Unit 7 Glossary (WWII in Europe)

**1939- 1945 (Europe)**- The largest armed conflict in human history. Ranging over six continents and all the world's oceans, the war caused an estimated 50 million military and civilian deaths, including those of 6 million Jews. Global in scale and in its repercussions, World War II created a new world at home and abroad. War began on September 1, 1939 with the German invasion of Poland.

**Atlantic Charter**- The joint declaration of President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill on August 14, 1941 that resulted from a conference at sea, setting forth the peace aims of their governments for the period following World War II. The declaration was later endorsed by a number of countries and incorporated in the purposes of the United Nations.

**Axis/Allies Powers**- World War II was fought between two major groups of nations. They became known as the Axis and Allied Powers. The major Allied Powers were Britain, France, Soviet Union, and the United States. The Allies formed mostly as a defense against the attacks of the Axis Powers. The original members of the Axis Powers were Germany, Italy, and Japan. When Germany invaded Poland, Great Britain and France declared war on Germany.

**Blitzkrieg**- “Lightning War”; Used by the Germans in the 1930’s where the enemy’s military power is assessed and then bettered. It starts with air raids in a sudden, swift, and overwhelming military attack. Then followed by long range artillery and then tanks to defeat the opposition quickly. Then foot soldiers progress and swarm the enemy, intimidating them to give up. Focus would go to a particular point of weakness in the enemies’ lines until that point was broken with full force.

**Concentration Camp**- Extermination camps that were a guarded compound for the detention or imprisonment of aliens, members of ethnic minorities, political opponents, etc. The Nazi party built a network of concentration camps in order to exterminate Jews, gypsies, physically and mentally handicap, and “undesirables”. (See Holocaust)

**Dictatorships**- A ruler who wields absolute authority and controls the government within a state or nation. Prior to World War II several men assumed the role of dictator in European countries including Adolf Hitler in Germany, Benito Mussolini in Italy, and Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union. Other countries such as Spain under Fascist Francisco Franco worked to overthrow republican governments and impose dictatorial rule. The League of Nations did not oppose the actions of dictators nor did nations such as Britain, France, or the United States intercede as the republican government of Spain fell to Franco. This encouraged the dictators as they organized and strengthened their control in Europe.

**Executive Order 9066**- In an atmosphere of World War II hysteria, President Roosevelt, encouraged by officials at all levels of the federal government, authorized the internment of tens of thousands of American citizens of Japanese ancestry and resident aliens from Japan. On February 19, 1942, Executive Order 9066 gave the military broad powers to ban any citizen from a fifty- to sixty-mile-wide coastal area stretching from Washington state to California and extending inland into southern Arizona. The order also authorized transporting these citizens to assembly centers hastily set up and governed by the military in California, Arizona, Washington state, and Oregon. Although it is not well known, the same executive order (and other war-time orders and restrictions) were also applied to smaller numbers of residents of the United States who were of Italian or German descent. For example, 3,200 resident aliens of Italian background were arrested and more than 300 of them were interned. About 11,000 German residents, including some naturalized citizens, were arrested and more than 5000 were interned. Yet while these individuals (and others from those groups) suffered grievous violations of their civil liberties, the war-time measures applied to Japanese Americans were worse and more sweeping, uprooting entire communities and targeting citizens as well as resident aliens. The number of internment camps expanded to 10, and more than 110,000 Japanese Americans spent the remainder of the war in them. In December 1944 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Ex parte Mitsuye Endo that it was beyond the power of the War Relocation Authority “to detain citizens against whom no charges of disloyalty or subversiveness have been made for a period longer than that necessary to separate the loyal from the disloyal.” In 1948 President Harry S. Truman signed the Evacuation Claims Act, which gave internees the opportunity to submit claims for property lost as a result of relocation. On February 16, 1976, President Gerald Ford formally rescinded Executive Order 9066. In 1988 Congress passed the Civil Liberties Act, which stated that a “grave injustice” was done to Japanese American citizens and resident aliens during World War II. It also established a fund that paid some $1.6 billion in reparations to formerly interned Japanese Americans or their heirs.

**Fascism**- Fascism is a philosophy or system of government distinguished by strict social and economic control; a strong, centralized government usually headed by a dictator; and often a policy of belligerent nationalism. Benito Mussolini was a socialist prior to World War I, but as he fought for Italy, he became a nationalist intent on uniting Italians and ensuring their obedience to a central authority. Fascists did not support the formation of political parties since this disrupted the unity of the state, and they did not support democracy because the concerns of the people were secondary to the good of the nation. A strong fascist nation had the right to build its following by controlling weaker nations. Mussolini was named prime minister of Italy in 1922 and retained control through 1943. In Germany, the Weimar Republic, established at the end of World War I, was challenged by leftists (Communists) who believed in world revolution and by ultra-conservatives (fascists and extreme nationalists) who opposed the democratic goals of the republic. Adolf Hitler attempted to unite Germany as a fascist state. Because of the influences of fascism, it was natural for Hitler to destroy anything which threatened the unified nation, hence his fixation with purifying the dominant Aryan race and his insistence on totalitarian rule. In Japan, economic depression increased public dissatisfaction with the government and bolstered ideas of nationalism and protection of Japanese interests. In 1932 the military defied the civil government and established a military dictatorship in Japan. Fascism in Japan differed from that in Germany or Italy because there was not one dictator but a group of military leaders who ruled. They sought to expand the Japanese empire, secure more raw materials, and increase their trading networks. The militarism and nationalism of Japan propelled it into World War II.

**Genocide**- The deliberate and systematic extermination of a national, racial, political, or cultural group.

**Ghetto**- During WWII, in most European countries this was a section of a city in which it was predominantly inhabited by Jews and in which all Jews were required to live.

**Holocaust**- The Holocaust was a methodical plan orchestrated by Hitler to ensure German supremacy. It called for the elimination of undesirables from German society. The Nazis first murdered nonconformists, political prisoners, homosexuals, the physically and mentally disabled, and non-Aryans (those who could not document a pure German ancestry). After a majority of these people were exterminated in gas vans, Hitler’s focus turned toward “the final solution of the Jewish question.” His anti-Semitism was rabid and it resulted in the execution of millions of Jews throughout Europe. Mass murder began in the Ukraine at Babi Yar, but the system of digging mass graves was too slow and German soldiers protested too much. Instead the Nazis developed concentration camps to hold the prisoners, gas chambers to murder them, and ovens to cremate the bodies. Reports of the atrocities failed to inspire any country to oppose the heinous crimes. Not until the Allied troops marched into Germany in 1945 was the extent of the Holocaust confirmed.

**Internment Camps**- A camp for the accommodation of internees especially during wartime. (See Executive Order 9066)

**Isolationism**- The policy or doctrine of isolating one's country from the affairs of other nations by declining to enter into alliances, foreign economic commitments, international agreements, etc., seeking to devote the entire efforts of one's country to its own advancement and remain at peace by avoiding foreign entanglements and responsibilities. (See Neutrality Acts)

***Kristallnacht***- Translated as “The Night of the Broken Glass”. On, November 9, 1938, almost 200 synagogues were destroyed, over 8,000 Jewish shops were sacked and looted, and tens of thousands of Jews were removed to concentration camps. This pogrom received its name because of the great value of glass that was smashed during this anti-Jewish riot. Riots took place throughout Germany and Austria on that night.

**Lend-Lease Act**- System promoted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to give aid to U.S. allies during World War II. Faced with Britain's inability to pay cash for war materials and food, as required by U.S. law, Roosevelt asked Congress to allow repayment “in kind or property” from countries vital to U.S. defense. The Lend-Lease Act was passed in March 1941, despite arguments that it led the U.S. closer to war. Much of the $49 billion in aid went to British Commonwealth countries; the Soviet Union, China, and 40 other countries also received assistance. U.S. troops stationed abroad received about $8 billion in aid from the Allies. President Harry S. Truman ended the program in 1945.

**Nationalism**- An extreme form of patriotic feelings, principles, or efforts especially marked by a feeling of superiority over other countries.

**Nazism**- In Germany, the Weimar Republic, established at the end of World War I, was challenged by leftists (Communists) who believed in world revolution and by ultra-conservatives (Fascists and extreme nationalists) who opposed the democratic goals of the republic. Adolf Hitler attempted to unite Germany as a fascist state. Because of the influences of fascism, it was natural for Hitler to destroy anything which threatened the unified nation, hence his fixation with purifying the dominant Aryan race and his insistence on totalitarian rule. Born in Austria during a period of social unrest and economic depression, he served in the Bavarian army during World War I and was convinced that

Germany was defeated not on the battlefield but internally by conspiratorial forces. In 1919 he joined the German Workers’ Party, a group favoring nationalism. In 1920 the namewas changed to the National Socialist German Workers’ Party (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter-Partei (NSDAP) shortened to Nazi). By 1921 Hitler was the party leader patterning his rule on that of Benito Mussolini and his Fascist Party in Italy. Hitler outlined his views in Mein Kampf (My Struggle) published in 1925. In 1933 the Nazis seized power and became the only legal political party in Germany.

**Neutrality Acts**- A series of acts passed in 1935, 1936, 1937, and 1939 to limit U.S. involvement in possible future wars and that was created in response to the belief that U.S. involvement in World War II that resulted from loans and trade with the Allies. The 1935 act banned the shipment of war materials to belligerents and forbade U.S. citizens to travel on belligerent vessels. The 1936 act banned loans to belligerents. The 1937 act extended these provisions to civil wars and allowed the president to restrict non-munitions sales to a “cash-and-carry” basis. The 1939 act banned U.S. ships from carrying goods or passengers to belligerent ports but allowed U.S. sales of munitions on a “cash-and carry” basis. The Lend Lease Act of 1941 diminished the laws, and they were repealed on November 13, 1941.

**Nonaggression Pact**- On August 23, 1939, representatives from Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union met and signed the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, which guaranteed that the two countries would not attack each other. By signing this pact, Germany had protected itself from having to fight a two-front war in the soon-to-begin World War II. The Soviet Union was awarded land, including parts of Poland and the Baltic States. The pact was broken when Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union less than two years later, on June 22, 1941.

**Pearl Harbor**- A harbor on the island of Oahu in Hawaii. It is the U.S. Navy’s main Pacific base. A surprise attack by the Japanese on the navy ships on 7 December 7, 1941 brought the US into World War II. The attack killed 2,403 people, injured 1,178 and destroyed 19 ships and 188 planes.

**Franklin D. Roosevelt**- (1882-1945) Born in New York to a wealthy family, Franklin Roosevelt entered politics in 1910 as a Democratic candidate to the U.S. Senate. He was a member of Woodrow Wilson’s administration and was unsuccessful in a bid for the vice-presidency in 1920. In 1921 he contracted polio but struggled to overcome the physical limitations and maintain a public, political career. In 1932 he opposed Republican incumbent President Herbert Hoover and soundly defeated him. He began the New Deal in the first 100 days after his inauguration. His reforms, proposed to counteract the effects of the Great Depression, affected four areas: finance, industry, agriculture and relief (welfare). He strengthened government work programs. His executive orders and sponsorship of legislation in the national interest supported the weak economy and remained viable years after his death. Yet, critics worried that his growing executive authority might undermine the checks and balances of the three branches of government. This concern derived from Roosevelt’s attempts to pack the Supreme Court with his own appointees. Congress eventually passed a court reform bill but it did not support Roosevelt’s ideas. Conservatives in Congress reacted by passing few New Deal reforms after 1937.

By 1939, Roosevelt transferred his efforts from the New Deal to a new diplomacy to counter the aggression of Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, and Tojo Hideki. American support for Roosevelt was high, and he dominated the political scene for four terms, the most of any U.S. president. The 22nd Amendment, adopted in 1951, often termed the anti-Franklin Roosevelt amendment, limited presidents to two terms.

**Stalin, Hitler, Franco, Mussolini**- After World War I, political unrest and poor economic conditions lead many countries to develop dictatorships as their government. Most dictatorships started in countries that did not have a democracy. These dictatorships held total power and ruled without regard to law and anyone who opposed these dictatorships would be imprisoned or executed. These leaders were Stalin (Soviet Union), Hitler (Germany), Franco (Spain), and Mussolini (Italy). (See Dictatorships)

**Totalitarianism**- A type of government that is distinguished by a single party or individual controlling the entire country. Every aspect of such a society will be controlled by a single person or party. This kind of political system recognizes no limits to its authority. It regulates every aspect of public and private life wherever feasible. There may exist widespread use of terrorism, mass surveillance, restrictions of speech and restrictions on other freedoms.

**World War II (1941-1945)**- World War II was a global conflict which began in 1939 and continued into 1945, in which the Allies (Great Britain, Russia, the United States) defeated the Axis Powers (Germany, Italy, Japan). Economic and social crises followed World War I in much of central Europe. Political unrest and fear of Communist revolutions comparable to that led by V. I. Lenin in Russia in 1917 triggered the rise of Benito Mussolini and the founding of the Fascist Party in Italy and the rise of Adolf Hitler and the founding of the Nazi Party in Germany. At the same time, extreme militarists in Japan exerted more control in the 1930s. Hitler’s attempts to unite all German-speaking people in Europe led to his invasion of Czechoslovakia and then Poland in 1939. Britain and France responded by declaring war on Germany. The United States declared war on Germany following the invasion of Soviet Union in June 1941 and on Japan following the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. The war remains the deadliest in history with between 40 and 60 million dead from battle and acts of genocide perpetrated by Nazi officials.