**Road to WWII**

Rise of Dictators

Failure of the League of Nations

Post WWI Russia

* Got out of WWI in 1917
* Stalin gains power 1924 and continues to try to implement Communism
* Stalin’s Five Year Plan – collectivization of lands
  + Focuses on production of agriculture and industrialzation
* Stalin’s purges – erases any opponents
* Cult of Stalin
* Widespread hunger
* 1939 signs the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact (not part of Axis)

Post WWI Italy

* Benito Mussolini sets up the first fascist state in 1922
  + Looks to revive the glory of the Romans
  + “Mussolini made the trains run on time”
  + “Blackshirts” to intimidate voters
* Felt left out of the Treaty of Versailles
* 1936 Rome-Berlin Axis joins Germany and Italy together
* Hitler had followed Mussolini’s fascist ways but soon overtook him in power

Post WWI Germany

* Hit hard by the Treaty of Versailles
  + Limited military: no air force, only 100,000 soldiers
  + Colonies and other lands taken away
  + Reparations (33 billion 1919 dollars)
* Combination of all of the above causes inflation
  + Germany prints money 1919
  + then hyperinflation in 1923
* On the road to recovery but 1929 the Great Depression hits the world and Germany suffers again

(reparations cancelled in 1932 but loans were finally paid off in 2010)

Hitler takes over 1933

* Started a systematic breakdown of the Treaty of Versailles – all listed under Mein Kampf (unite all German speaking peoples-Austria, militarize, lebensraum)
* Same methods as the US and Canada to spark an economic upturn – public works projects (autobahn)
* Military production and public works fixed their economy – strongest before WWII
* Abolished all other political parties – dictatorship
* Belief in the Aryan Race and should exterminate all the inferiors
* Systematic extermination 1935-45 – take away their rights and privileges (Nuremburg Laws), concentrate (ghettos), deport/ kill (concentration camps)
* Kristallnacht – attack on Jewish people in 1938 – broken glass made it a “Crystal Night”
* Concentration camps and ghettoes set up 1939

Road to war – Failure of the L.O.N.

* 1931 Japan invades Manchuria then parts of China
* League of Nations takes no real action against Germany and Japan
* Japan withdraws from the League
* 1935 Italy attacks Abyssinia (Ethiopia) to connect their African claims
  + LON puts economic sanctions on Italy

Immediate Causes

* 1936 Hitler occupies the Rhineland (to be demilitarized under Versailles)
* Socialists vs fascists in Spain
  + Italy and Germany support fascists (only through supplies), 1936-39
* British policy of appeasement when Hitler broke the rules of the Treaty
  + Britain wanted to make peace by letting Hitler join with Austria (Mar 1938)
  + Britain lets Germany take the Sudetenland and Czechoslovakia (Mar-Apr 1938)
* Britain claimed that they would wage war if Hitler attacked Poland
* Hitler called his bluff and the war began September 1, 1939
* Hitler had an agreement with Russia to split Poland – part of the Non-Aggression Pact August 1939

Canada’s Response before 1939

* Canada continued to follow a policy of gaining autonomy and was considered isolationists like the Americans (stay out of Europe’s business)
* People from WWI were pacifists now
* 1937 King visits Hitler, everything ok according to King
  + Meets first with Hermann Goering (to be Luftewaffe commander)
  + Discusses trade between Canada and Germany

Hitler told King,

"so far as war is concerned, you need have no fear of war at the instance of Germany. We have no desire for war; our people don't want war, and we don't want war." (King’s Diary, June 29, 1937)

* + Hitler had said his remilitarization was to regain pride from the humiliation of the Treaty of Versailles
* King’s Meeting with Hitler

"My sizing up of the man as I sat and talked with him was that he is really one who truly loves his fellow-men, and his country, and would make any sacrifice for their good." (Diary, June 29, 1937)

Hitler appeared to be "a man of deep sincerity and a genuine patriot." (Diary, June 29, 1937)

King saw similarities between himself and Hitler, writing, "As I talked with him, I could not but think of Joan of Arc. He is distinctly a mystic .... He is a teetotaller (abstains from alcohol) and also a vegetarian; is unmarried, abstemist (moderate) in all his habits and ways." (Diary, June 29, 1937)

* King unwilling to take Jewish refugees to stay out of Europe’s business
* Canada still in a depression so they didn’t want more immigrants
* *St. Louis* –Refuses entry of 900 Jews in 1939
  + Before Canada, the St Louis tried Cuba and the US (Cuba allowed 29)
  + Ship goes back to Europe, 288 are taken by Britain and survive
  + The rest are spread over Belgium, France and the Netherlands where the Germans will take over
  + about 250 will eventually die because of the Holocaust