left so many people dissatisfied. I've often described World War I as a conflict where, yeah. Technically there were some winners. Because one side surrendered. The other side didn't. But nobody really felt like they won the First World War. And that's important to keep in mind. And the larger cause of democracy seems stale. It seems tired. It seems moribund after World War I. And the wave of the future, the kind
of political ideas that are exciting many people in Europe. And to some extent in America as well. Are coming now from the political extremes. Relatively speaking, those who support democracy are towards the middle of the political spectrum. But on the far left, and on the far right there are other ideologies that are really accelerating. Gaining force here. That for many Europeans. And for many Americans. And for many Asians. I mean, for many throughout the globe. It's these new radical ideologies that seem to have the answers. Now, on the far political left, the radical ideology is communism. And I'll get back to that a bit later in this lecture. But what I want to concentrate on for a few moments now is the ideology of the far right. And that's fascism. And two leaders shown here in the back of this vehicle helped to symbolize the rise of fascism in Europe after World War I. On the left, of course, is Adolph Hitler, who will come to power in Germany in 1933. What is sometimes forgotten about Adolph Hitler is that he did not initially seize power in that country. It would probably be easier to look back on the beginnings of World War II. If we could say that Hitler just launched some kind of a coup to take over the German government. That he was never legitimately elected into it. But that was not the case. He was invited into the German government legitimately. And only then did he gradually turn it into a one-party dictatorship. In other words, significant numbers of Germans, for whatever reason, made their peace with what Hitler was all about. And that's actually, to me, that's more disturbing than if just right from the start he had seized power. But his national socialist or Nazi party was one manifestation of this rise of fascism. Now, many scholars will tell that you Hitler and his Nazi thugs were, for the most part, not very intellectual in developing fascism as an ideology. But if you look at Italian fascism, symbolized by Bonito Mussolini here on your right in the back of this vehicle. It was much more intellectually based and Mussolini had actually come to power in Italy all the way back in the early 1920's. And by the late 1930's, these two men had forged a pretty strong partnership. And were preparing to plunge Europe into a state of warfare. And so I want you to appreciate that every European country during the 1920's. And even more so in the 1930's. Had a fascist movement. Even very democratic countries like England. Now, the strength of these movements varied from, you know, from one country to the next. Obviously, it was much stronger in a country like Germany than in England. But fascism, to one degree or another, was everywhere. And there were fascist elements in the United States as well. And the fact that Hitler was already clearly clamping down on the Jewish population of Germany. And then as Germany occupied other countries was also cracking down on their Jewish populations. Frankly, there were many in the west who were not quick to really condemn Hitler. Because on some level, due to some latent anti-Semitism, they felt like, okay. Well, you know. This guy -- this guy's a bit of a thug. But at least he kind of knows how to handle this whole Jewish problem. And he kind of puts those people in their place. And so it made many in the Western world, including among prominent Americans. It made them willing to tolerate what Nazi Germany was doing. So I would like to you appreciate that by the late 1930's, Hitler and Mussolini had both already engaged in several acts of imperialism. And in all cases, they were completely ignoring the World War I peace treaty that had established certain boundaries for Europe. That had placed
certain restrictions on how large Germany's military could be. Hitler, and to a lesser extent Mussolini, were ignoring this international law. And they were doing it openly. And nobody was really standing up to them for it. Because there was so much exhaustion left over from World War I. That the feeling was it's better to appease these dictators than to stand up to them. So just to give you a few quick examples. By the time we reach the late summer, early fall of 1939. Adolph Hitler had already absorbed the nation of Austria into his larger German Reich or empire. He called it the Third Reich. The third empire in German history. So Austria had ceased to exist as an independent country. Czechoslovakia had ceased to exist as an independent country. The Italians had done some conquering of several African lands. So now Mussolini was promising a second Roman empire for his people. And neither of them were satisfied by the early fall of 1939. So they are about to plunge Europe into warfare. And on September first, 1939, German forces invaded their neighbor of Poland. And it was finally at this moment that England and France as the leading democracies of Europe, finally decided they'd had enough. And they declared war on Germany. So September of 1939, in terms of an official textbook definition of when World War II begins in Europe. That would be the moment. And so I'll come back to events in Europe here in a few moments.

Slide 17

Text: Japanese Empire

Photo of Japanese soldiers]

Audio: As disturbing as events were in Europe during the 1920s and especially the 1930s leading up to World War II, this was not the only part of the world where America was confronted with the rise of a form of fascism. The Japanese empire had been on an ultra-aggressive course for decades, and gradually on a collision course with the United States and East Asia. And in a way it's very ironic, because all the way back in the 1850s as that decade began, the Japanese islands at that point were an incredibly isolated provincial kingdom having almost no contact with the outside world. I mean, very few foreigners were allowed to trade with Japan back then. It was a country that to a large extent was minding its own business, whatever else you want to say about it. But in the 1850s, a U.S. Naval squadron sailed into Tokyo Bay, not to attack the Japanese, but to demonstrate by their superior technology and firepower that it was time for Japan to open itself up to the rest of the world, and so agreements were reached whereby Japan began to trade more with the outside world, there were more ties with the United States, there were more ties with European countries, and there was a degree of coercion behind this. Again, not that Japan was invaded or anything, but this was a rather heavy-handed act by the United States. And it really started a trajectory of events that led all the way to December of 1941 when the chickens really came home to roost for the United States as the Japanese launched their sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Now, I'm not trying to suggest that the Pearl Harbor attack was in any way justified. I'm just trying to show you an historical linkage of events. I'm trying to show you a certain irony, but I am in no means passing a value judgment that somehow lets Japan off the hook for Pearl Harbor and World War II. But to make a long story short, once
Japan was forced to open itself up to the West, it began to modernize its nation at a breakneck pace. Now, the Japanese built up a modern navy, they had an industrial revolution, they took on at least the trappings of a European style parliamentary democracy, but political power was still in the hands of a select few; a select few that would use the fact that the Japanese emperor was supposed to be a living god on earth. They would use the sacred image of their emperor to justify a major string of imperialistic conquests around East Asia that rapidly turned Japan into a world pour. Just to summarize a couple of those events: In the 1890s, the Japanese went to war with China to acquire territory and economic privileges; during the first decade of the twentieth century, the Japanese defeated the old Russian empire of the czars, and by that time they also completely dominated the Korean Peninsula; the Japanese entered World War I just as an excuse to be able to grab German colonies in the Pacific, a number of key islands to advance their positions there; and the Japanese eventually in the late 1930s formed a partnership with Germany and Italy, and so the three nations referred to themselves as the Axis Powers; and once World War II broke out in Europe, the Japanese would use the declining fortunes of the French and British as a way to go after some of their colonies in the Pacific. So the Japanese empire was very much on the move. And when the Japanese invaded China beginning in 1931 and continuing periodically through that decade, they committed extraordinary atrocities against the Chinese people. The Japanese soldiers, such as the ones you see celebrating here, were motivated by really perversion of the medieval code of the samurai, a code known as bushido, and one of these perversions led them to treat any prisoners that they took with just extraordinary brutality because they considered anyone who was willing to surrender to be subhuman and not worthy of any decent treatment whatsoever. And so the Japanese empire certainly saw the United States as its greatest threat in East Asia and vice versa, and negotiations between the two countries were not going well by the late 1930s. The Japanese typically, when they were challenged on their aggressive behavior, they would say to U.S. diplomats, well, look. You've got your Monroe Doctrine which basically says hands off to foreign powers who want influence in the Western hemisphere. You know, it's America's backyard. So the Japanese would argue, why can't we have our version of a Monroe Doctrine for East Asia? And I have to admit, that was a tough argument to refute because U.S. foreign policy had been heavy handed in our neck of the woods for quite a long time, and so the Japanese were sort of arguing, they just needed their place in the sun in East Asia, in their backyard. In any case -- and I'm sort forced to blend events in Asia with events in Europe. I haven't said too much about Europe yet, but when France was conquered by Germany in 1940, the French were forced to give up their Southeast Asian colony of Indochina to the Japanese because Japan and Germany had this partnership with each other. So that allowed the Japanese to expand in Southeast Asia, and they had their eyes on Dutch colonies heavy with oil in what is today Southeast Asia; they to some extent had their eyes on Australia and New Zealand, which were part of the British empire at the time; and the United States was really the only major power standing in their way. And FDR had been engaged in diplomatic efforts to try to find some way to keep tensions under control with Japan, but in the summer of 1941, because of increasing Japanese aggression, the United States cut off all oil shipments to Japan and virtually all economic contact and trade with them whatsoever. And the Japanese high command, which was increasingly dominated by radicals, they basically took this as an act of war. And so the Japanese continued to negotiate with America, but secretly behind closed doors, their plan was that if by November of 1941, the United States had not made diplomatic concessions to allow trade to recommence with Japan, then the Japanese were going to launch a sneak attack.
against the headquarters of the U.S. Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor; the idea being to drive the
United States all the way back to its west coast and basically kick it out of East Asia for good. So
this is really a fateful step here. So the Japanese would increasingly spend the fall of 1941
pretending to negotiate in good faith, while in reality, they have a very bold military operation
that they're planning and preparing for, and that will culminate in the Pearl Harbor attack of
December 7, 1941.

Slide 18

Text: Nazi Domination of Europe

[Photo of Nazi soldiers marching]

Audio: It's difficult not to get geographical or chronological whiplash in covering World War II
because I have to keep jumping back and forth between Europe and Asia, but I want to bring
Europe up to late 1941 as well so that we're at the same moment when America comes into the
war in December 1941. While the Japanese had been engaged in the aggression that I've tried to
summarize for you a moment ago, Europe has already been plunged into warfare since the fall of
1939. And again, the United States was not in that fight yet, but I want to talk about the overall
chain of events. From 1939 -- from late '39 until late 1941, the Germans were experiencing a
tremendous amount of success in conquering large parts of Europe. In the fall of 1939, the
Germans conquered Poland, although they did get some assistance from the Soviet Union. Those
two countries, the fascists Nazi Germany and the communist Soviet Union, had greed secretly to
carve up Poland between them. So in the fall of 1939, Poland fell. Then in the spring of 1931, the
Germans conquered Denmark in about a day; they conquered Norway, that took a bit more
effort; and then they launched a massive invasion into Western Europe that swept through
Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg -- very small country, small factor -- and then eventually into
France itself. And in about six weeks the German military was able to accomplish what it had
never been able to do in World War I, and that was to get the French to surrender. What you see
here in this photograph are German troops who are marching through Paris after the French have
surrendered. They're marching underneath the Arc de Triumph, which is one of the main national
monuments of French military success. So obviously, this was a humiliating moment for the
French. By the summer of 1940, the French are knocked out of the war. The northern half of that
country as well as its western coastline were directly occupied by the Nazis, and what was left of
southern France became a kind of puppet or collaborationist government that cooperated with the
Germans as a sort of junior partner, but again, really a puppet government with the Nazis pulling
the strings. Then in the -- as 1940 -- once we get into 1941, the Germans turned their efforts and
their focus to southeastern Europe, conquering Yugoslavia and Greece, such that by the early
summer of 1941, the Germans are masters of a great part of continental Europe. And by the way,
there is a map of Europe that will be coming up in a few slides, and I would ask that you refer to
it from time to time if you find that you need that geographical backup to my comments. But the
Nazis have really not suffered major defeats by the summer of 1941. The best you can say is that
their air campaign against Britain to try to soften up the British people in preparation for
invasion, well, that did fail. They inflicted a tremendous amount of damage, but the British Air
Force and the British people held on, so Hitler did have to abandon his plans to invade England.
So that was certainly a setback of sorts. But in terms of meeting on the battlefield and losing
territory, that had not yet happened to Germany. But by the summer of 1941, Hitler was ready to take his biggest roll of the dice in what would turn out to be his gravest error. Hitler's primary antagonism was not directed at the democracies of the world. It was not directed at Western Europe. It was directed at the communist Soviet Union, and the vast expanses of the Soviet Union he had in mind for the German people to be able to expand and colonize. The term in German was "lebensraum" or "living space." What Hitler really loved about Eastern Europe, the eastern half of the Soviet Union, was the potential for the German people to be able to expand and develop Hitler's master race in the bizarre way that he defined it. And he looked at the Soviet Union and he saw plenty of individuals who he considered to be of a lower racial quality. Hitler really saw all of human history as a function of conflict between races. He had his own rather strange definition of an Aryan race at the top and various other groups working their way towards the bottom. And although Jews were not their own distinct racial category in reality, Hitler defined them that way. Jews were at the very bottom of this hierarchy, and certainly Slavic peoples that you find in Eastern Europe weren't too far above it. So what Hitler had in mind was conquering vast swathes of territory in eastern Europe, either exterminating or enslaving all of what he would have called the "untermensch," those "lesser peoples" living in those areas, and meanwhile the Germanic peoples move in with a privileged status call, colonize those areas, and fulfill his ultimate vision of a new world order. So Hitler has in mind that he wants to invade the Soviet Union and he plans to attack them along a massive battlefront that would include several of Germany's junior partners in Eastern Europe. What he had in mind, what was dubbed Operation Barbarossa, would be the largest single military campaign in world history; in terms of the total number of troops involved, the single largest campaign in world military history. Now, to the extent that his generals could be candid with him, they tried to warn him that this was a pretty bad idea because Germany was potentially biting off more than it could chew. The Soviet Union was a huge area known for its very severe winters, you know, there was a shorter season to be able to attack before the rain set in and eventually, you know, frigid weather. So -- and of course, his generals knew their military history. Napoleon Bonaparte by 1812 into 1813 dominated much of continental Europe just as Hitler now did, and Napoleon had invaded the old Russian Empire with an army of more than 500,000 men. He came back with about 40,000. His invasion of Russia is really what broke his empire and led to his first exile. And of course, I mean, Hitler was, in general, aware of this too, but Hitler's arrogance and his fixation upon accomplishing all of his goals in his lifetime dictated that this had to be done, and therefore in June of 1941, the Germans launched this massive attack and for the first few months it was very successful. The Soviet Union lost about three million of its people, the Germans did conquer a sizable portion of territory in the western Soviet Union. But by December of 1941, a particularly severe Russian winter set in, and the Germans did not deliver that knockout blow that was so important to their success. They actually got to within about seven miles of the Soviet capital of Moscow and couldn't finish the job. Their offensive ground to a halt in a severe Russian winter, the Germans had been so arrogant that they hadn't really planned still, you know, fighting at this late in the year. Many soldiers didn't have a proper winter uniform. Their vehicles didn't have, you know, antifreeze to be able to survive low temperatures. Frostbite was rampant among German soldiers. And although the following year the Germans did make some gains in the southern Soviet Union, really by December of 1941 most of the Nazi initiative for success in Europe had come to an end. To some extent you could really see the handwriting on the wall in December 1941: Because the Germans did not deliver that knockout blow against the Soviet
Union, this war was not going to end quickly for them. And of course, what also happens in December of 1941 is that the United States enters the war. And because Germany will declare war on America, America now has every excuse to declare war on Germany and bring U.S. forces into the European fight, and this is ultimately going to spell the end for Germany. But, again, just keep in mind, in these early years, late ’39 to late 1941, a very desperate time for the forces of freedom, and also, frankly, for the forces of Communism because of the initial success against the Soviet Union. But that tide is going to be turned here and that will be covered in some successive slides.

**Slide 19**

**Text: Pearl Harbor Attack – 12/7/41**

[Photo of bombed ship in Pearl Harbor]

**Audio:** If you’ve watched the classic movie “Animal House,” you might recall that at one point that John Belushi tries to rally the spirits of his fraternity brothers by saying, “Remember when the Germans bombed Pearl Harbor.” Of course, I think virtually all of you know that it was not the Germans who bombed Pearl Harbor. It was the Japanese. In all seriousness, this was one of those moments where every American who was more than an infant or a toddler at that time probably remembers getting that news and knows where they were when they learned about this attack on December 7, 1941. It had been a sleepy Sunday morning at the headquarters of the U.S. Pacific fleet in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, but everything changed at about 7:30 that morning. Let me set the stage before I get into the attack itself.

As I said, the Japanese, while pretending to negotiate in good faith, were actually preparing to move a carrier strike force more than 3,000 miles across the Pacific Ocean to hit the United States where it was least expected. The U.S. planners generally thought that if war was going to break out with Japan, they’d hit our colony on the Philippine Islands. They’d hit Wake Island, where we also had facilities much closer to Japan. They’d hit those kinds of locations. They’d never be able to get undetected all the way to Pearl Harbor. In fact, we even had radar station set up on the Hawaiian Islands, but on the day the attack came, but the operators, when they saw the blips on the radar screen, assumed that they must be U.S. bombers out on training missions. There just was not a vigilant mentality in place. U.S. intelligence, although it had certainly picked up indications that the Japanese were becoming more aggressive, it really didn’t put together the whole picture until it was too late. In one of the ultimate ironies of the Pearl Harbor attack, U.S. cryptographers in Washington D.C. had gradually gleaned onto the fact that the Japanese were going to attack Pearl Harbor but because of bad atmospheric conditions, they couldn’t send a radio message to Hawaii to warn them. Instead they had to use a Western Union wire service. The Western Union deliveryman, with this very important message, had basically made it to the naval base when the attack began. He actually had to dive out of his vehicle because Japanese planes were strafing the area. He’s carrying in his satchel the news that, had it arrived a little bit sooner, it might have allowed the base to be on a little higher alert and the attack to be much less successful. So the Japanese swept in with air raids from their carriers that sunk or damaged 10 major U.S. warships in Pearl Harbor, including sinking a number of battleships, including the *USS Arizona*, which today is a very sacred memorial to all those who
died at Pearl Harbor. There were a very sizable portion of the Arizona’s crew died when that ship went down very quickly and a fair number of them were entombed in the hull of that ship. It now lies just below the water level. To this day, any naval vessel that passes the Arizona has to render honors to it to commemorate what happened here. Almost 3,000 Americans lost their lives in the Pearl Harbor attack, but I would like to emphasize that, as devastating as it was, it really did not accomplish the goals the Japanese had in mind. The commander of the Japanese fleet who had been the architect of this attack, an admiral named Isoroku Yamamoto, who had actually spent some time in America as a younger officer, serving as a naval attaché. He was actually one of the few senior Japanese officers who really knew something about what made the American people tick and how this country works. He was very appreciative of the fact that this country had so much industrial might that if America got into a protracted war with Japan that would really allow our industries to keep churning out tanks, planes and warships, etc., that there was no way the Japanese were going to be able to win this fight. What he had been trying to design a knockout blow. He figured if he could sink U.S. aircraft carriers, because the carrier now is the really face of modern naval warfare. It’s not the battleship. Back in the days of World War I, fleets were still centered around the battleship. But now the aircraft carrier, with its ability to project power through its planes, the aircraft carrier was the key weapons platform in the navies of the 1940’s. The idea was if he could sink America’s carriers at Pearl Harbor, the United States would have to push its defensive perimeter all the way back to the west coast of the United States and it would have to rebuild the most important part of its fleet and that would take time. He was hoping that if this attack was so devastating and so demoralizing, that the American people would not have the stomach to go to war with Japan. That what they would rather do is make a quick peace on Japan’s terms, agree to back out of East Asia and let the Japanese have it as their own sphere of influence. And that would be it. Game over. The Japanese empire could get on with its business. That was his plan. The problem was, U.S. aircraft carriers happened to not be in port on that fateful day, December 7th. Japanese planes didn’t stick around long enough to destroy all of the aviation fuel stores to supply the planes flying off the carriers. In other words, again I am not trying to minimize the devastation of almost 3,000 Americans losing their lives and a number of warships being destroyed, but America’s ability to retaliate was still pretty much intact after Pearl Harbor. All the attack really did was galvanize the American people, who by and large still had isolationist sentiments before Pearl Harbor. The general feeling was “let’s stay out of the rest of the world’s problems. They’re not ours.” There was a great deal of lingering dissatisfaction with why we had gotten involved in World War I. So, for the most part, Americans were in no hurry to get into this fight, either in Europe or in Asia. But Pearl Harbor changed everything. When FDR asked Congress to declare war on Japan, he had no problem with Congress. He had no problem with the American people. Then, because Germany was a partner with Japan, when Hitler declared war on America, the United States then entered into the European conflict as well. While Pearl Harbor was certainly a 9/11 kind of moment for that Greatest Generation or that World War II generation, I just want you to keep in mind that, at least at the highest levels of the Japanese military – look at someone like an Admiral Yamamoto, he recognized that all he really had done was to awaken a sleeping bear and it was now going to be very difficult for the Japanese to win this war.

Slide 20
Text: Allied “Big Three” Leaders

[Photo of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, President Franklin Roosevelt, and the leader of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin]

Audio: Once the United States entered into the war, the effort to defeat fascism is now going to be directed by three leaders who made for a very uneasy and unusual partnership. They were referred to as the big three and they're shown here at this diplomatic conference. In the center, of course, is President Franklin Roosevelt. To his right or your left as you look at the slide was British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and then on the opposite side was the leader of the Soviet Union, the communist, Joseph Stalin. Let me just say a few things about Churchill and Stalin. You already do have some background on FDR. Winston Churchill was to some extent, a 19th Century British Imperialist trapped now in the middle of the 20th Century. He was a man who was a firm believer in maintaining if not expanding the British Empire. He had no use for the growing call for European powers and for the United States to try to relinquish their colonies. He was a man who had written some excellent works of history. I mean he was a very learned man. His mother was American so he did feel a certain kinship with the U.S. people. He was an alcoholic; I mean practically swimming, you know, in liquor every day. But he was in the process of being absolutely, back to my favorite word, indefatigable in rallying the British people during their war with Germany. I mean because when -- back before America got into the war when British cities were being routinely bombed by the German Air Force, you know, Winston Churchill would tour the rubble and rally people's spirits, and talk about never giving up. He was a very tough man, but he had his differences with both of these other leaders. Now the differences with Stalin probably aren't too surprising. Churchill was a major anticommunist. He was very concerned about the spread of that ideology, so naturally he would be leery of a partnership with Stalin. But Churchill also had some differences with FDR even though the two men felt a very personal warmth towards each other and they cooperated on so many levels. But here's the thing; Churchill, like plenty of other British leaders, recognized that by virtue of coming into this war and building up its military, the United States was naturally going to be replacing Britain as the world's supreme power. There was a passing of the torch that was taking place here whether the British liked it or not. And of course, Churchill was reluctant to see that take place. So one scholar has called it a relationship of competitive cooperation between Britain and America and competitive cooperation is essentially an oxymoron. I mean, they're two terms that don't really fit. But what I'm trying to get at is even while they were putting together operations to defeat fascism, British and U.S. leaders were sort of jockeying for position to see what the post-war world would look like because the British, to some extent, were trying to hang onto their empire. They were trying to choose military operations that protected their empire more than defeated the Germans quickly. Now for example, to get back to the geography of the war, while American planners generally liked operations that struck at the heartland of Germany and aimed at knocking Germany as quickly out of the war as possible, the British were often interested in more peripheral operations because they were located in areas of British colonies that would defend British Imperial interests. So this Anglo-American partnership as much as of course it would be crucial in defeating Germany, it was behind closed doors, one that was also fraught with tension. And then we bring Stalin into the mix. Now here's Joseph Stalin, a classically paranoid individual. He had already seen to it that thousands of dedicated
communists, including some of his best military officers, had been imprisoned and killed because he didn't trust them. Stalin, who was responsible for more deaths among his own people in the vast Soviet Union than Hitler had killed through the Holocaust. I'll say that again. Stalin was actually responsible for more deaths among his own people through implementing his policies and cracking down on political opposition than Hitler was responsible for deaths through the genocide that we call the Holocaust. Now again, don't get me wrong, I am not in any way trying to minimize the Holocaust. But just to put things in a -- you know, put a sense of scale on things, Stalin had more blood on his hands even by the time that the Pearl Harbor attack had taken place. But this is another situation of the enemy of my enemy is my friend. The Soviet Union is on a massive battle front against Germany, so if the Soviets can be weakening Germany on one side of Europe and the United States and Britain can be blooding the Germans elsewhere, then obviously it makes sense for these three countries to have some kind of a partnership. Now, FDR being the master politician, he probably dealt with Stalin about as well as any western leader possibly could. Churchill made some progress, but the relationship between Churchill and Stalin was a bit frostier. But this big three of allied leaders would do much to shape the overall policy of how these three countries defeated fascism.

**Slide 21**

**Text:** Race War vs. Conflict of Ideologies

[Anti-Japanese propaganda cartoon]

**Audio:** As I prepare to talk about the particulars of the US war effort, I would like you to appreciate that if you were a U.S. citizen, you know, paying attention to current events and especially if you happen to be serving in the U.S. military, the war in Europe against Germany versus the war in Asia against Japan, they were defined very differently for the American people. And the propaganda cartoon that you see here on the slide says a great deal about the war against Japan. What I would like to argue to you is that the war in the Pacific was defined really on both sides. I mean the Japanese did the same thing, was defined as a race war. And so the kind of images that would be associated with the war effort, I mean, here you see this lurking menacing Japanese soldier. He's got the exaggerated slanty eyes and the rather evil looking mustache. His face is actually styled after the Japanese Prime Minister Hideki Tojo who was one of the radicals who had really pushed for war in the first place. But he's carrying a pistol. He's carrying a naked white woman. In fact, she couldn't be any whiter and this is really tapping into America's hierarchy of race, the way that whiteness is viewed versus the other races and ethnicities. In the background, you can see individuals being tortured and killed. And here, the message is this is your enemy. And what I'm trying to get at here and I hope it's not too obvious, is that when you define your enemy in racial terms and you use various racial metaphors to suggest that your enemy is subhuman because of his racial composition, then the implicit message that you're really sending to the American people is that no tactic is off the table. I mean anything you need to do to defeat this enemy is acceptable because they don't deserve human consideration. They have forfeited that right. And don't get me wrong, I mean Japanese treatment of conquered peoples was terrible and ill will toward Japan continues to this day because of Japanese occupation policies. You know, you look at how the Koreans, the Filipinos, the Chinese all continue to react to Japan. I mean it's still -- the Vietnamese, as well. I mean it's still not a great
situation. And one statistic that I'll share with you, if you were a western soldier who was captured by the Japanese so whether you were American, British, Australian, you were a New Zealander, about one-third of your ranks would not survive the prison camp experience with the Japanese. You know, only about two-thirds of those soldiers who went into Japanese custody survived the experience because you were kept on starvation rations; the discipline was terrible; the overall living conditions were deplorable. The Japanese were notorious for that. So on the one hand I certainly grant you Japanese behavior was barbaric, but at the same time do you really need to go this far to motivate your public to fight the Japanese? You know, what you're doing, of course, is you're encouraging your own soldiers to get down in the gutter with the Japanese when you have messages like this. And so I should mention that it was a practice in the Pacific War for U.S. soldiers to bring back hollowed out Japanese skulls as souvenirs from combat. And as this story first began to get out in the press, I mean you didn't hear a great deal of outrage over it. So I'm not trying to suggest that you fight a war with one hand tied behind your back, but I would question the absolute necessity of having to define a conflict in this way. Now meanwhile, [background noise] if you looked at the war in Europe for America, I would suggest to you that that was defined very differently. Now sure, I mean up to a point, there were some stereotypes that were made about the German people and certainly, you'd find some epithets hurled, you know, referring to German by the, you know, as Huns referring to barbarian tribes that at one point had lived in that land. But for the most part, the war against Germany was defined as a war against ideas, as a war against National Socialism as an ideology. You know, the idea being that there's just this small group of Nazis who have sort of hijacked a nation. They've hijacked an otherwise pretty decent German people. So if we, you know, can just discredit those ideas and defeat that political movement, that's all it's going to take. Now obviously everybody knows, I mean, you're going to have to kill Germans to do it, but I would suggest to you that there were some very different intensity attached to the European war by U.S. propaganda because again, it was defined merely as a war against ideas rather than as a race war. And so that sends a different message to the soldiers who are going to participate in this conflict.

Slide 22

Text: U.S. War Effort in Europe

[Map of major battles of World War II]

Audio: I'm now going to stick with the war in Europe until its conclusion so hopefully it will be a little easier to focus. And I know this map is blurry in some places but I'm going to try to hit the major details for you and keep the scenario together. The area outlined in yellow here shows the height of Nazi power. By the spring and summer of 1942, as you can see, much of continental Europe lay in Germany's hands. I've already mentioned lands that were conquered by Germany. The Germans had made significant inroads into the Soviet Union although again they did not deliver the knockout blow. The Germans and Italians also had territory conquered in North Africa and it is at this point that the tide of the war, it's going to begin to turn. So what I'm going to do for a little bit here is talk about the major military operations in which America participated and how as a result, Nazi power was gradually pushed back. In late 1942, US troops in large numbers reached the European theater for the first time by landing in North Africa, alongside their British counterparts. And so from Northwest Africa, US and British forces began
to drive the Germans back while meanwhile, the British won a victory in Egypt at El Alamein, down here in the southeastern corner of your map, that prevented the Germans from breaking into the Middle East oil fields, which would have denied the British much of their oil supplies and really changed the entire nature of the war. And as a result, as the conflict moved into early 1943, the German and Italian position in North Africa is gradually extinguished and so the North African campaign comes to an end in 1943. And at least the Germans are kicked off of that continent. As 1943 continues, US and British forces land first on the island of Sicily, as a way to combat both the Germans and the Italians and then as that year continues, they land in various spots on the southern mainland of Italy, which ultimately destabilizes Italy to the point where Benito Mussolini is removed from power and Italy tries to drop out of the war, and actually switch over to the Allies. Unfortunately for them, the Germans decide to continue to occupy the country and force the Allies to slug their way up the Italian boot, if you will, and this is very mountainous country. It's very ideally suited for defensive operations so there will be an Italian theater in World War 2 that will continue to see quite a bit of fighting right up to the end, and it will be pretty slow going for Allied forces. They do capture Rome in June of 1944 and will continue to move northward. But the Allies don't really get rapid movement and rapid progress in the Italian theater. And I bring this up because this helps to really dictate the need for the Allies to open up another front against Germany. And it's really going to be the western Allies who have to do this because of course, the Soviet Union is still tied down on a massive battlefront here in the east. So we've got an Italian front, we've got an eastern front, and there now needs to be another one created if Germany is going to be defeated very soon. And this leads to one of the great guessing games in world military history. The Germans know that England and America are planning a major amphibious landing somewhere in Western Europe. And theoretically, it could be as far north as the coast of Norway, here in Scandinavia, it could be as far south as where France meets Spain. It could be anywhere in between. And so what Hitler has been doing ever since he conquered Western Europe has been building what he called his "Atlantic Wall." He was putting slave labor and other forms of forced labor into a massive construction effort to try to put in huge gun emplacements, concrete bunkers, tank traps and all kinds of other defensive measures that would defeat any invading force. And of course, the Germans were working at a furious pace but they had a tremendous coastline to cover. I mean, you could make certain judgments as to where the most likely spots for invasion were, but it was still to a large extent a major guessing game and the Germans were stretched very thin by all the conquering that they had done here, in Europe. So the Germans were trying to figure out where is this attack going to take place? Now we're going to get back to that in a moment, but what the Allies are going to succeed in doing is actually pulling off one of the greatest forms of deception since the Trojan horse. And of course, the Trojan horse, in the war between Greece and Troy, that's just a legend. I mean, well, I'll put it this way. There was a war between Greece and Troy. Whether there was really a Trojan horse involved is an entirely different story. That cannot be proven by any means. So I'm being somewhat tongue in cheek, when I say "The greatest act of deception since the Trojan horse." But if necessary, please refer back to this map as I continue to talk about events in Europe.

**Slide 23**

**Text:** Dwight Eisenhower
Audio: By 1944, there were several hundred thousand U.S., Canadian, and British troops gathering in southern England with a massive amount of material to prepare for this invasion of Western Europe. But again, the big question is where will it be? The officer who was put in charge of this operation. It was called Operation Overlord, was a U.S. general and future President by the name of Dwight Eisenhower. And, as a matter of fact. Eisenhower's single greatest claim to fame for eventually becoming President is that this attack that he's planning is going to be an incredible success. But as this operation was in its planning stages. Eisenhower recognized that the only way that he was going to be able to make this work was if the politicians stayed out of it. He never wanted political considerations to get in the way of military necessity and reality. So he told both President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill. That the only way that he was going accept this assignment to be responsible for this massive invasion of western Europe was if both of those political leaders agreed to give him supreme authority over the entire endeavor. And they did agree to do so. And Eisenhower proceeded to put together an excellent plan. Now, this photograph is from the eve of the invasion. Eisenhower was meeting with some U.S. paratroopers or airborne troops who were going to be really the tip of the spear in this operation. They're going to drop in to occupied territory hours ahead of the main landing force. In order to cut communication lines. Capture some key positions. And basically, create as much chaos as possible for the Germans. Needless to say, being a paratrooper was one of the most dangerous military assignments that you could undertake in World War II. And I believe, let's see. I think this is the 101st Airborne that Eisenhower's talking to here. The U.S. 82nd Airborne and the British 6th Airborne were also part of this operation.

Slide 24

Text: Invasion of Normandy

Audio: So I'm going to use a smaller map now to get into detail about this invasion. What you see here is the English Channel and the southern coastline of England, most of the northern coastline of France. Logical thinkers, and the Germans did tend to be very logical, expected that the likely place for this major Allied attack was going to be where the distance between England and France was the shortest. After all, the English Channel, even in the summertime, was a very difficult area to traverse with war ships and smaller vessels. They were very high seas, they were treacherous tides in places, violent weather could sweep through very quickly. So it did make sense that, you know, as they say, "the shortest distance between two points is a straight line." And if you look at this map, you'll see that over in the upper right hand corner, the narrowest area between England and France was the Strait of Dover, where the French region of Calais was located. And so, the Germans did have some logical reason to believe that that would be the most likely place for the Allied attack. And the Allies decided to feed into that logic, by creating the impression that that was exactly where we'd come, when in reality, they had something different in mind. So what the Allies did over here in southeastern England, was they actually built a dummy or fictitious army. And they even used Hollywood set designers to do it. You know, knowing that there were some German spies in the countryside who would be trying to gather
intelligence on Allied intentions, what they basically did was they built papier-mâché tanks and planes. They had small numbers of men drive around in jeeps all day, generating all of this radio traffic, as though they were part of a huge force, when actually, they were just a skeleton, creating a deception. And so they did all of this so that the Germans would expect that the main thrust of this Allied attack was going to come across from Dover into the Calais region. But to really make this deception work, the Allies had to put their most feared commander in charge of this fictitious army, and that was a man by the name of George Patton, a very effective, but also very controversial US officer. He had fought in both North Africa and Sicily, eventually commanding a US army, but the problem was, while Patton was incredibly aggressive on the battlefield, got the sort of results you wanted, struck terror into the hearts of the Germans, he was not what we would today call a very "politically correct" individual, and there were several incidents where he had been touring US military hospitals and had come across soldiers who were not suffering from physical wounds. You know, their bodies had not been ripped apart by shrapnel, but they were instead suffering from what sometimes is called "shell shock" or "battle fatigue." Today, we might use a term like "post traumatic stress syndrome," a situation where, you know, something neurological has happened to you, and you're having difficulty kind of coping and re-acclimating, but to look at you, there would not be obvious, physical manifestations. But your spirit, your will, they're broken. You're demoralized and so some of these soldiers were in US military hospitals, around men whose bodies had been blown apart. And when George Patton was coming through, he felt like if you were suffering from shell shock, all you really were was just a coward. And he became enraged at the sight of these soldiers. He yelled at them, he slapped at least one of them on the helmet and when word got back to Dwight Eisenhower about this, he basically put Patton in the doghouse. Patton was brought back to England from Sicily and it wasn't clear that he was ever going to get a field command again, that he might have to sit on the sidelines for the remainder of the war. And Patton, of course, was chafing to get back into the fight. Well, what Eisenhower decided to do was to find one way to make use of Patton's fearful reputation with the Germans because frankly, in the German army, if a general or field marshal wanted to slap a soldier around a little bit, that wasn't really going to get you in trouble, in the German army. So the Germans could have cared less about these controversies. So what Eisenhower did was to put Patton in command of this fictitious army. And so for the Germans, that really reinforced their suspicions that the attack was going to come over here in the Dover/Calais region. Meanwhile, the real attack was planned for the Normandy region of France, which is down here where you see all these arrows pointing. Five invasion beaches had been selected and you can see that two of them on the western side were designated for US troops and then the British and the Canadians had the rest. This is where the real attack was going to come. The problem is, in order to keep the deception going, the Allies couldn't run too many bombing raids in the Normandy area because that would heighten German suspicions. So they did most of their bombing up in Calais and just enough in Normandy so that it looked like they were kind of covering all of their bases. The Germans meanwhile, were preparing ferocious defenses and yes, they did put more emphasis into their defenses up here in Calais, but Normandy was hardly undefended. The Germans had, for example, massive steel obstacles that could prevent tanks from coming ashore. They had the beaches set up in a way where machine gun nests in mortar positions had overlapping fields of fire, with pre-sighted target zones. So that soldiers landing on those beaches were in some cases, in a real death trap. The Germans had massive concrete bunkers with gun emplacements that
could destroy Allied warships and landing craft and protect German soldiers from Allied attack. Now again, the Germans are stretched fairly thin, so if the Allies can get a breakthrough point somewhere on this coastline, they're ultimately going to be successful. But the question was, how many casualties would the Allies have to take to get that breakthrough point? Well what ends up happening is that on June 6, 1944, dubbed "D-Day," almost 300,000 Allied airmen, sailors, paratroopers and ground troops would make this assault. War ships would come across the English Channel; landing craft would disembark from the larger war ships and bring these troops in. Meanwhile, in the wee hours of the morning of June 6th, more than 6,000 paratroopers dropped behind German lines to try to achieve those objectives I mentioned a moment ago and make things a little bit easier for the ground troops coming in. Now, as it turns out, the worst fighting of D-Day, by far, took place at one of the US beaches, mainly Omaha. Of the 2,500 Allied soldiers who died on June 6th, 1,000 of them alone, roughly 1,000 of them died at Omaha beach. It just so happens that the Germans had recently moved a crack unit into that area. Allied intelligence didn't find out about it until too late. So while things went relatively well at the other beaches, Omaha was truly a blood bath. And for those of you who have seen the movie "Saving Private Ryan," it opens with a very realistic scene of what the first wave of that invasion was like. And it really was touch and go there for a while. But I also have to say that as bad as it was, to lose 2,500 fighting men in this invasion, it easily could have been much worse. Realistically, Allied planners were expecting far heavier casualties. Things actually went very well. And Dwight Eisenhower, as the commanding officer, had been prepared to take full responsibility if this thing went south. As a matter of fact, he prepared a statement that would be publicized to the world, in which, had things gone badly, he would have accepted full responsibility and presumably would have stepped down from his post. However, he never had to issue that message because things did go relatively well. So the bottom line is, the invasion of Normandy becomes that final nail in the coffin of Nazi Germany. Once the western allies established that beachhead, and for the first couple weeks, they have a little trouble breaking out, but once that beachhead is established, it's now the beginning of the end for Nazi Germany. The Allies are going to be able to retake France and to begin to move towards the heartland of Germany itself. So the invasion of Normandy was the largest single amphibious operation in the military history of the world. Bigger than anything else and it was also, an intelligence masterpiece because with the deception that I described earlier, even when the Germans began to get reports that Allied troops were landing at Normandy, many German officers still thought, "That's just a diversion. The real attack is coming at Calais," so the Germans hesitated to act decisively against the Normandy operation because they still thought it was just part of something broader. And so US intelligence, US deception and I should say Allied deception and intelligence, they were huge factors in the ultimate success of this attack.

Slide 25

Text: Collapse of Nazi Germany

[Photo of a besieged Berlin]

Audio: To continue the war in Europe, by late 1944, British, American and also free French forces, make a long story short, the French despite being defeated and despite some collaboration with the Germans, there are also French military units who are assisting in the Allied war effort.
So basically, by late 1944, US, British, I should say Canadian and French forces were all basically on the outskirts of western Germany. Meanwhile, the Soviets are gradually closing in from the east. The last major military operation in which US soldiers were involved was something that's called "The Battle of the Bulge." And it is shown on the map of Europe; that's several slides back here. Basically Hitler took one last roll of the dice in December of 1944. Recognizing that the western allies were no fans of Soviet Communism, he came up with this desperate plan that he hoped could split off the western allies from the Soviet Union. What he did was to quietly move much of his armor from the eastern front, against the Soviets, over to the western front. And he picked a sector of the western lines that were very quiet, a place where there were US soldiers that were part of understrength units that had taken heavy casualties, units that were trying to recuperate and were not really battle ready. And Hitler decided to launch a surprise attack that would hopefully create a massive breakthrough point at the weakest juncture of the Allied lines. He hoped he could then move forward through that breakthrough point and drive a wedge between US and British forces, and perhaps drive all the way to the Belgian port of Antwerp, which was a major Allied supply center. If he could capture that, he would paralyze Allied supply lines, because they'd now have to move their material across a much greater distance. And he was hoping that the British and the Americans would be so demoralized by the success of this attack that they would decide to make a separate peace with Germany rather than continue the war. That way the Germans could then turn around and concentrate all of their efforts on the Soviet Union. So he was hoping that the degree of anti-Communism in both America and Britain would be enough that combined with some German military success, they would decide to quit the war and make a separate peace. Now, I've already told you, behind the scenes relations between US and Soviet leaders and British and Soviet leaders, those relations weren't great. No question about it, but it was not realistic for Hitler to think that after everything Germany had done in this war, that America and Britain were going to be willing to cut a separate peace and leave the Soviets in the lurch. So Hitler was not engaged in his most effective thinking here. But the Battle of the Bulge was initially very successful. The Germans did achieve the element of surprise. They launched an attack in the middle of the winter, when it was least expected and because of bad weather, although the Allies normally had air superiority, bad weather was grounding their planes. So German tanks were able to cut a pretty significant wedge or bulge into the Allied lines and by the time it was all over, there were about 200,000 US soldiers dead and wounded. So I mean, this was a severe blow to the US military machine. But while the Allied lines bent, they didn't break. General George Patton's third army turned 90 degrees and came up north to assist the beleaguered US forces and ultimately, the Battle of the Bulge was a German defeat. The Germans could not exploit their initial successes and turn it into the kind of grandiose operation that Hitler had in mind. And I want to mention one of the key episodes in the Battle of the Bulge for you to appreciate. One of the key towns that the Germans had to capture because it was a junction of many different roads in the area was the town of Bastogne, and US paratroopers of the 82nd and 101st Airborne divisions had been tasked with defending those towns. In other words, instead of dropping out of planes, they now had to become foot soldiers and defend these positions. And they ended up being surrounded by the Germans. And a German officer was sent in under a white flag of truce to try to negotiate terms of surrender. And the US general who met with this officer, his name was Anthony McAuliffe; he gave the German office a one-word reply to the demand for surrender. That word was "Nuts." Now the German officer was a little confused. He took that message back to his commander. It
took the Germans just a little bit to figure out that they had basically been told that surrender was not an option. And those defenders fought on. They were rescued by Patton's third army, although the way paratroopers like to tell it is that they didn't need rescuing, but one way or another, as I said, this last very bold gamble by Hitler failed. The Battle of the Bulge, while it did prolong the war in the west a bit, and it certainly produced heavy casualties, but the Germans ended up losing valuable forces that they could not spare. And the western allies eventually moved into Germany anyhow. One last feature of the Battle of the Bulge, just to try to make the story more interesting, one way that the Germans tried to destabilize US lines was to drop commandoes behind American lines, but have them dressed as US military police. And these were German operatives who spoke flawless American English. You know, no trace of an accent. And the thing is, the military police would do things like direct traffic, you know, they would perform a lot of functions behind American lines and so if you got German conspirators posing as MP's, you know, they'll do things like turn road signs in the wrong directions so that American units who don't know the area will go off heading in the wrong direction. You know, also you could cut communication lines. You could basically create confusion and initially these German operatives were doing exactly that. So the problem was, once the word got out that the Germans were doing this, you know, when you came across an American soldier who wasn't in your unit, how did you know he was who he really claimed to be? And the way that US soldiers tried to get around this was that they would quiz each other on features of American life. Like, you know, they'd ask questions like, "Who won the last World Series?" or they'd ask questions about Hollywood stars and starlets. And if you didn't give the right answer, you might end up being thrown in the stockade. As a matter of fact, there was at least one US general, a one star general who ended up spending some time imprisoned because he couldn't answer one of these questions correctly. Now gradually, the confusion got sorted out and again, the Germans were defeated, but I just wanted to give you a little more of a flavor for what this operation was like. So by the spring of 1945, the German capital of Berlin is besieged by Soviet forces. Basically, Dwight Eisenhower decided that the Soviets should have the honor of capturing the German capital of Berlin. If the western allies had concentrated on that objective, they probably would have gotten there first. But instead, they went after other targets and it was the Soviets who closed in on Berlin. And this is a famous scene of a Soviet soldier putting his nation's flag atop one of Germany's most important buildings. I think it might even have been the Reichstag, which was the headquarters of the Nazi government. And you can see the city is being just pounded completely into submission. I mean, the fighting was going block to block. It was brutal, and not long after Berlin fell, and the Nazis surrendered, in the spring of 1945. So the war in Europe will come to an end at that point. The war in the Pacific is going to continue on into the late summer of that year, and I'm about to get to that Pacific war. But I'd like to say one more thing about the war in Europe. And it's something that we often forget, as Americans. I'm not trying to minimize US casualties here. I mean, the United States, between dead and wounded lost more than 500,000 servicemen in World War 2, between Europe and Asia or Europe and the Pacific. But I want you to appreciate that the best estimates we have are that the Soviet Union lost more than 20 million of its citizens during World War 2. And in part, this was because the Germans chose to fight a very different against the Soviets than they did against western nations like America and Britain and France. And this again, has much to do with the racial ideology of the Nazis. They did not see fighting America as a race war, or at least not primarily as one. I mean, sure, the fact that America had a sizable Jewish population, I mean, that was something the Nazis
commented on, but when they looked at the Soviet Union, that was really where most of their racial animosity was centered and therefore, Hitler had actually given a standing order that German units that fought against the Soviets shouldn't even take prisoners. Don't even bother taking prisoners. Now this was never 100% enforced, but I'm trying to suggest to you that there was a particular severity to the way that the Germans fought on the eastern front that you don't see in the west. Now yes, there were atrocities in the west, don't get me wrong, but the situation was far more intense in the east. And I'm going to use one statistic to illustrate my point. If you were a US, a French or a British soldier who happened to be captured by the Germans during the war, you had an 81% chance of surviving the prison camp experience. All things considered, that's not too bad. 81%. The best research shows that if you were a Soviet soldier, who was captured by the Germans, and became a prisoner of war, you had only a 53% chance of surviving the prison camp experience. And that number doesn't even count how many surrendering Soviet soldiers who were slaughtered before they even officially became prisoners of war. So I just want to bring this up because it's easy to forget. Shortly after, well frankly, even before World War 2 comes to an end, a new international struggle is already taking shape and that's the Cold War. That is a global struggle between the forces of Communism and capitalism or Communism and democracy, however you want to put it. And Americans are already becoming very leery of the Soviet Union before this war is even over. And so the Soviets are very quickly going to become enemy number one, as we move past the end of World War 2. And so it's easy to forget the sacrifices that the Soviets made in World War 2. The bottom line is, however discredited that Communism is, and however brutal that Josef Stalin was, the Soviet Union bore the brunt of defeating Germany. I mean, that's just the truth. It was on the eastern front, where the Germans took their heaviest losses. That was really the key to their ultimate defeat. So I just want you to have a little bit of a sense of scale when you compare the eastern front to where the other allies fought.

**Slide 26**

**Text:** U.S. War Effort in the Pacific

[Map of World War II Pacific Theater]

**Audio:** Now I turn our attention to the war in the Pacific. By the late spring, early summer of 1942, the Japanese empire had reached the point of its greatest extent. So to use the map -- and again, you're probably going to want to refer back to this a few times while I move on to other slides -- but you can see the pink territory that's been conquered by the Japanese, they've conquered the most valuable portions of China, they control the Korean peninsula, they have French Indo-China, they've captured Burma and Thailand, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, they've captured the Philippine islands which had been a US colony. They surprised the Philippines on December 7th, the same day that Pearl Harbor was hit. They are threatening to conquer all of New Guiney, and these are very heady times for the Japanese. As a matter of fact, scholars have described that the Japanese were suffering from what was called victory disease -- I mean they didn't call it that at the time, that's what scholars have subsequently called it -- that the Japanese had been so incredibly successful that it was building up a feeling of arrogance. And by the late spring, early summer of 1942, the big decision in the Japanese high command was where to concentrate their next operation. And they could basically look at any of the major
axes on a map, and anticipate successful operations. Because the Soviet Union was so heavily tied down and fighting Germany, maybe the Japanese should concentrate with northern thrust, into Siberia, which was rich with all kinds of natural resources that could help the Japanese economy. Again, after all, the Soviets were distracted. So maybe the north was the way to go. The Japanese also might decide to concentrate to the west. The most valuable colony in the British Empire, though it's barely shown here on the map, was India. Now the Japanese were already threatening India, why not concentrate in that direction, you know, plenty of prizes to be had there. Perhaps there's a third alternative, concentrate in the south. Now the Japanese were already threatening to cut off Australia and New Zealand from the rest of the world. They might actually invade at least portions of those territories, and bring them into a larger Japanese empire. But in the end, the decision was made to concentrate in the east, to strike at America once again, to try to do what the Pearl Harbor attack had failed to accomplish, and that was to push America's defensive perimeter back to the west coast of the United States, and possibly demoralize America to the point where this country would leave the war. Now Admiral Yamamoto [phonetic] was realistic. He knew there was no way he was going to get the element of surprise of Pearl Harbor again. But maybe he could get the element of surprise at the Midway islands, shown here on the map, which he basically saw as a stepping stone to get to Pearl Harbor. So what he planned to do was to launch a massive attack to capture the Midway Islands, and then use that as a staging area to soften up, and then hit the Hawaiian Islands themselves. And once he had Hawaii, there are no other islands until you hit the west coast of the United States, so America would be forced back into a very defensive posture. So Yamamoto gathered a huge force to do this, and he put together a very intricate plan. At the end of the day it was probably a bit too intricate, too many moving parts. But among other things, what he planned to do was to launch a diversionary attack against US forces up here in the Aleutian Islands off of Alaska, so that hopefully US carriers in Hawaii would be drawn north. And then he'd hit midway, and once US carriers were turning around and coming back towards midway, the Japanese would destroy them there, and Hawaii would basically be left without serious defenses. Now that was the plan. On paper it looked pretty good, I mean certainly Japanese officers had some concerns about it. But the plan was fatally flawed from the start, for the very important reason that US code breakers, or cryptographers, had succeeded in deciphering a portion of one of Japan's main naval codes. So as the Japanese were communicating about their plans, US officers were picking up enough of the details that ultimately the midway attack was sniffed out. We knew Alaska was a diversion, we knew what was going to happen at midway. So when the Japanese launched this attack, with the assumption that they were going to have the element of surprise, they end up running into a major US force, and a larger force than what they expected, because the Japanese thought they'd knocked out one of our carriers, the Yorktown, in an earlier operation, when they ship had actually limped its way back to Pearl Harbor, and US technicians had done an amazing job of making the carrier battle-ready once again. So when the Japanese thought they were only going to have to face two carriers, they actually had to face three. And the battle of midway, which takes place in June of 1942, really ends up being the turning point of the Pacific War. And I'm just going to switch slides here to continue talking about it.

**Slide 27**

**Text:** Battle of Midway
Audio: To describe the Battle of Midway, first, let me say that using the technology of the 1940s, even when you know that your enemy is about to show up in a general area -- you know, you know they're overall battle plan -- you still don't know precisely where their carriers and other warships are until your search planes find them. So although the United States had evened the odds somewhat by being able to know of this operation ahead of time, that, by no means, guaranteed that the Battle of Midway was going to be a U.S. victory and especially not a big victory. The Japanese had four aircraft carriers with their complement of air squadrons in the vicinity of midway; the U.S. had three carriers. And the Japanese had larger forces in reserve that fortunately never really became a key part of the battle. But anyway, I just want you to appreciate that as this engagement takes place, there was a real element of contingency. And basically what happened is that U.S. forces were able to find the Japanese carriers first. Actually, the first aircraft squadrons that hit those carriers were not successful, but the Japanese commander on the scene, Admiral Nagumo who had led the carriers at Pearl Harbor, was very surprised to see so many U.S. planes attacking his ships, it really suggested that the Japanese did not have the element of surprise that they thought and that there might be more U.S. forces in the area than they'd anticipated. And so he began to vacillate over how to continue the attack -- and I'm trying to spare you a lot of small technical details -- but basically, his vacillation helped to leave Japanese forces in a confused state of readiness, such that you can really say that the entire Pacific War between, you know, 1941 and 1945 was really decided in about 15 to 20 minutes that Battle of Midway. Because while the Japanese were confused and trying to get their bearings, more U.S. planes showed up above their carriers and launched a devastating attack that sank three of those carriers on the spot and left a fourth one so crippled that it ended up being sunk shortly thereafter. So the Japanese lost every aircraft carrier in their major strike force. They also lost about 220 of their pilots, and that was really the most irreplaceable feature of the whole battle because the Japanese did not rotate their pilots back home the way America did to train new pilots. They really kept their best people constantly at sea in these operations, so there was just no replacing that experience that these fallen pilots had developed. Now, the U.S. did lose the USS Yorktown at the Battle of Midway, I mean, it was a significant engagement. But the Japanese casualties were far heavier. The Japanese has to call off the whole operation. It was a severe embarrassment for Admiral Yamamoto, and as I said, it's really the turning point of the entire war because with their four best carriers at the bottom of the Pacific, the Japanese never again have the initiative to launch a major offensive against the U.S., so now it's increasingly going to be America that's dictating the terms of the Pacific War. Now, don't get me wrong, the Japanese still have plenty of fight left and there are going to be many desperate encounters as the United States turns the tide of this war. But, again, in terms of the overall initiative and momentum, it will be in the hands of the United States once this conflict comes to an end. So to summarize a very long and complicated story, following the Battle of Midway, the United States with combined air, naval, and ground operations, gradually tries to capture key positions in the Japanese island chains and gradually move its way towards the homeland of Japan itself. And it takes a while, and U.S. forces, especially Marines, suffer extraordinary casualties taking many of these island strongholds because the Japanese philosophy is to fight to the death, and they use virtually suicidal tactics -- well, in some cases, explicitly suicidal tactics. I know many of you have probably heard the term "kamikaze." This comes about in 1944. By that year the United States
was recapturing the Philippines, for example, and really beginning to close in on Japan itself. And Japanese had suffered such casualties that they come up with the idea of sending in some of their pilots on one-way suicide missions; they basically turn their planes into guided missiles. They only give you enough fuel for a one-way trip; they fortify you with some of their ceremonial wine, called saki, beforehand; you know, you're really given the message that you're bringing honor to your family and your emperor by doing this. And basically you take to the skies and you try to crash your plane into a high-value U.S. target, most preferably an aircraft carrier, but, you know, other large war ships would be valuable as well. This begins in 1944. The U.S. Navy has to adjust to it and there are some heavy casualties in the process. There were a number of ships that were sunk and severely damaged by kamikaze attacks, so this is no small factor in the war, but again, U.S. forces adjust to it and the kamikazes do not end up saving the Japanese war effort. But they also use suicidal tactics with their infantry. I mean, they often charged into strong U.S. positions, again often getting their soldiers a little bit tipsy beforehand so they'd have the stomach to do this, and, you know, most of these attacks were not successful but they sure, you know, inflicted heavy casualties and put the fear of God into U.S. troops that had to face up against this. But U.S. forces do gradually -- one term that was used was called "island hopping," where you pick certain targets, sometimes you capture easier positions so you can bypass and isolate the stronger ones, sometimes you have to hit the stronger ones -- but U.S. forces gradually move their way across the Pacific and close in on the homeland of Japan itself. And what I'm going to do here to give you an example of the war is to turn to one of its most significant land battles, and that would be the taking of the island of Iwo Jima.

Slide 28

Text: Fall of Iwo Jima

[Photo of soldiers raising the U.S. flag at Iwo Jima]

Audio: If you want to go back and check -- check my map of the Pacific for a moment. You'll notice that Iwo Jima was an island reasonably close to Japan itself. And, therefore, it was strategically important to America. Because it needed a location for air bases that would allow U.S. bombers to hit the Japanese home islands. Really bring the war home to the Japanese people. Knockout key targets. And hopefully compel the Japanese to surrender. So although Iwo Jima was pretty desolate place. I mean basically, a volcanic rock. Almost nothing grew there. Very inhospitable. It was very important in the grand scheme of things for World War II. So by February of 1945, the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marines were preparing a massive assault of Iwo Jima. And the Japanese knew it was coming. They had prepared pretty elaborate defenses of their own. What the Japanese generally did was, rather than put their main forces right at the beaches to hit you the moment you come in. Instead, they'd have more of a defense in depth. They'd sort of lay back, wait until many of your troops and supplies were congested in the beach areas. And then they'd hit you. And they would do so with pillboxes that would have, you know, automatic weapons fire coming out of them. They'd have tunnel complexes and other hiding places. So that, as your troops advanced in, Japanese soldiers might suddenly spring up behind you. Of course, they had artillery set up in certain locations. And this postage stamp of an island. It was only about eight square miles. It ends up taking 72 days to capture it. And the casualties in the process were extraordinary. 6,000 Marines died taking Iwo Jima. Another 19,000 of them
were injured. And about 22,000 Japanese died defending it. And there were almost no prisoners taken. And this was not uncommon. Again, the Japanese were not big on surrendering. If you did get prisoners, it was usually because they were too wounded or somehow disoriented. You know, to be able to continue resisting. And the -- one of the centerpieces of the battle for Iwo Jima was the taking of Mount Suribachi. Which was the highest point on the island. And the photograph that you see here is one of the most iconic images from World War II. It shows U.S. Marines hoisting the U.S. flag above Mount Suribachi. And once the warships in the harbor and the troops down on the beaches saw this flag going up. You know, ships were sounding their whistles and horns. And people were cheering. It was a real sign even though, by the way, there was plenty of fighting left to take Iwo Jima. But it was a real sign that -- that America was winning this fight. I should mention, because it has something to do with how we remember our history. That the scene that you see here in the photograph. And by the way, the U.S. Marine Corp memorial in Washington D.C. also has a concrete recreation of this scene. This scene itself was actually a restaging of the raising of the flag at Iwo Jima. A bit earlier, a much smaller flag had been raised by Marines who got to the top of Mount Suribachi. But it was decided, because it would make for a little better press, to go back with a somewhat different group of soldiers with a larger flag. And recreate the thing once again. So this is not the original photo that you see. But instead, the recreation of it. And some of the soldiers that were part of the original flag going up ended up being killed in battle. And so there ended up being some concern that they had to be remembered for the fact that they were part of the original crew that did this. But one way or another, Iwo Jima was very typical of the intensity which with the Pacific War was fought. And you might notice on your map. There was another island, Okinawa. Which also was captured to be used as an air base for hitting Japan. And again, another case of prolonged bloody fighting in order to win this fight. So I just want to you appreciate the intensity with which the Pacific War was fought.

**Slide 29**

**Text:** Use of Atomic Bomb

[Photo of A-bomb detonation cloud]

**Audio:** Once US ground-based bombers can reach Japan, the war is brought home to the Japanese people in a most vivid way. And a number of their major cities including Tokyo were firebombed using Napalm, which is jellied gasoline. It's an explosive that's designed to set other fires. And the Japanese were taking heavy casualties from these attacks. But it was still was very unclear that they were going to surrender any time soon, even though the war was obviously going badly for them. And as we get into the summer of 1945, US planners were compelled to begin, you know, drawing up an operation to invade Japan itself. And the estimates were running as high as perhaps as 500,000 US soldiers would die, taking the Japanese islands. After all, the Japanese did -- clearly indicated that they were willing to fight to the death; that they were willing to make you pay for every acre that you took from them. And so there was a concern that the war needed to be brought to an end more rapidly, while avoiding the massive casualties incurred by invading Japan itself. And meanwhile there had been progress made at test facilities in New Mexico through what was called the Manhattan Project, which had been a top secret operation, with much of the initial research taking place at a number of US universities across
the country. The Manhattan Project had basically figured out how to split the atom and create an atomic bomb as an incredible detonation of energy, as the kind of super weapon. A weapon of mass destruction, to use a more modern term now, that might be able to revolutionize the entire face of warfare. In July of 1945, there was the first successful test of an atomic bomb. It took place in New Mexico. There was a ground level detonation that -- and by the way, please keep in mind, Franklin Roosevelt actually died back in the spring of 1945 before the war in Europe had even come to an end. So although he had done much to set the Manhattan Project in motion and pave the way for the bomb to be used, it's not ultimately going to be his decision. Instead, his vice president, Harry Truman, who had not been a key player in the administration. In fact, he hadn't even been part of the administration until he ran with FDR in 1944 as his running mate to be his vice president. But it will be Harry Truman who takes over as president, and this decision is going to come to his desk. And once he knows that the US has pretty well mastered the technology, he will then give the go-ahead in August of 1945 for the atomic bomb to be dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. There were several cities that were on the short list to get the A-bomb attack. Some of the considerations were weather conditions and how much military value the target had. Hiroshima did have some military facilities but it was also a major population center. I mean, let's be blunt about that. And in August of 1945, the A-bomb was dropped by a plane nicknamed the Enola Gay. And then between two and three days later, a second atomic bomb was dropped on the Japanese city of Nagasaki. As far as we can tell between the two attacks, roughly 200,000 Japanese died. If you were lucky, you died very quickly by being vaporized. If you were unlucky, you lingered on for a while suffering from fatal radiation sickness, and it was a much more painful way to go. But obviously, the world was never the same again, once these weapons were used. And the Japanese did surrender not long after the bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. Now because I've already gone way over my time limit, I'm going to be quick about this. There continues to be some debate to this day over how much the use of the A-bomb was about bringing the war to an end quickly versus how much of it was about signaling the Soviet Union that America had a monopoly on this technology and we weren't afraid to use it. In another words, some historians argue that the use of the A-bomb had either more to do or a lot to do with the Cold War that was emerging rather than with World War Two. And I really don't want to get into all of that right now. Certainly, the official position of the White House was that the bomb was used to save American lives. And even in the long run, I suppose you could argue to save Japanese lives, since an American invasion probably would have ended up killing more Japanese than the A-bomb's did. But one way or another, the Japanese did agree to surrender not long after the atomic bombs were used.

**Slide 30**

**Text:** Surrender of Japan

[Photo of Japanese surrender upon the USS Missouri]

**Audio:** In a final irony, the Japanese surrender took place in the same spot where America had initially collided with Japan back in the 1850s by forcing it to open up to the rest of the world. Shown here is a portion of the battleship USS Missouri, that came into Tokyo Bay as part of a naval flotilla. And here is where US, British, Japanese dignitaries, and a number of others were present for the Japanese to unconditionally surrender, and bring the Pacific War to an end. And
shown behind the microphones there, towards the front of that assemblage, is General Douglas Macarthur. I mentioned him from the bonus army incident. He had been the commander of US and Filipino forces on the Philippine islands when the war broke out, so he had to suffer through the embarrassment of being defeated there, but he also had the honer of being able to lead ally forces that then retook the Philippines. So the Japanese surrender, their emperor had to make a radio address to the nation, admitting that he was not divine. The United States proceeded to occupy Japan, as allies were also doing with Germany, and in many ways to try to bring about certain political, economic, and social reforms. Some would argue they did a little bit too good of a job, because by the 1980s, Japan and western Germany had two of the most competitive economies in the world. But in any case, here, the war in the Pacific officially comes to an end, and the focus of international politics will increasingly move towards this emerging Cold War.

**Slide 31**

**Text:** Homefront

[Poster of Rosie the Riveter]

**Audio:** Due to constraints of time, I'm going to gloss over the home front of World War II in an embarrassingly brief way. But I want to emphasize that American women were a huge part of the war effort. On the one hand, by serving in U.S. military auxiliary units, such that women were actually, you know, wearing the uniform and contributing quite directly to the war effort; but also by taking plenty of industrial jobs, providing the sort of equipment that U.S. soldiers needed to do their job on the battlefronts. And the poster that you see here is very important. The U.S. government embarked upon, you could call it a motivational campaign. If you a little bit more cynical, you might call it a propaganda campaign, to encourage women to join the industrial work force. This at a time when traditionally women had not been encouraged to do things like this. And one of the central motifs of this propaganda campaign was Rosie the Riveter. A riveter is basically somebody who, you know -- a rivet is something that holds together -- helps to hold together airplanes, tanks, ships, and so forth. So I mean, you're basically an ironworker or a steelworker. This is my very nontechnical description here. But a riveter is an important industrial worker in a war effort. And so Rosie the Riveter -- you would see many depictions of her like one here -- is used to encourage American women to get into what was seen as a very unfeminine line of work. But, of course, she's, you know, flexing her biceps here showing that she's tough enough to get it done. And women really did pitch in in this regard, you know, working long shifts and discovering that they were making, in many cases, better money than they ever had before and feeling very empowered in the process. So many of the women who were part of this home front war effort say that, sure, they wanted to defeat fascism, that was important to them; but they also liked the other benefits that were coming out of this employment as well. But what the government and employers didn't really tell you during World War II was that, you know, once the conflict was over and men were coming home, the women were going to be expected to drop these jobs and allow the men to move back into their traditional spots. And so for many of these female workers, they are going to be frustrated when they feel like the rug gets pulled out from under them. But I do want you to appreciate that American civilians and military auxiliaries, be they male or female, all sacrificed a great deal to make World War II a success. I mean, there was a great deal of rationing of certain products that were needed for the
war effort. If you lived on either of the coasts of the United States, oftentimes at night you had to put up blackout curtains in your home because there was a concern that enemy planes might come overhead. So you didn't want to give them any visual references to your communities. I'm just giving you a couple of examples here, but plenty of Americans had to pitch in and really make sacrifices; and so this is another feature of why we call that World War II generation the greatest generation.

**Slide 32**

**Text:** End of World War II

[Famous photo of a sailor kissing a woman in the street]

**Audio:** What I have here for the final slide, it's another iconic image from World War II, this is from the celebration after news arrived that war against Japan was over, which meant the entire war was over. It was not uncommon to see scenes like this where your average U.S. serviceman in the street is hugging or kissing your average woman on the street. People are just absolutely jubilant. I think if you look at the background behind this photo, these two people did not know each other before they locked lips here. But I'm just trying to give you a sense of the mood as World War II came to an end. And very quickly, Americans will be encouraged to feel that they're entering into an era of prosperity, there will be plenty of Veterans benefits for not only those who fought in World War II but the Korean Conflict that comes shortly thereafter. There will be the GI Bill to make it much easier to get a college education; there will be benefits for buying homes. Americans will be encouraged to, you know, get married, move out into the suburbs, have large families. This is one reason why we end up with a very large baby boom generation after World War II. So I just wanted to end on a relatively upbeat note here.

**Slide 33**

**Text:** Recommended Primary Sources for Papers & Other Assignments

- The 25 points by National Socialist Part (1920)
- First Inaugural Address by FDR (Mar ’33)
- “Share Our Wealth” Plan by Huey Long (1934)
- “Blood, Toil, Tear and Sweat” speech by Winston Churchill (1940)
- Arsenal of Democracy speech by FDR (Dec ’41)
- Four Freedoms speech by FDR (Jan ’41)