**US History**

**Measurement Topic 6: America’s participation in WW2**

**Capacity Matrix 2: The end of the war decisions and effect**

**Level 3: Learn it, study it**, and then test it

Learning Target #1: Describe the events that caused/led the USA to join WW2. Learning Target #2: Explain Roosevelt’s foreign policy during WW2.

After World War 1, Americans did not want to be part of any other wars. Americans began to feel that the government should create a policy of isolationism. Isolationism is a type of foreign policy where a nation decides to stay away from the issues of other nations. When nations participate in isolationism, they remain neutral during wars and other altercations. In order to insure that the United States remained neutral, neutrality laws were created. The first law was the neutrality act of 1935. This law mandated that America could not sell weapons/arms to any nation/country at war. A second law was pass in 1936 that added to the first neutrality act. This addition stated that America could not sell arms/weapons to any nation/country that was involved in a civil war. Americans really were in support of isolationism.

President Roosevelt was not an isolationist, but he knew the American public supported isolationism, however he felt that the USA should stand by and not support nations in need so in 1937 when Japan invaded China, it was technically not a war, so Roosevelt ignored the neutrality act of 1935 and sold weapons to China to fight Japan. In Europe Hitler had steadily gained land. The other major nations did not want to go to war again so they attempted to appease Hitler with treaties and agreements. This worked until Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. September 3, 1939 France and Great Britain declare war on Germany September 3, 1939. Roosevelt knew that the American people did not want to join the war, so he officially declared American neutrality two days after the war started, however because he was not an isolationist he did convince congress to redo the neutrality act. A new law was passed in 1939 which allowed nations at war who wanted to buy stuff (weapons, food, supplies) from the USA need to pay cash and transport them with their own ships. This allowed the USA to sell supplies to the Allied nations (France, Russia and Great Britain). Roosevelt found a loophole in the neutrality act to help Britain. Germany had destroyed almost all Great Britain’s Navy, so they had requested the USA sell them some ships. According to the law, Roosevelt could not “sell” ships to Britain, but Roosevelt could “loan” Britain ships/destroyers. An agreement was made where the USA would loan ships in exchange the USA would build American bases on British colonies.

Shortly at the start of WW2, France falls to the Germans, Russia to is slowly falling, and Great Britain has run out of money to continue fighting in the war, so Roosevelt again asks congress to help out the Allied nations by passing a new law. The new law was called the Lend-Lease Act. This new law would allow the USA to rent out weapons to the allied nations. Rent was to be paid regularly or at the end of the war. Roosevelt also met secretly with Churchill, Great Britain’s leader, and entered into an alliance together. The alliance was called the Atlantic Charter. Roosevelt and America was willing to support the Allies but not get involved in the war.

As the USA remains neutral, but helps the Allied nations it begins to accumulate enemies. Germany had become angry with the interference the USA had by providing supplies to the Allies, but Japan was the nation that took the irritation to the next level. The USA had sold weapons to China when Japan had invaded them. To also help keep Japan from spreading its control, the USA stopped selling jet fuel and oil to Japan, which infuriated the Japanese. Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7th, 1941. Later that night Roosevelt asks congress to declare war on Japan. On December 7th, 1941 America was at war with Japan, but on December 11th, 1941 Germany and Italy declare war on America.

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What foreign policy did Americans want prior to WW2?
2. What laws were created to keep the USA neutral? Explain each.
3. What was the lend-Lease act? Explain it.
4. What was the Atlantic Charter? Who did it involve?
5. How did President Roosevelt feel about isolationism?
6. What happened in 1937?
7. What happened December 7th, 1941?

Write a summary of explaining what America did to try and stay out of the issues in Europe and what Roosevelt did to help the Allied nations who were at war.

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