

World War II in Asia

AP World History

Chapter 21

“Collapse and Recovery in Europe”

1914 – 1970s

Japanese Imperialism

- In the 1930s = Japan had seized much of China
- Japan now set its sights on French, British, Dutch and American colonies in Southeast Asia
 - Included Indochina, Malaya, Burma, Indonesia, and the Philippines
- Major target = French Indochina
 - Included Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia



Japanese Imperialism



- Japan was dependent on foreign (especially American) resources and materials
 - 73% of its scrap iron = from U.S.
 - 60% of its imported machine tools = from U.S.
 - 80% of its oil = from U.S.
 - 50% of its copper = from U.S.
- Japan wanted to be economically independent
- Western Europeans and Americans increasingly viewed Japan as aggressive, oppressive, and a threat to their economic interests in Southeast Asia

Japanese Imperialism

- When Japan invaded French Indochina, the U.S. demanded that it withdraw from there AND China
- When Japan refused, the United States:
 - Imposed an embargo that banned the sale of scrap iron and oil to Japan
 - Froze all Japanese monetary assets in the U.S.
- Japan's dilemma: cave or resist?
 - If it gives in to U.S. terms → Japan seen as a weak 2nd or 3rd-rank power
 - If it resists and goes to war → uncertain outcome



Japanese troops entering Saigon in northern Vietnam in 1941

Pearl Harbor

- December 7, 1941 = Japan bombed the American naval fleet based at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii
- Japan sunk or disabled 19 ships & destroyed 188 airplanes
- More than 2400 people died
- More than 1000 people were wounded



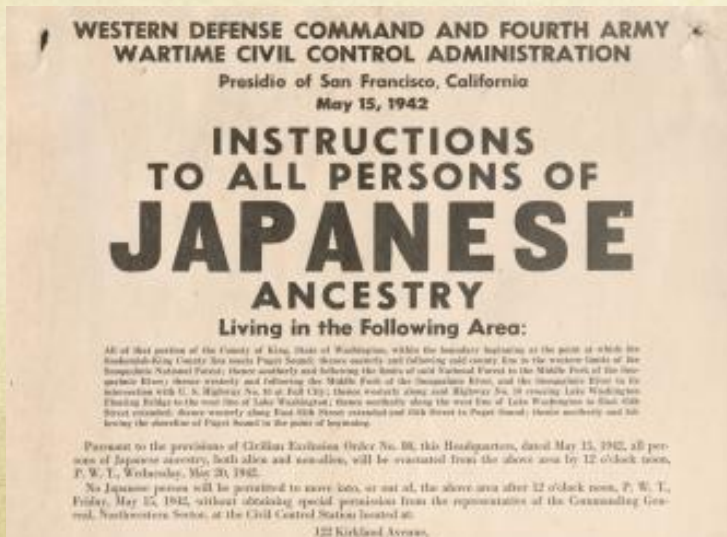
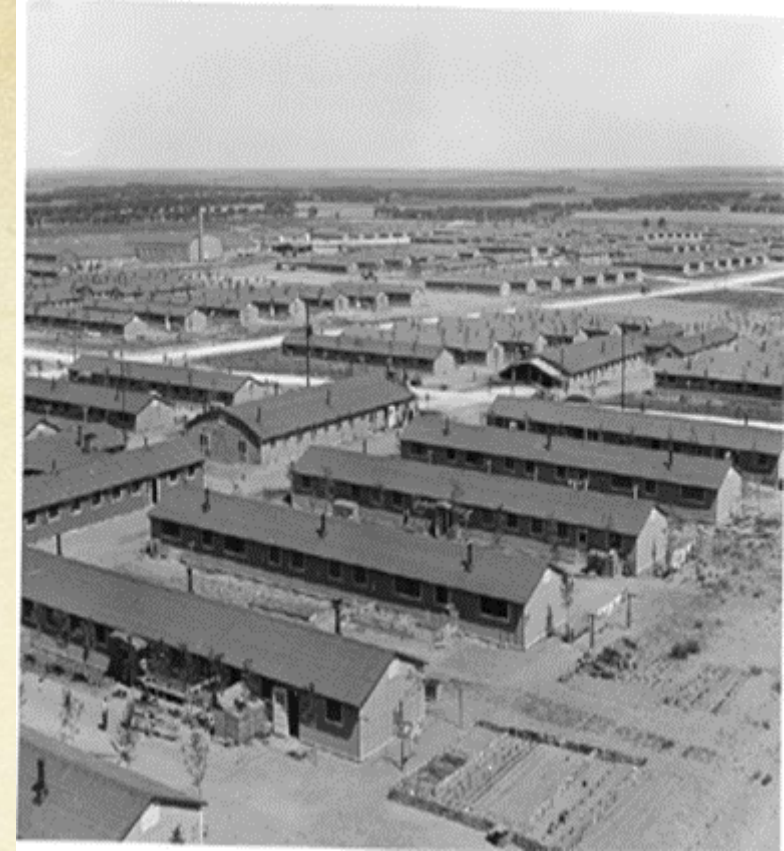
Pearl Harbor



- FDR called this: “a day that will live in infamy”
- December 8, 1941 = the U.S. declared war on Japan
- Because Japan was allied with Italy and Germany → both Italy and Germany declared war on the U.S.
- To back the U.S. → Great Britain declared war on Japan

Internment Camps

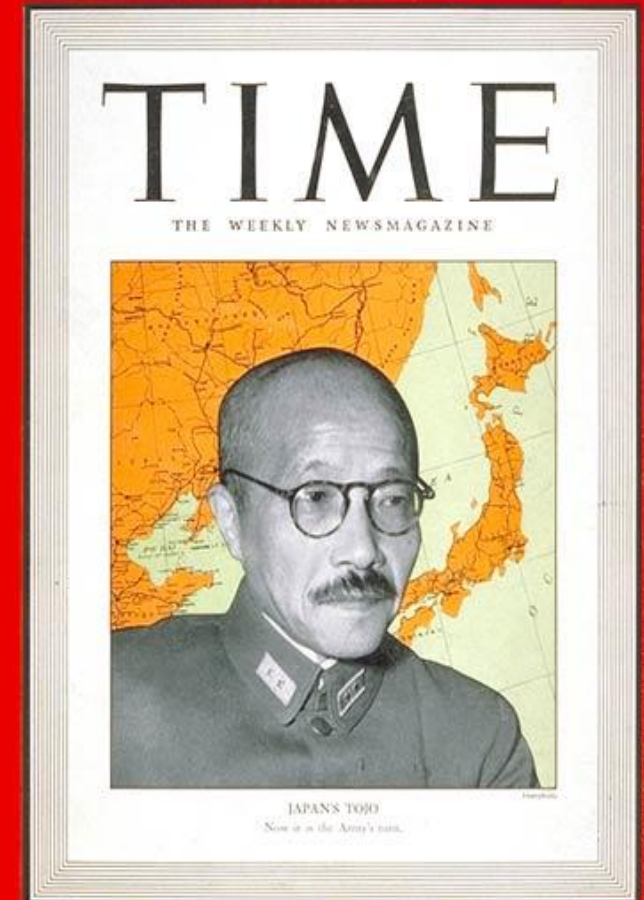
- After Pearl Harbor, Japanese-Americans were feared and hated by many other Americans
- Many accused of being traitors or supporting Japan
- Many on the west coast were placed in internment camps = like temporary prisons until the war was over





- Authoritarian Prime Minister of Japan during World War II
- Very popular in Japan when WWII started because Japan's navy was dominating that of the U.S. in battle after battle
- As the tide began to turn in the Pacific, however, and the U.S. began to win battles → Tojo's popularity declined and he faced more opposition in Japan
- After Japan surrendered in WWII, Tojo was arrested for war crimes, sentenced to death, and hanged in 1948

Hideki Tojo



U.S. Leaders in the Pacific Theater



Douglas MacArthur

General of the Army in the Pacific Theater



Chester W. Nimitz

Fleet Admiral in the Pacific Theater

WWII in the Pacific

- December 1941 – May 1942 = Japan dominating in the Pacific
- Winning battle after battle, successfully attacking U.S. naval bases, and taking over island after island
- Major target for Japan during this time = the Philippines
 - December 1941 = Japanese forces landed on main island of Luzon in the Philippines
 - U.S. troops there = unprepared for this attack
 - MacArthur took troops south to the Bataan Peninsula → in hopes that U.S. army would either A) come with supplies and troops to back them up or B) rescue them



WWII in the Pacific



- U.S. army never came → U.S. troops faced starvation and continuous attacks in Bataan

- Most surrendered in April 1942

- 2000 soldiers & nurses escaped to Corregidor = fortified island at the tip of the peninsula

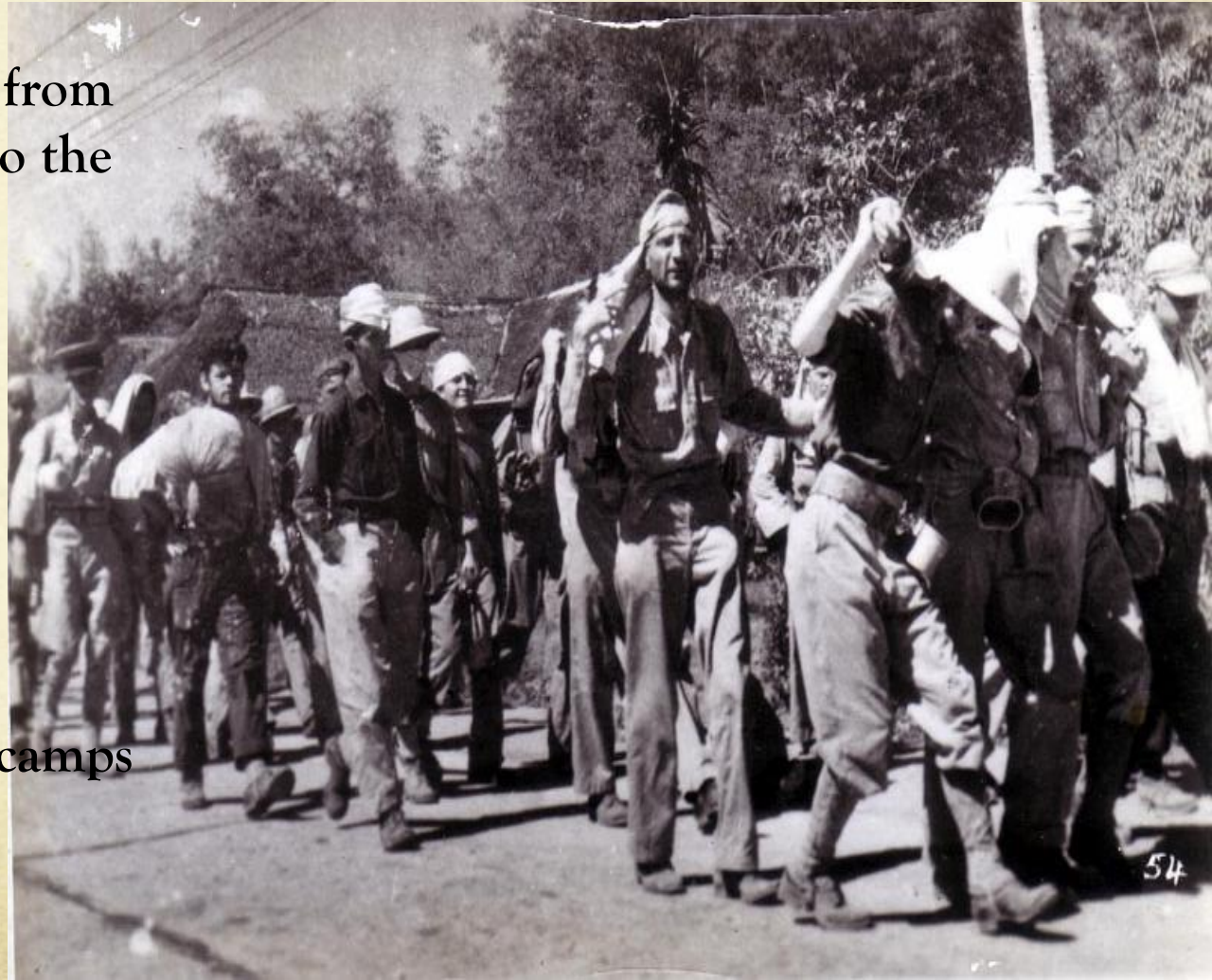
- Survived another month of attacks by living in rock tunnels

- Ran out of ammunition and food → rest of the U.S. troops surrendered in May 1942

- 76,000 POWS in Bataan → all weakened by hunger, disease, and the tropical heat

WWII in the Pacific: Bataan Death March

- Japanese split POWs into groups of 500-1000
- Force marched them to a RR station 60 miles away
 - Boarded a train that took them 8 miles away from the POW camp – they walked those 8 miles to the camp
- Prisoners treated brutally the entire time
 - Denied water
 - Beaten and tortured
 - Shot if too weak to continue
 - At least 10,000 died marching
 - About 15,000 more died in the actual POW camps



WWII in the Pacific: Bataan Death March

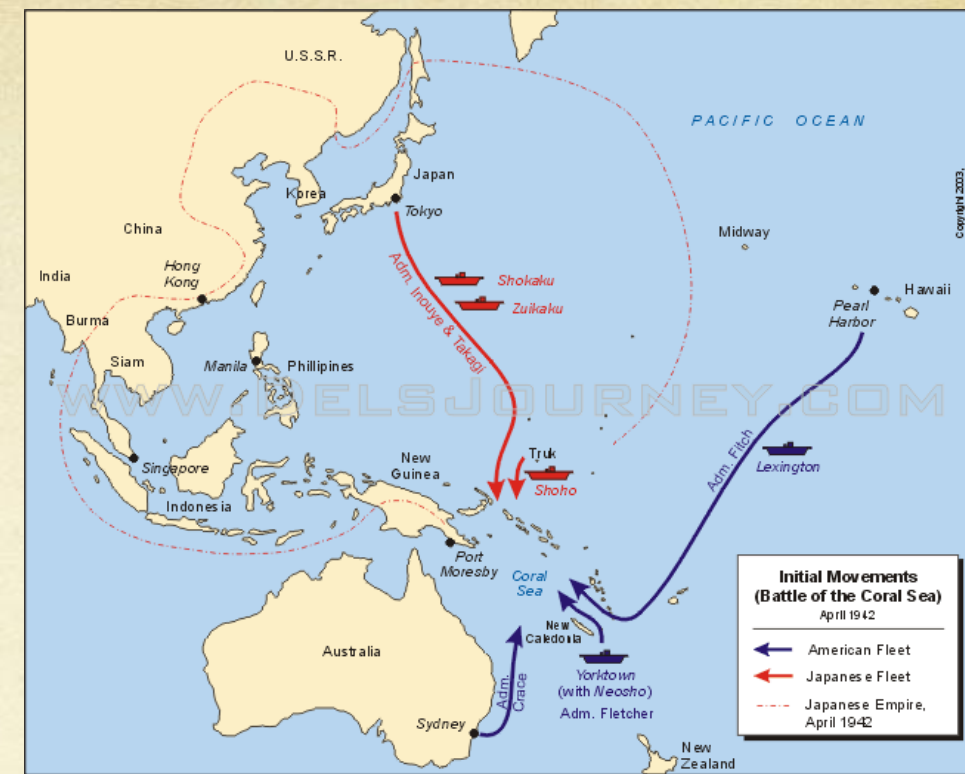
- Japanese actions defied POW standards outlined at the Third Geneva Convention in 1929
- Said POWs should be treated humanely and protected against violence



American Red Cross workers preparing food and packages for prisoners of war

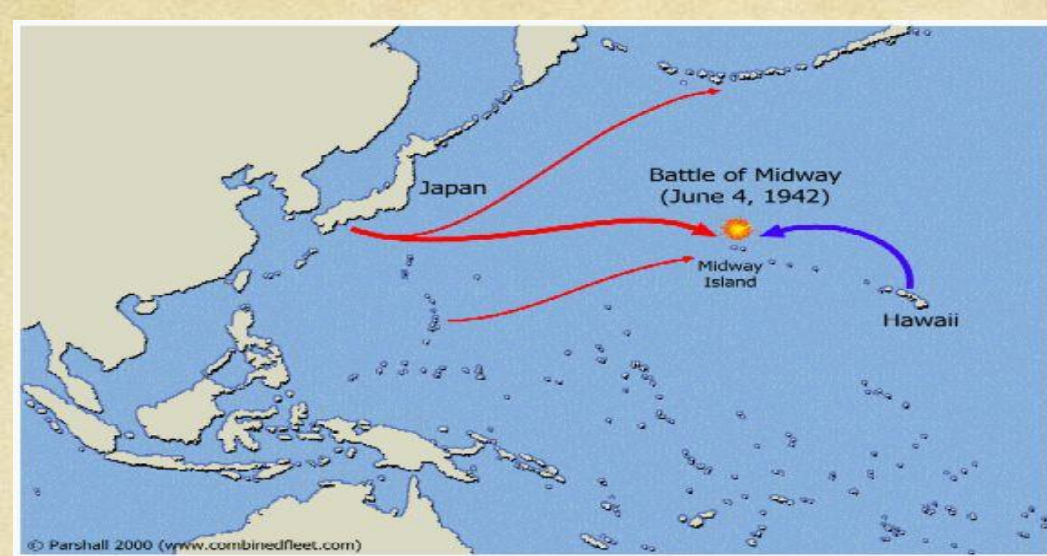
WWII in the Pacific: Battle of the Coral Sea

- May 1942
- U.S. code breakers break Japanese military code
- U.S. learns Japan is going to attack Australia
 - U.S. decides to beat them to it → brought a fleet to the Coral Sea, northeast of Australia
- 5 day battle → each side lost about ½ their planes and an aircraft carrier
- Battle = a draw – but it kept Japan from invading Australia
 - Japan's ships were out of fuel – couldn't make it to Australia without refueling first



WWII in the Pacific: Battle of Midway

- June 1942
- Code breakers, once again, deciphered the date and location of Japan's next big attack
 - Midway = a refueling station in the middle of the Pacific
- U.S. Navy plans an ambush attack there
- Decisive American victory
 - Irreparable damage done to Japan's fleet
 - 4/5 Japanese aircraft carriers and a heavy cruiser were sunk



WWII in the Pacific: Battle at Midway

- This battle turned the tide in favor of the United States in the Pacific theater
- Japanese shipbuilding and aircraft-building programs could not replace fast enough
- Meanwhile, United States factories were producing ships, aircrafts, and other military supplies at a very fast pace



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WWII in the Pacific



- New U.S. strategy after Midway = “island-hopping”
- Organized by General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz
- “Leapfrog” to Japan
- Capture some islands and bypass others
- Bypassed islands = would be blockaded and cut off from supplies
- 1st successful victory using this strategy = Battle of Guadalcanal in August 1942

WWII in the Pacific

- New Japanese strategy = use of kamikaze pilots = suicide bombers
- Result = battles became even bloodier with higher death tolls
- Nevertheless, by the end of 1944 = U.S. victory over Japan seemed inevitable
 - American planes continuously bombed Japanese cities
 - MacArthur and his troops regained the Philippines



Battle of Okinawa

The Battle of Okinawa was the last major battle of World War II, and one of the bloodiest. On April 1, the Navy's Fifth Fleet and more than 180,000 U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps troops descended on the Pacific island of Okinawa for a final push towards Japan. The invasion was part of Operation Iceberg, a complex plan to invade and occupy the Ryukyu Islands, including Okinawa.

American troops who headed North to the Motobu Peninsula endured intense resistance and over 1,000 casualties, but won a decisive battle relatively quickly.

The kamikaze suicide pilot was Japan's most ruthless weapon. On April 4, the Japanese unleashed these well-trained pilots on the Fifth Fleet. Some dove their planes into ships at 500 miles per hour causing catastrophic damage. The Fifth Fleet suffered:

- 36 sunk ships
- 368 damaged ships
- 4,900 men killed or drowned
- 4,800 men wounded
- 763 lost aircraft



Okinawa

The Maeda Escarpment, also known as Hacksaw Ridge, was located atop a 400-foot vertical cliff. The American attack on the ridge began on April 26. It was a brutal battle for both sides. Japanese troops hunkered down in a network of caves and dugouts. Much of the fighting was hand-to-hand and particularly ruthless. The Americans finally took Hacksaw Ridge on May 6.

Both sides suffered enormous losses in the Battle of Okinawa.

Americans: over 49,000 casualties including 12,520 dead.

Japanese :about 110,000 Japanese dead.

Aprox. 40,000 and 150,000 Okinawa citizens were also killed.

Winning the Battle of Okinawa put Allied forces within striking distance of Japan. But wanting to bring the war to a swift end, and knowing over 2 million Japanese troops were awaiting battle-weary American soldiers, Harry S. Truman chose to drop an atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6.



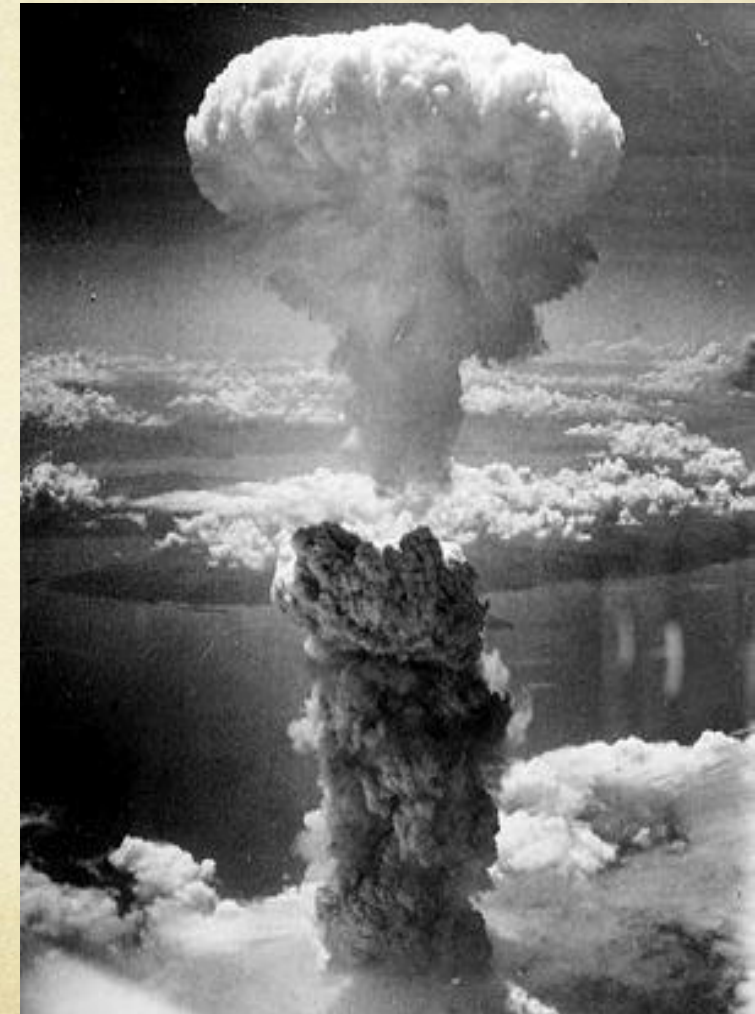
WWII in the Pacific



- Early 1945 = Americans defeated Japan in the two bloodiest battles of the Pacific theater
 - Battles of Okinawa and Iwo Jima
- General Hideki Tojo still refused to surrender → fight to the death!
- President Truman gave Tojo an ultimatum = surrender or we'll use our new weapon → the atomic bomb
 - Truman wanted to avoid the enormous loss of life that would have resulted from continued warfare in the Pacific
 - Japan did not surrender

WWII in the Pacific

- August 6, 1945 = atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima
 - No response from Japan
- August 9, 1945 = second atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki
- About 200,000 Japanese died in these two cities from the explosions
 - Thousands more would die in the following months and years from the blasts' radioactivity
- August 14, 1945 = Japan surrendered
- September 2, 1945 = proclaimed V-J Day = Victory over Japan Day



Atomic Bomb Victims



Atomic Bomb Victims



Brief Video of the
Atomic Bomb

Occupation of Japan after WWII

- U.S. forces occupied Japan after WWII from 1945 to 1952
- Occupation led by General MacArthur
- Democratic constitution imposed on Japan by the U.S.
- Land, sea, and air forces = all disarmed
- During the occupation – the U.S. sent over \$2 billion in financial aid to Japan to help restore it

