

And the War Begins!

- Mackenzie King did not want Canada to go to war again
- however, he really had no choice:
 - Hitler had to be stopped
 - Britain needed allies

- King promised to not conscript soldiers at all in order to keep Quebec supporting the war

- Canada was not well prepared for war
- the numbers of soldiers were not that high, and most of their equipment was way out of date
- people still remembered the war – not as enthusiastic as the last time
- lots of men signed up
 - \$1.30 a day as a private was a welcome increase from the depression's poverty

- Canada contributed early with the BCATP
 - British Commonwealth Air Training Program
 - trained over 130,000 pilots, navigators, etc.
 - trained on the prairies – lots of land and no enemies to mess with training

- when war broke out, King mobilized the gov't for war
- made C.D. Howe the head of munitions and supplies
 - had the power to do whatever necessary
- Canada contributed to the war with uranium, food, munitions, people, supplies.. whatever necessary!

The Beginning of the War...

- at 4:45am on Sept. 1st, 1939, Hitler invaded Poland and England declared war that same day

- Poland was demolished

- Hitler was using a new battle strategy to crush the Poles known as **blitzkrieg**

- Used surprise, speed, and a massive assault
 - Luftwaffe (air force) would heavily bomb and drop paratroopers behind enemy lines
 - Panzers (heavy tanks) would demolish whatever was left of enemy positions
 - lighter tanks and infantry would mop up whoever was left
- was the exact OPPOSITE of WWI tactics which relied on defense and trenches
- Hitler knew that if his advances were stopped, he would likely lose

- the Brits and French wanted to fight a defensive war

- hold them off long enough to weaken/bankrupt the country with blockades
- Britain relied on their channel (island!) and the French relied on the **Maginot Line**
 - underground series of defenses along the Rhine

Phony War

- after the defeat of Poland, nothing really happened until May of 1940 (false sense of security?)

- Germany needed to beat France, then it could hit Britain

- the Germans made a surprise move
- rather than attack France over the Maginot Line, they went around, through the Ardennes Forest (Belgium)
- beat France in two weeks via relentless blitzkrieg attacks
- 500,000 Allied (British, French, Canadian) soldiers were stranded on the French beaches at **Dunkirk**
 - over 340,000 were evacuated by the Royal Navy and the merchant marines
 - nearly cost the Allies the war right there...

Battle of Britain

- Hitler had France and needed to take out Britain
- wanted to invade (**Operation Sea Lion**)
 - bomb them to smithereens and then invade
 - problem: Britain wasn't giving up
 - Hitler, frustrated, turned to bombing cities in order to demoralize the English public
 - was Britain's "finest hour" (Churchill) as they withstood the beating and fought back
- Canadian pilots joined in the defense of Britain, and although outnumbered 5-1, they held the Luftwaffe off

Russian Invasion

- unable to beat Britain and its Allies, Hitler turned his sights to the east
- Hitler knew that Russia under Stalin would not remain idle for long – decided to attack first...
 - broke the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and invaded in 1941 – will prove to be a BIG mistake...
 - Germans were after oilfields in the Caucus, and Hitler secretly didn't like Slavic people (like Jewish people)