

Scene 02 Causes of WWII

June 6 1944. Thousands of men from all over the world are risking their lives to free Europe from the reign of the Nazis in what must be one of the most brutal battles of all time...

But why, why did this have to happen?

We will need to look back to the first world war to find out what caused the second world war.

The first world war was initiated by Germany in 1914 and ended with Germany's defeat in 1918. This war was one of the largest that the world had ever seen in terms of casualties and economic collapse. Devastated by the war, the attacked countries demand for Germany to pay reparations. Leaders of the Allied countries: the United States, Great Britain, France and Italy meet in Paris to come up with a treaty that has to prevent Germany from starting a war ever again. The negotiations result in the Treaty of Versailles, in which Germany accepts the full blame for the first world war. The treaty arranges the reparation payments, limits the amount of armed forces in Germany, and describes which pieces of land should be handed over to other countries. Germany is forced to sign!

In the years after world war 1, the German people suffer. Unemployment is high and many are poor. These circumstances give rise to feelings of nationalism and spark civil unrest. During this time a man enters the stage: ADOLF HITLER. As he becomes a member of a small political party named 'German Workers Party', his ideas about Germany's future start to take shape.

While the party is still small, he becomes the party leader and changes its name to 'National Socialist German Workers Party' also known as Nazi party, as he tries to gain a following among the suffering people. In 1923 Hitler tries to seize power by means of a violent coup in Munich, but the time wasn't right for him yet...his attempt fails. He is captured and convicted for high treason.

In prison he writes a book: 'Mein Kampf'. This notorious book speaks about his racist ideologies. After a year Hitler is released and as head of the Nazi party he claims he will break the burden of the Treaty of Versailles if only the German people would vote him for president. When the financial crisis breaks out in 1929, the Nazi party sees a massive increase in following.

In 1933 Hitler finally rises to power as he gets elected as Chancellor of Germany. Though forbidden by the Treaty of Versailles he immediately starts to expand the army. He orders a military base to be stationed in the Allied occupied Rhineland. Furthermore steps are taken towards military agreements with Japan.

France and Great Britain are suspicious, but decide not to take action as they think that a strong Germany is a welcome obstacle against the advancing communism in Russia.

Under Hitler the economy slowly improves and in 1938 Hitler's troops march into Austria. Nazi propaganda and the improving economy in Germany persuade the Austrian people to vote "yes" to becoming part of Germany.

Hitler claims that the annexation of Austria will be his last. Again, France and Great Britain do not intervene.

But only half a year later the Nazis invade the western part of Czechoslovakia. After negotiation this is allowed by Great Britain, but only under the promise of Hitler to stay out of the remaining part of Czechoslovakia. When in 1939 Hitler breaks this promise, France and Great Britain threaten Hitler to declare war on him.

As Hitler is planning against a two front war, which was a major cause in Germany losing the First World War, Hitler makes a non aggression pact with the Soviet Union to make sure he can focus his war efforts westwards.

Meanwhile everything is being setup for an invasion in Poland.

Scene 03 Invasion of Poland

In Poland, Hitler is searching for "Lebensraum".
Room to live and farm land for feeding his people.

When German troops set foot in Poland, the Nazi propaganda machine tries to trick the world in believing that Germany attacked out of revenge for a Polish charge against a German military base. England and France demand an immediate retreat, but Hitler's forces march on...

During the build up to the war the German military tacticians had been developing an innovative military tactic, called "Blitzkrieg". This 'lightning war' is based on speed and surprise. The combined use of light tanks, soldiers and close air support results in high manoeuvrability and a fast paced warfare.

This new war tactic proves to be very effective, and soon Poland surrenders to the Nazis.

France and Great Britain now finally declare war on Germany...
World war II has begun.

Scene 04 German expansion

April 1940. Hitler attacks Denmark and Norway. Even though allied troops are stationed in Norway, both countries capitulate within days.

One month later German troops invade the neutral Belgium and The Netherlands. The Dutch army is defeated in 5 days. Belgium is able to hold its ground longer thanks to French and British army groups in the east. Smart Nazi war tactics eventually enable the German troops to move on and invade France. Remaining allied troops are evacuated from the beaches of Belgium. Stunned by the fast advancing German army in the north of France, the French government has no choice but to ask for a truce.

In Europe the 1930's had been a decade of rising tension, but turbulence was also growing in the far east.

At the time Japan's rulers realise that their island will run out of vital resources soon. Therefore Japan greatly depends on trading with other countries, including the United States. Japan seeks to be more independent and starts to annex other countries.

First Manchuria is invaded. Other parts of Asia are threatened with annexation too. Though most countries believe in a peaceful solution, the United States warn Japan by giving military support to China. Furthermore the United States stop trading with Japan in order to limit their capability to produce military equipment. But Japan calls the American bluff...

In september 1940 Japan concludes a pact with Germany and Italy and signs a nonaggression pact with the Soviet Union.

Now that Hitler has arranged back up from Italy and Japan, conquering more nations in western Europe isn't a priority to him anymore. He is planning to acquire the living space he needs on the eastern side of Germany.

He realises however, that before he can do that, he has to eliminate the threat that Great Britain still is.

Invading Great Britain requires a switch of tactics from the Nazis. Their first priority is to gain control over the British airspace...

Scene 05 Battle of Britain

After months of air raids and bombardments on British military and civilian targets, the German Luftwaffe has to bow down for the British Royal Air Force. An impending invasion of German ground troops fails to materialize.

The Battle of Britain is Hitler's first defeat in a war that, up until then, had been decided in his favor.

Scene 06 Pearl Harbor

Meanwhile the disturbed relation between Japan and the United States is reaching it's boiling point. Leaders of the United States are still trying to stop Japan's aggression with economic measures, but by the end of 1941 Japan's rulers see no future in negotiation anymore. Japan sticks to its expansion plans.

In a vicious attempt to cripple the American naval forces, Japan decides to attack the Hawaiian navy base Pearl Harbor.

The USA is at war... With in a short period after the Pearl Harbour attack, the United States erect a massive military industry that is backed by war bonds. These war bonds are a very clever way to finance the war and to get the Americans to stand behind the war effort.

Scene 07 Operation Barbarossa

In June 1941, right after the defeat in England, Germany launches Operation Barbarossa. The goal of this huge operation is to eliminate the Soviet Union. Hitler breaks the non aggression pact!

The German army starts off very strong in an attempt to strike Russia where it hurts most. The capital of the nation, Moscow.

But the Nazis misjudge Russia's vastness, and its rough climate.

First fall sets in, the roads turn to mud which almost makes the German army grind to a halt.

Then winter comes. In the very cold conditions, the Russian Red Army gains the advantage over the ill equipped German forces. The Nazis never make it to Moscow.

The failure of Operation Barbarossa marks an important tipping point in World War 2. It causes Russia to take side of the Allies in this world wide conflict.

Scene 08 German decline

Instead of a new offensive against Moscow, Hitler chooses to aim at the oilfields in the Caucasus region. A large part of the German army is ordered to take Stalingrad, the industrial heart of the Soviet Union. Hitler thinks that if Stalingrad falls, the Soviets will surrender. In order to seize Stalingrad, the Nazis cannot not depend on their highly effective blitzkrieg tactics. The streets of Stalingrad are too small and tanks struggle with the debris of collapsed buildings...

The invasion of Stalingrad unfolds into heavy door to door fighting. Both sides suffer heavy losses. The battle of Stalingrad is a decisive blow to the Nazis. A large part of Hitler's army is killed and whoever remains can only just escape.

Hitler is losing the upper hand...

Meanwhile in western Europe the Nazis are aware that the chances of an Allied attack is growing by the day. In all haste the Germans start reinforcing the Atlantic Wall. A large defensive system that covers the entire western coastline from the Pyrenees all the way up to Norway.

On the 6th of June 1944 the German defenses are put to the test.

The Allies attack the Nazis on the beaches of Normandy. Operation Overlord begins...

Scene 09 Normandy and beyond

The Allies, consisting of British, American and Canadian forces strategically make use of paratroopers, amphibious landing vehicles, airplanes and warships to secure a foothold on the beaches of Normandy.

The first objective of Operation Overlord is accomplished, but the allies will have to get off the beaches and into the mainland.

The Allies have crossed the English channel and breached a hole in the Nazis defensive lines...The invasion of Normandy is a success...at the cost of thousands of casualties.

During the first few months after the Normandy invasion, the Allied advance is slow. Tons of military equipment, fuel and soldiers have to be transported to France for the Allied forces to not only be able to hold their ground, but to start pushing the Germans back. As soon as the supply chains are up and running, the Allies pick up speed. The German armies are being cornered into the south east of France.

As the liberation of western Europe starts to take shape, the German army is still able to put up heavy resistance in some areas. Around the beginning of 1945 the allied forces manage to push into Belgium and the Netherlands. The liberation of these countries prevents the Germans from firing missiles at Great Britain.

Eventually the Allies march into Germany where they meet with the Russian Red Army that had fought courageously on the eastern front and had suffered a lot of casualties in their successful attempt to liberate millions of people.

Hitler, who couldn't handle the sight of the collapsing Third Reich, commands the German people to fight until the end, but he himself commits suicide on the 30th of April 1945. Just days before Germany is finally defeated by the Allies.

In the course of the liberation, it became very clear that the Nazis had been gruesomely effective at the annihilation of Jews and other minorities that they considered Untermenschen. Bizarre extermination camps were found in various locations. Some of them held barely living people who would later become living proof of the millions of innocent victims that had fallen prey to the Nazi regime.

Scene 10 The defeat of Japan

Germany, Hitler and the Third Reich are defeated. Europe is liberated, but the war itself is not over yet. Japan still poses a threat in the east. The English, the Russians and the Americans conclude that Japan should surrender unconditionally. Japan refuses.

Japan knows that a war against the Americans and the Russians will result in a defeat and therefore hopes that the Russians will respect the 4 year old non aggression pact between the two countries. Meanwhile the United States launch attacks on the Japanese Islands Iwo Jima and Okinawa as test cases for a later invasion on the main island. Japan is vastly outnumbered in weapons, ammunition and aircrafts and knows cannot win these battles. Still the Japanese code of honour gives them the spirit to fight on.

The War Journal of the Imperial Headquarters concludes:

“We can no longer direct the war with any hope of success. The only course left is for Japan's one hundred million people to sacrifice their lives by charging the enemy to make them lose the will to fight”

This ultimate last defensive effort of the Japanese results in a massacre on both sides. Plans to invade the main island of Japan with ground troops are put on hold in order to prevent any more casualties...

America is ready to put its faith into a new kind of weapon. A weapon so devastating that armies can be wiped out in an instant...Unsure about the consequences, but not willing to risk more lives, US leaders decide to use the new weapon against Japan...

An atomic bomb, “Little Boy”, is boarded on a B-29 and flown above Japan.

The crew is about to release a bomb that will instantly wipe out 80,000 people. While thousands more will die from nuclear radiation in the days after...

Japan wrongly assumes that the United States have played their hand and still doesn't want to surrender. America responds by throwing a second bomb, “Fat Man”, on the city of Nagasaki...

Japan can no longer continue and surrenders. World War 2 has finally come to an end...

Scene 11 Memorials

Millions of soldiers, minorities and innocent civilians were killed during World War 2.

The aftermath of the violent war years is still visible today. The numerous World War 2 memorials all over the world will help us to remember and reflect upon this regretful period in our history.

Let us forever honor those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.
we salute you!

For safety:

but his attempt fails.

Untermenschen, *inferior people*.

The Austrian people are attracted by Nazi propaganda and the improving economy in Germany. In a referendum they vote “yes” to becoming part of Germany.

The numerous world war 2 memorials all over the world will help us to remember and reflect upon this regretful period in our *recent* history.

in the course of world war 2, more and more countries from all over the world gave their support to the Allies.

It is difficult to point out the winners and losers of the second world war. All countries that engaged in combat suffered their casualties, but the Soviet Union lost by far the most men. The outcome of the war would be very different if it wasn't for the tremendous efforts of both the Soviet Union and the Allies. The USA and the Soviet Union became real superpowers after the war.

For trailer:

The story of World War 2 is coming to the dome! World 2 War is an action packed full-dome documentary that combines cinematic battle scenes with informative overviews of the battlefield and historic reference from photos and videos. World 2 War will put you right in the middle of World War 2's biggest battles!