

## History Revision Notes – Twentieth Century Conflict (Paper 1)

### The First World War (1914 – 1918)

- Causes**
- The Triple Entente (Britain, France and Russia) and the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy) meant that any attack could result in a World War.
  - Long term tensions in Europe (e.g. France hated Germany for taking Alsace and Lorraine).
  - Nationalism – i.e. every country wanted what was best for them.
  - Imperialism / Colonisation – e.g. the scramble for Africa.
  - The arms race (navy = Britain and Germany, army = France and Germany).
  - War plans were made – e.g. the Schlieffen Plan (Germany) and Plan 17 (France).
  - The murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand was the spark that caused the war.
- War Plans**
- The Schlieffen Plan → Defeat France through Belgium in 6 weeks.
  - Alliance of Britain with Belgium, so joined the war.
  - Plan 17 → France would attack and regain Alsace and Lorraine quickly.
  - Failed – troops went back towards Paris.
  - Returning French troops intercepted Germans – won Battle of the Marne.
  - Race to outflank each other – ended in stalemate, and trenches dug.
  - Gallipoli Campaign → Churchill aims to open supply routes for Russia (1915).
  - Take Turkey out of the war, capturing Constantinople.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> landing (Anzac Cove) failed – Turks prepared.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> landing failed – British relax – Turks build forces.
  - Trenches dug out – stalemate again.
- Warfare**
- Russian advance = failure (biggest defeats = Tannenburg and Masaurian Lakes).
  - New weapons developed – flame throwers, machine guns, gas warfare, and tanks.
  - Mainly defensive weapons – easy to defend, hard to attack (stalemate in trenches).
  - If troops sent “over the top” nearly all were killed.
  - Difficult conditions in trenches – dangerous, rats spread disease, bad food, disease (trench foot, shell-shock), people wanted a “blighty one”, to be sent home.
  - Verdun – French try to defend 17 forts against German advance, succeed.
  - Battle of the Somme – French / British offensive = a million killed for 15km land.
  - Battle of Jutland (war at sea) – Germans did more damage, but retreated first. After battle = blockaded in the ports for rest of the war (Britain controlled the seas).
- The Home Front**
- Zeppelins attacked Britain from the air – searchlights helped to shoot them down.
  - Propaganda = used to get people to sign up (before conscription was introduced).
  - Women had to work in the factories etc. – the men were fighting in the trenches. Many of these jobs were dangerous, and women had a lot of responsibility.
  - This was the first step towards giving women the vote.
  - DORA (Defence Of the Realm Act) = restrictions, e.g. rationing and censorship.
  - Mandatory conscription introduced in 1916 (propaganda, e.g. Kitchener)
  - Conscientious Objectors refused to fight because of their beliefs (e.g. Quakers), but they still helped the war effort, an often did dangerous jobs.
- The war ends**
- Russia = starving and defeated. Revolution – “peace at any price”. Treaty of Brest-Litovsk takes Russia out of the war.
  - Zimmerman telegram promises Mexico Texas if joins the war. This and US ships sunk by U-boats prompts USA to enter war. But 6 months needed to get troops over.
  - German Ludendorff Offensive (final “push”) – bulge in trenches, Germans attacked from 3 sides by General Foch, Germans tired without supplies – therefore failed.
  - French Nivelle Offensive – failed. French army mutiny – Petain orders them shot.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele) – still stalemate.
  - Allied victories – Italy beat Austria, Turkey defeated, Bulgarian army surrenders.
  - Germany asks for an armistice (end to fighting).
  - German High Seas Fleet ordered for a final attempt at victory, but sailors mutiny.
  - 2 politicians signed an appeasement whatever the terms – Kaiser fled to Holland.
- Peace Treaty**
- Treaty of Versailles signed (1<sup>st</sup> World War considered as a “war to end all wars”).
  - Germany blamed for the war, her territory is divided up, and her army is limited. Massive fines (reparations) imposed. Rhineland = demilitarised.
  - Austria-Hungary broken up and forbidden to unite with Germany.
  - Turkey’s empire broken up. Poland made as an independent country.
  - Britain and France grow to the height of their powers (unfair?).

**The Second World War (1939 – 1945)**

- Causes**
- The Treaty of Versailles was harsh on Germany – feelings of resentment.
  - Adolf Hitler
    - Racial ideas (persecution of the Jews).
    - Acts aggressively – rearms, wants living space (Lebensraum).
    - Charismatic leader – promising a “greater Germany”.
  - Aggression in Europe
    - Mussolini rises in Italy – invaded Ethiopia.
    - Spanish Civil War (helped by Italy and Russia).
    - Japanese invasions China to expand territories.
  - Nazi-Soviet Pact makes Russia and Germany allies (but hate each other).
  - The Depression in America helped Hitler to rise to power.
  - Four steps to war
    - 1) Unite Germany and Austria.
    - 2) Unite Sudetenland (Czechoslovakia) with Germany – Hitler appeased by Chamberlain at Munich Conference.
    - 3) Take over the rest of Czechoslovakia.
    - 4) Invade Poland – Britain / France = war on Germany.
- Warfare**
- Hitler used “Blitzkrieg” (lightening warfare) in order to quickly invade and take over a country, using a combined attack by aircraft, tanks and artillery.
  - Britain / France = not able to begin fighting immediately – it was a “phoney war”.
  - Preparations for war – women / children evacuated to countryside, air raid shelters built, “blackout” at night, mandatory gas masks.
  - Hitler invades Denmark and Norway – Chamberlain replaced by Churchill.
  - Operation Yellow – Hitler invades Holland and Belgium, then France by going around the Maginot Line – occupy North. South France = Vichy France (Petain).
  - Evacuation at Dunkirk – ships from Britain save British troops (live to fight another day). Great British defeat, but used as propaganda – i.e. the “Dunkirk spirit”.
  - Battle of Britain
    - Operation Sealion – German troops waiting to invade, but need control of the air.
    - Luftwaffe winning – RAF airfields badly damaged.
    - Switch attacks to London – RAF reorganises forces.
    - RAF defeat Luftwaffe a week later – 60 planes lost.
    - Hitler switches to night time bombing – Britain won Battle of Britain, but Blitz begins.
  - The “Blitz”
    - Aim to damage trade, production and British morale.
    - ARP (Air Raid Precautions) introduces shelters, blackouts, air raid sirens, and barrage balloons.
    - Didn’t do as much damage as anticipated, but Britain still alone.
- Allies expand**
- Operation Barbarossa
    - Germans invade Russia, looks like Russia will fall.
    - Stalin recovers – war leader for Great Fatherland War.
    - Scorched-Earth policy / factories moved beyond Urals.
    - Lend-lease aid from USA / determined to fight.
    - Germans pushed out – Stalingrad, Kursk, Leningrad.
  - War in Pacific
    - Japan attacks Pearl Harbour, 1941 = US war on Japan.
    - Japan is slowly pegged back by US Navy – “island hopping”.
  - Allied bombing damages German industry.
  - Germany and the Axis powers have captured too much territory too fast – can’t hold onto it (“victory disease”).
  - Allied victory at El Alamein gives them the advantage in Africa.
  - January 1944, Allies attack Gustav Line (Italy) – push Germans to Gothic Line.
  - June 1944, Operation Overlord – D-Day landings / Germany driven from France.
  - Air attacks on Britain (V-1 and V-2 pilotless rockets) continues.
  - Allies increase bombing on Berlin – win control of the German skies.
  - Battle of the Bulge
    - Allies try to invade Germany from France – General Montgomery fails to cross the Rhine.
    - Eisenhower orders a slower advance.
    - December 1944, Germans drive Allies back (Battle of the Bulge), but lose thousands of men and weapons.
    - Germans can only defend – Allies advance.
  - Throughout 1944, Soviets drive Germans back to Germany – poised to strike at Germany itself by the end of the year.
  - 1945, Soviets get to Berlin first – meet with US and British forces in Berlin.

- End of the war in Europe (V.E. day = 7<sup>th</sup> May).
- Japan carries on war in Asia – USA use atomic bombs (Hiroshima and Nagasaki).
- End of the war in Asia (V.J. day = 15<sup>th</sup> August).

### **The Cold War (1945 – 1989)**

- Definition*
- Political conflict between the USA (democracy) and the USSR (communist).
  - It was a “cold” war, because there was no fighting (although there nearly was).
  - Competition – e.g. the space race, the arms race (nuclear), and sports.
  - Conflicts abroad – Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, Berlin Blockade.
  - Alliances – NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) = democratic alliance, Warsaw Pact = communist (Soviet) alliance.
- Berlin Blockade*
- Germany is occupied (1945) – split into 4 zones (British, US, French, Soviet).
  - British, US, and French zones combine to form West Germany (capitalist).
  - Russia creates (and exploits) East Germany – iron curtain through Europe.
  - Marshall Plan gives money to countries if become democratic – USSR refuses.
  - Berlin lies in the East – but both sides want it.
  - Stalin blocks access to Berlin by road and rail.
  - Have to save Berlin (Truman doctrine of containment) – Berlin airlift.
  - Berlin wall built in 1961.
- Cuba*
- Playground for rich Americans in the 1950s.
  - 1959, Fidel Castro takes power. US factories “nationalised” – US cuts trade links.
  - CIA tries to oust Castro at the Bay of Pigs – failure!
  - Castro turns to Russia – missile bases set up (could wipe out USA).
  - Stand-off between Kennedy and Khrushchev – brinkmanship.
  - US naval blockade of Cuba.
  - Eventually both sides back down – a “hot-line” is established.
- The Arms Race*
- Effects of nuclear attack = blast, dust, heat, radiation. Long term effects = radiation, deformities, climate changes (nuclear winter).
  - Range – tactical = battlefield, theatre = one country, strategic = country to country.
  - Cuban missile crisis (1960 to 1962)
  - Nuclear proliferation (1960s and 1970s)
  - NATO / Warsaw Pact – having weapons is a deterrent (i.e. MAD theory – Mutually Assured Destruction).
  - CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) emerges – unilateral = one country disarming, multilateral = more than one country disarming.
  - Reduction – treaties and SALT talks (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks).