The Road to World War II
The WWI Peace Settlement
(The Treaty of Versailles)

○ War guilt clause placed total blame for the war on Germany
○ Germany was assigned reparations payments of $33 billion.
○ Germany lost its colonies.
○ Alsace and Lorraine were returned to France.
○ Germany’s military power was severely limited.
○ The coal-rich Rhineland was demilitarized.
○ A League of Nations was established to work for international peace (weakened because the U.S. did not join)
Other Outcomes of WWI

- An entire generation of young European men was almost wiped out.
- Italy and Japan were angered at not receiving additional territory.
- The Ottoman empire was reduced to the area of present-day Turkey.
- China lost territory to Japan and became a virtual Japanese protectorate.
- The Austro-Hungarian Empire was dissolved.
Other Outcomes of WWI

- The new nations of Yugoslavia, Hungary and Czechoslovakia were formed from Austria-Hungary. All had a variety of ethnic groups with nationalistic ambitions.
- Russia lost territory to Romania and Poland. Finland, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania gained their independence.
Other Outcomes of WWI

- Poland was restored to the European map. A Polish Corridor was created to give Poland an outlet to the Baltic Sea.
- The Ottoman Empire was divided into mandates with Great Britain controlling Iraq and Pakistan, and France acquiring Syria and Lebanon.
The Great Depression

- The cost of the war had devastated the economies of Europe.
  - Germany couldn’t pay its debt to France and Britain
  - France and Britain couldn’t pay their debts to the U.S.
The Great Depression

○ Overproduction during the war
  ● Leads to a drop in agricultural prices in Europe, the U.S., Africa and Latin America
The Great Depression

- Banking systems collapse
  - U.S. was unable to make loans to European nations
  - Global trade diminished
  - Massive unemployment
The Great Depression

- Political results
  - New social welfare programs increased the role of the government in people’s lives
  - Rise of fascist governments in Italy and Germany
  - Japan increased its imperial expansion in the search for new markets
The Rise of Fascist Dictators

- Nationalist, one-party authoritarian regimes
- Destroy the will of the individual in favor of “the people”
- Hitler and the Nazi (National Socialist Party)
- Mussolini in Italy: wanted to restore the glory of Italy
- Japan came under military rule
- Fascist does NOT equal communist
Prelude to War

- Hitler’s philosophies
  - Based on Social Darwinism
  - The Aryan race was the most highly evolved
  - Inferior races, such as Slavs and Jews, had “corrupted” the German race
  - Jews should be eliminated and Germans should take over Europe
The Third Reich

- By 1932, Nazis dominated German government
- In 1933, Hitler becomes chancellor and sets his eyes on conquering Europe
- Begins rebuilding the military in violation of the Treaty of Versailles
Spanish Civil War

- 1936 – army officers under General Francisco Franco took control of much of Spain
- Brutal civil war between Franco’s “nationalists” and the democratic loyalists
- Hitler and Mussolini support Franco and use it as a training ground of military equipment
- However, Spain would remain neutral throughout WWII
The Road to War

- 1931 – Japan invades Manchuria
- 1935 – Mussolini invades Ethiopia
- 1936-1937 – Spanish Civil War
- 1937 – Japan invades China (beginning of the war in Asia)
- 1938 – Hitler proclaims Anschluss (the unification of Austria and Germany)
- 1938 – Munich Conference (Britain and France accept Hitler’s pledge to not take more territory)
The Road to War

1938 – Munich Conference
- Hitler is given the Sudetenland (part of Czechoslovakia) without the consent of Czechoslovakia
- Britain and France accept Hitler’s pledge to not take more territory
- APPEASEMENT POLICY

March 1939 – Nonaggression Pact
- Britain, France, Greece, Turkey, Romania, and Poland agree that if one is attacked, they would all go to war
The Road to War

- August 1939 – Hitler signs a nonaggression pact with the Soviet Union (Nazi-Soviet Pact)
  - Stalin and Hitler figure out how they will divide Eastern Europe after Hitler invades
  - Stalin agrees to stay out of the fight
- September 1, 1939 – Hitler invades Poland (beginning of the war in Europe)
As Japan invaded China in 1937, they pillaged towns and cities in brutal fashion

- The Rape of Nanjing – 250,000 Chinese were slaughtered in a few weeks
- Japan continued to advance along the eastern shores of China