

Pacific Theatre of War

- Japan was an imperialistic country since the turn of the 20th century due to lack of resources
 - being a small island, they needed coal, iron, oil, etc.
- moved into Manchuria (China's foremost industrial province) in 1931 and invaded further
- many atrocities occurred here (The Rape of Nanking)

- by 1941, they began to stretch farther into Asia
- before Pearl Harbour (later notes), Japan was attacking Hong Kong, Rangoon, Manila, and Midway
 - saw 6 months of consecutive victories

- **Hong Kong** was a battlefield that saw CDN casualties
 - was a British holding (hence why we were there)
 - defended bravely for two weeks in spite of having no chance of winning
 - harsh combat, and brutal treatment of CDN POWs
 - many CDNs were worked to death in work camps and faced the worst treatment in all the War
 - freed CDN POWs in 1945 were as skinny as Jewish prisoners in German work camps
 - many CDNs never forgave the Japanese for what they went through

- this was one of Canada's first losses in WWII, and was the defeat of our entire Asian presence
- after Pearl Harbour, Canada is really afraid that Japan will attack us next...

Pearl Harbour

- as we've said before, America was isolationist in theory, but not necessarily in practice prior to 1941
 - sold arms to BOTH sides
 - gave loans to BOTH sides
- America as a capitalist juggernaut was in full speed

- however, this changed due mainly to the Pacific theatre of war and Japanese aggression
- Hitler was winning in Europe, but the Americans were worried about the Japanese
 - built a "two-ocean navy" in 1940 (Atlantic and Pacific)

- both Japan and America sought to avoid conflict with each other, but neither would compromise their goals for peace
- the USA warned Japan to give up its aggression
 - seen as a threat to their dream of becoming a world power
 - USA was aware of the brutalities committed against the Chinese from Japanese aggression
 - The Rape of Nanking...
- most isolationists wanted to stay out of Europe, but literally none opposed war on the Pacific
 - was Germany more of a threat?

- in July of 1941, Japan had taken over all of Indochina
- Roosevelt froze their American assets as a result
 - Japan had a choice:
 - submit to the USA, or simply seek greater territory to feed its war machine
 - figured that they had until mid December until their oil supplies would be in jeopardy
 - strike, or starve themselves of oil and capitulate?

- US code breakers had word that war was imminent by November

- Japan hoped that a surprise attack would serve as a knock-out punch
 - instead of striking small US-held areas, hit their main fleet in one fell swoop
 - would make the US worry about Hitler more, and leave Japan alone

- on December 7th, 1941, Japan struck
 - unopposed waves of Japanese bombers flew across Oahu to bomb parked naval ships, and strafe landed planes
 - was the most devastating loss in American history
 - 188 aircraft destroyed and as many damaged
 - eight battleships, three cruisers, and three destroyers were sunk or crippled
 - killed 2,400 Americans
 - Roosevelt said: “This day will live in infamy!”

- this attack did not cause the Americans to waver at all
- if anything, it made them madder than ever (like the British in the Battle of Britain)

- declared war on Japan the next day
 - still weren't sure about Hitler though...
 - Hitler helped them out by declaring war on THEM
 - another big mistake Hitler made, although it likely would have happened anyways
 - quoted “America was a country who was half Judaized and half Negrified” and he would see them defeated
 - Mussolini was quick to echo those words (before he was quick to eat them...)

- now, the USA was in a global war, more so than most of the Allied troops

- whether we like it or not, the Americans on the Allied side helped to greatly swing the balance against the Axis