

Essay on the history of america - world war ii to 1970s

[War](#), [World War 2](#)



It is essential to understand the circumstances that arose after World War II which gives a prior of analyzing post-war in America. Obviously, it is not possible to do without examining the war itself, especially its development and the outcome. In the year between 1939 and 1945, this is a period which has made a permanent record on the world history, being an era regarded as the darkest of all in the existence of man. This is because of the war involving over 60 countries which lead to the loss of about 50 million lives among them being both military and civilian. The initiation of the war was associated with the maximum ruler of Germany who was in authority at that time. Adolf Hitler, whose interest was in the acquisition of massive lands in Eastern Europe, had an ambition he started by invading Poland on September, 1939. This action of Hitler was swiftly responded to by other countries within and outside Europe, forming an alliance to contain his excesses. Hitler was not left alone in his pursuit but instead his German forces gained the alliance of countries like Finland to successfully invade the Soviet Union in an attack referred to as the Operation Barbarossa. Within these six years of war, various warring factions sprouted, either in support of or opposition to the German forces. Japan is an example, rising in support of Hitler and launched an amphibious assault in a quest to capture Port Moresby in 1942. That assault was contained by an attack from the opposing Commonwealth Nations called the "Allies" in the Coral Sea battle; European countries like France, Britain and their associates like the United States, Canada and Australia formed the Allies while Germany and its supporters- Japan and Italy- formed the Axis. At a point, the Allies had an upper hand on the Axis due to their outnumbering of the Axis nations both in actual number

and weaponry. By 1943, the Allies had gained great momentum and in the following year, 1944, France was invaded by the allied forces (the famous D-Day in Normandy) and captured by the defeat suffered by the German Army units. Not long from then, by May 1945 precisely, the Axis Army collapsed and surrendered to the Allies, shortly after the suicidal death of Hitler, marking an end to the war of six years and declaration of victory followed by celebration parties in Britain.

During this period of war, there were several major turning points. Basically, among the two in this context, one was civil right Movement which gave the African American equality together with that of women. This was possible through America getting a black president for the first time and women getting into the issues of politics. Similarly, the other turning point was the creation of Johnson which was referred to as 'The Great Society' with legislation which had laws that had the attempts to fight poverty thus referring it the war on poverty. Importantly, all the legislations created by Johnson were able to remain intact for the significance of all the Americans. Certainly this was not the end of war since already the war was in progress outside Europe where it emanated and in the Far East with Japan holding on to battle even after Germany had surrendered. This war continued for few months farther into 1945 even though there were some behind the scenes peace talks, the Japanese Emperor Hirohito, was purposely misinformed by the army elite and did not accept the path of unconditional surrender of the proud country (Duiker, & Spielvogel, 2007). Then the United States played a lead role in the ongoing war in Japan, by dropping atomic bombs in the two Japanese cities, Nagasaki and Hiroshima on August 6 and 9 respectively. But

even then, despite Hirohito's will to end the hostilities, the generals wanted to fight on and even planned a coupe-d'état, which, fortunately for all, failed. Since Japan had no more strength on the fight, so it surrendered unconditionally on August, 1945. These wars lead to an enhancement of the social and economic status of America and hence making it a super power with a much improved economic growth.

Women played a major role that could lead to the win during the war. Due to massive conscription of men, women involved themselves in jobs outside home with some joining politics and thus this increased greatly than what was experienced during World War One. Both in Britain and in the UD women moved from being just homemakers to working outside their homes, being at the war front or factories building warships, aircraft, weaponry and vehicles. Women got greatly recruited into the Army, especially to the Navy where they were able to free men combatants of some duties. An example of one significant role played by women then was serving as pilots for Army planes which took supplies to the war front and served as aid workers like Army nurses and doctors. Women were formally encrypted into the Army in 1942 by the establishment of Women Army Auxiliary Corps (WACC) which translated into Women's Army Corp the following year. These contributions from a gender once less regarded are now well praised as part of what helped the Allies gain the victory at last. Other spheres of human endeavor which were once considered the exclusive of men, prewar, also benefited from the contribution of women (Barrow, & Mandy, 2008).

War indeed leaves significant marks on its participants, even on associated non-participants, and so did World War Two. The effect of World War Two

was sadly not restricted to just its participants; it was a war which affected every part of the world with a ravaging downturn to the global economy. Yet, as surprising as it is, some countries, such as the United States had their economies benefit from the war, thanks to wise economic policies of its leaders. This, of course, was much due to the massive destruction in the new world and the Far East, making USA the only developed country that did not require a "major overhaul". That's why from 1945 to the early 1970s, the US economy improved greatly, gaining it place as a world superpower. This is fondly associated with the 'golden age of capitalism' which saw, low class families changing status to middle class, a grand-breaking record of productivity and a significant rise in the US GDP. A baby boom was also experienced in the US at that time and just five years after the war ended, the GDP per person in the US had risen much higher than that of any of the participating countries in the war, both the allies and the amazingly quickly recovering Germany. Taxes were cut down from the wartime rates; inflation was quite low and; the vision of President Lyndon B. Johnson of a "Great Society" paid well off. President Johnson was president of the US between 1963 and 1969 after serving as the Vice of John Kennedy and taking over after the famous assassination which occurred in Dallas. Lyndon Johnson was a president who brought about many social reforms. Out of these reforms, the impacts of many of those are still being felt today. President Johnson will be remembered for the design of the 'Great Society' legislation which brought about a magnificent increase in the number of educated people in the US because of the education aid. He upheld the civil rights, the Medicare, Medic aid and public broadcasting and a declaration of war on poverty. The

government had money from the \$200 billion war bonds to even finance private industry research and development such which led to the development of the internet. At that time, what we know as internet today was called Arpanet. Space programs were another thing that benefited from the administration of Johnson and he did not stop supporting it until the first Moon landing mission was launched in 1969. Downside, President Johnson, played a major role in the involvement of the US in Vietnam War. His desire to stop Communism from expanding led to his military campaign in Vietnam which has made about 550, 000 US military men to be in Vietnamese territory by the year 1968. His activities to win a war that many considered unwinnable made his popularity to plummet due to increasing US casualties, giving rise to many protests, and thus causing a division in his Democratic party (Lipset, & Seymour, 1996). World War Two was a devastating event and most nations that experienced it has continually demonstrated a negative attitude towards it. With no doubt, this led to the birth of the peace initiative called the United Nations of which the United States became a member since inception, replacing the in-adept League of Nations. So, the Alliance of the opposing nations to German's invasions, metamorphosed into the United Nations formed by France, Soviet Union, China, Britain and the United States, the great powers that got the victory at war (Shils, Edward, Janowitz, & Morris, 1995). These countries became the permanent members of the UN's Security Council till present day and had the Universal Declaration on Human Rights put together and adopted in 1948. The United Nations has impacted so much on the pursuance of peace and encouraging

the enshrinement of human rights in national and regional laws, the world over ever since.

References

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