

# WWII, CHAPTER 25

## NOTES PART 2

# African Americans

- ◎ A. Philip Randolph
  - President of:
    - Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters
    - National Negro Congress
  - Began to organize a march on Washington
  - FDR proposed an executive order making it mandatory that African Americans be able to work in defense plants—Randolph called off the march
- ◎ 1.2 million African Americans left the South to take jobs in wartime industries
- ◎ Race riots resulted—in 1943, more than 270 racial conflicts occurred in nearly 50 cities

- ⦿ Selective Service Act said that there shall be no discrimination against any person on account of race or color
- ⦿ At first, African Americans were segregated in poorly equipped units commanded by white officers
- ⦿ Later in the war, when the shortage of infantry neared a crisis, were African Americans permitted to rise to combat status
- ⦿ The ordinary soldier experienced discrimination everywhere

# Zoot Suit Riots--Latinos



# Nisei

- Japanese American soldiers who knew Japanese served stateside as interpreters and translators
- The Nisei 442<sup>nd</sup> regiment fought heroically in Italy and France

- ① Despite segregation, the armed forces ultimately pulled Americans of all varieties out of their communities
- ① Most soldiers looked back at the war as the greatest experience they would ever know

# Injury and Death

- The chance of being killed in combat was less than 1 in 50
- The risk of injury was much higher
- Battle fatigue—caused by the prolonged stress of combat

# Prisoners of War

- 120,000 Americans became prisoners of war (POWs)
- Conditions in German prison camps were not usually life threatening for Americans
- Conditions for POWs in the Pacific were abysmal
  - Of the 20,000 Americans captured in the Philippines, only 40 percent survived to return home in 1945
- 6,000 American and Filipino prisoners died on the notorious 80 mile “Bataan Death March”

# World at War

## ◎ Soviets Halt Nazi Drive

- WWII was a war of offensive maneuvers
- In 1941, Hitler attacked the Soviet Union
- He had to delay the invasion in order to help the Italian army in North Africa and Greece
- From June to September, Hitler's forces killed or captured nearly 3 million Russian soldiers
- Soviet civilian resistance and motivated Red Army troops launched a counterattack in the winter, and the Germans moved toward Stalingrad
- Soviets suffered more casualties in the battles that followed than Americans did during the entire war

# Red Army Prevails

- By Feb. of 1943, the German Sixth Army was overpowered by Soviet troops
- Greatest land battle in history:
  - Kursk, Ukraine
  - More than 2 million troops and 6,000 tanks went into action
  - Germany lost and began to defend from a Soviet army and country that outproduced the German war machine

# Allied Offensive

- ◎ 1942
  - Germany, Italy, and Japan controlled central Europe and part of the Soviet Union, parts of China, and the southwestern Pacific
- ◎ American shipbuilding kept up with Nazi submarine attacks
- ◎ US production of amphibious landing craft surpassed that of Germany

# North Africa

- ◎ Operation Torch
  - British and American troops launched an offensive into Morocco in Nov. of 1942 after the British had halted General Erwin Rommel, the “Desert Fox” in Egypt
  - The Allies took North Africa
- ◎ Casablanca conference—FDR and Churchill ruled out any possibility of negotiation with the Axis powers
- ◎ Stalin did not attend and disagreed—thinking it would prolong the war

# Invasion of Europe

- Summer of 1943—Invasion of southern Italy
- Italians rose up and the King dismissed Mussolini
- Italy surrendered by September
- Hitler blocked the Allies from heading north out of Italy

## ◎ Operation Overlord 1944

- June 6, 1944—"D" Day invasion of Normandy France of more than 175,000 troops and 20,000 vehicles
- In the next six weeks, almost 1 million Allied soldiers came ashore and pushed east into France
- Battle of the Bulge—Germans took the Allies by surprise in Belgium, but the Allies fought back
- By May of 1945, the Allies had reached Berlin and Hitler committed suicide

# Asia and the Pacific

- ◎ After Pearl Harbor, the Japanese took over much of the Pacific in a string of defeats
- ◎ Midway Island—June, 1942
  - Two carrier fleets clashed at the Battle of Midway on June 4
  - US sunk 4 Japanese aircraft carriers and destroyed hundreds of planes
- ◎ US Navy and Marines fought an “island hopping” campaign

# Last Stages of War

- ◎ Holocaust
  - From 1933 to 1941, the Nazis murdered 6 million Jews
- ◎ Yalta Conference
  - Feb. 1945 at Yalta, a Crimean resort on the Black Sea
  - United Nations discussed
- ◎ Roosevelt died of a stroke on April 12, 1945
- ◎ Harry Truman took office
- ◎ B-29 Enola Gay dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6
- ◎ August 14—another dropped on Nagasaki