



## 16-1: Hitler's Lightning War

Essential Question:

How did the aggressors of WWII benefit from the policy of appeasement?



## Eastern Europe: Post WWI



# Germany Sparks a New War in Europe

- ▶ Secret Agreement
  - ▶ **Nonaggression pact**—Germans and Soviets agree not to fight each other. This was known as the **“Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact”** signed in 1939.
- ▶ Hitler: No threat from the east
- ▶ Stalin: Takeover of Baltics and no threat from Germany



# German's Blitzkrieg

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- ▶ Sept. 1, 1939: Hitler attacked Poland
- ▶ First test of Germany's newest military strategy – The Blitzkrieg
  - ▶ "Lightning War"
  - ▶ Used fast moving planes and tanks, followed by massive infantry forces, to take enemy by surprise
  - ▶ Swiftly crush opposition with overwhelming force
- ▶ Would bring Lebensraum, or "living space," for the German people
- ▶ The "racially superior" Germans would colonize the territory
- ▶ Britain and France did little militarily to aid Poland



# The Soviets Make Their Move

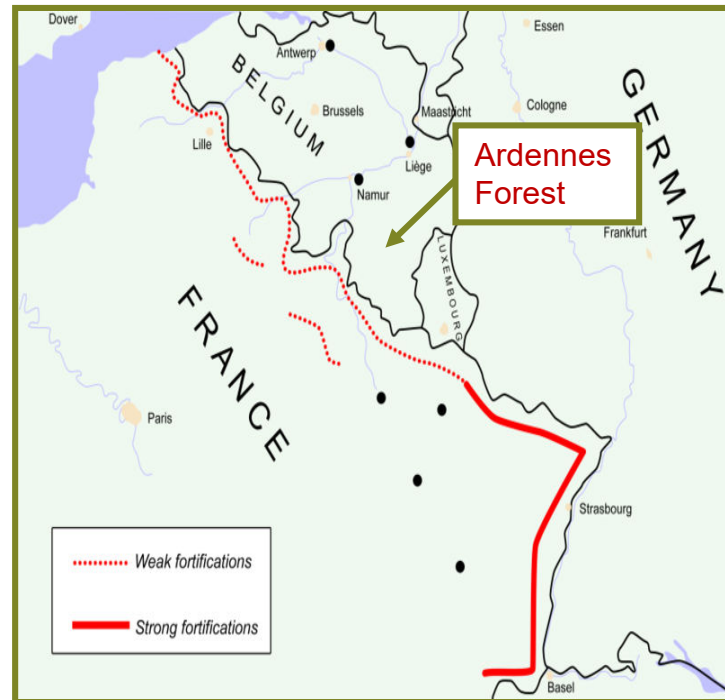
- ▶ Sept. 17th: Stalin sent Soviet troops to occupy the eastern half of Poland
- ▶ Moved to annex countries north of Poland
  - ▶ Lithuania, Latvia, & Estonia fell without a struggle
  - ▶ Finland resisted
    - ▶ Stalin sent 1 million troops to Finland
    - ▶ Finns fiercely defended their country
    - ▶ Soviets suffered heavy losses, but they won through force of numbers
    - ▶ March, 1940: Stalin forced the Finns to surrender



Soldiers on skis attacked Soviet

# Maginot Line

- ▶ French and British troops were stationed along the **Maginot Line**
- ▶ A system of fortifications along France's border with Germany
- ▶ Waited for the Germans to attack for 7 months
  - ▶ Nothing happened
- ▶ Britain and France accused of waging a "phony war"



# Denmark and Norway

- ▶ April 9th, 1940: Hitler invaded Denmark & Norway
  - ▶ 4 hours after the attack, Denmark fell
  - ▶ 2 months later, Norway surrendered
- ▶ Germans began building bases along the Norwegian & Danish coasts to launch strikes on Britain

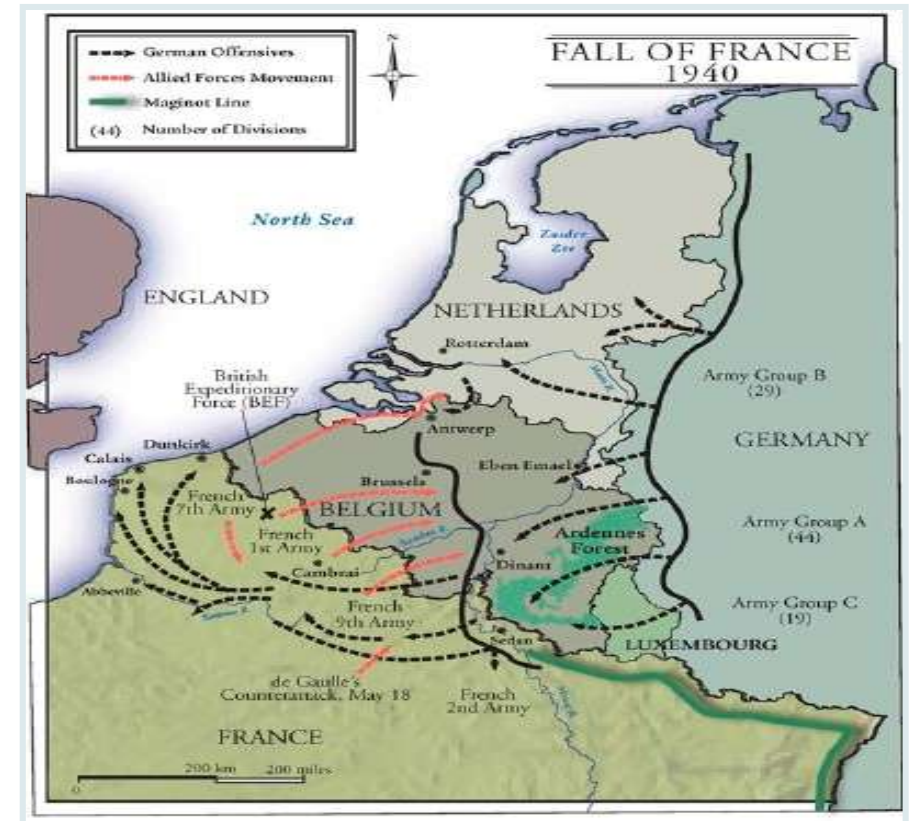
German infantry attacking through a burning Norwegian village.



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-H26353  
Foto: Borchert, Erich (Eric) | April 1940

# The Fall of France

- ▶ May, 1940: Hitler begin a dramatic sweep through the Netherlands, Belgium, & Luxembourg to get at France
- ▶ Hitler sent larger force of tanks & troops through the **Ardennes**
  - ▶ A heavily wooded area in northern France, Luxembourg, & Belgium
- ▶ Germans managed to squeeze by the Maginot Line
- ▶ Reached France's northern coast in 10 days.





# Rescue at Dunkirk

- ▶ Germans trapped Allied forces around the French city of Lille (Leel)
- ▶ Allies outnumbered, outgunned, and attacked from the air
  - ▶ Retreated to the beaches of Dunkirk
    - ▶ French port city near the Belgian border
    - ▶ Were trapped with their backs to the sea
- ▶ Great Britain set out to rescue the army
  - ▶ Sent a fleet of 850 ships across the English channel
- ▶ May 26 to June 4: Sailed back and forth from Britain to Dunkirk
  - ▶ Carried some 338,000 soldiers to safety



# Rescue at Dunkirk

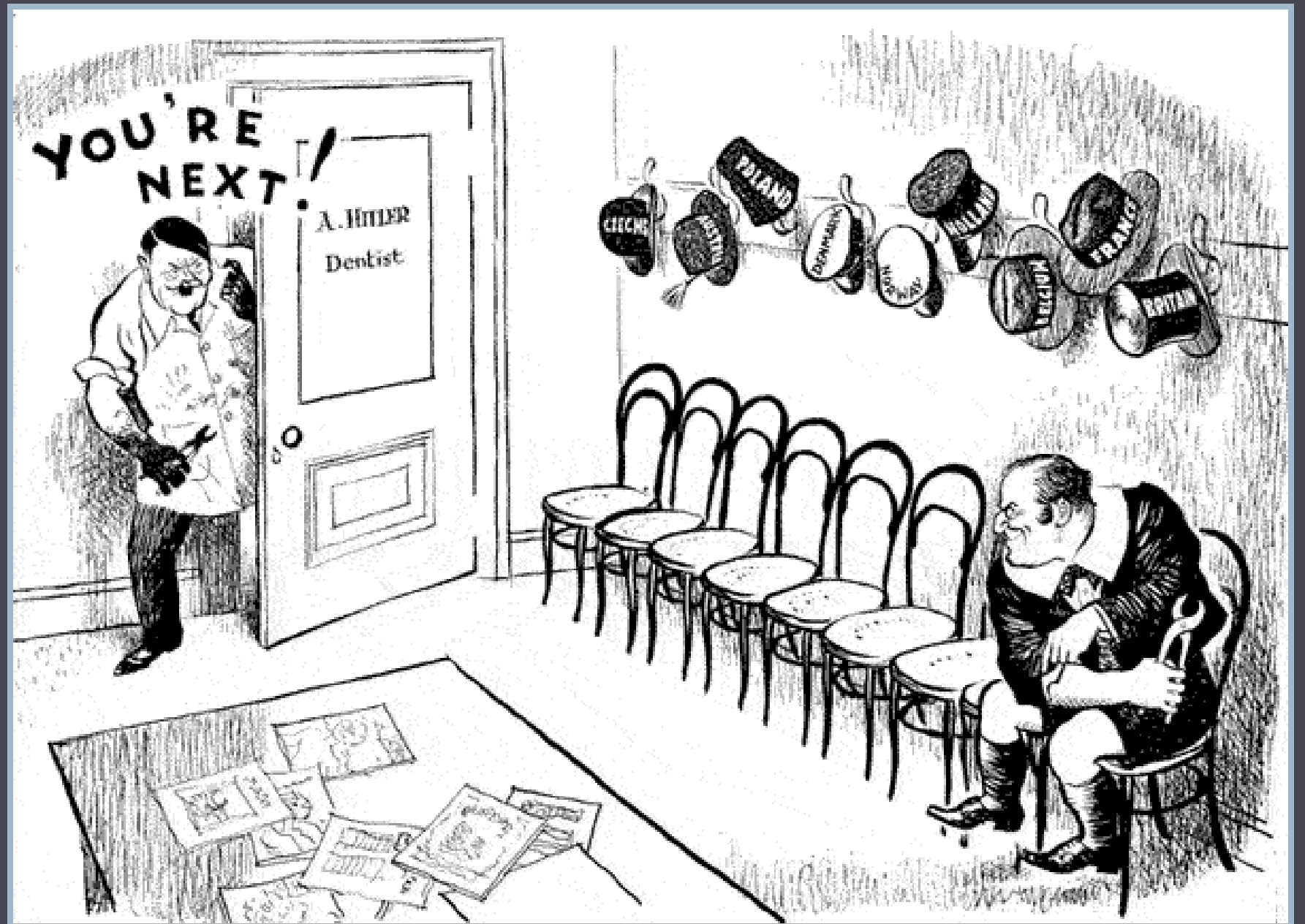


# Fall of France

- ▶ June 14th: Germans took Paris
- ▶ June 22, 1940: French leaders surrendered
  - ▶ Germans took control of the northern part of the country.
  - ▶ Left the southern part to a puppet government (Vichy France)
    - ▶ Headed by Marshal Philippe Petain
    - ▶ French hero from WWI



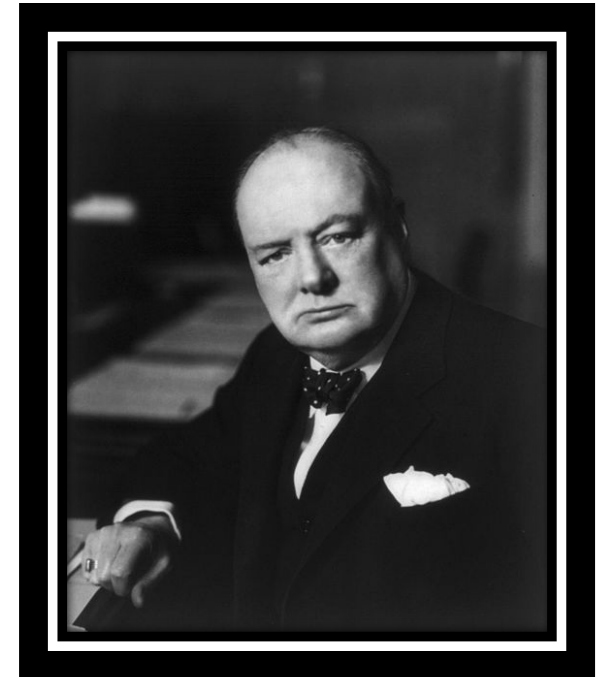
# Battle of Britain



# Battle of Britain

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- ▶ Great Britain now stood alone against the Nazis.
- ▶ Winston Churchill
  - ▶ British Prime Minister
  - ▶ Declared that his nation would never give in
- ▶ *“We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets...we shall never surrender.”*



# Battle of Britain

- ▶ Summer 1940: Germany began bombing Great Britain
- ▶ Sept 7th: Began bombing cities, especially London
  - ▶ Purpose: to break British morale
- ▶ Royal Air Force counterattacked
  - ▶ New technology
    - ▶ Radar: electronic tracking
    - ▶ Enigma:
      - German code-making machine
      - Smuggled into Britain
      - Enabled them to decode
      - German messages
      - Alan Turing
  - ▶ **Battle of Britain**—Air war over Britain lasted until May 1941



Aircraft spotter on the roof of a building in London. St. Paul's Cathedral is in the background. 306-NT-901B-3.



Winston Churchill giving his famous 'V' sign





Standing up  
gloriously out of  
the flames and  
smoke of  
surrounding  
buildings, St.  
Paul's Cathedral is  
pictured during  
the great fire raid  
of Sunday  
December 29th."  
1940. 306-NT-  
3173V.



Children of an eastern suburb of London, who have been made homeless by the random bombs of the Nazi night raiders, waiting outside the wreckage of what was their home." September 1940. 306-NT-3163V.





# Mediterranean & Eastern Europe

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- ▶ **May 10, 1941: Hitler called off attacks in Britain to focus on Eastern Europe & the Mediterranean**
- ▶ **North Africa**
  - ▶ Mussolini attacks British-controlled Egypt
    - ▶ Suez Canal key to reaching oil fields in Middle East
  - ▶ British take 130,000 Italians prisoner
  - ▶ **Hitler sends in tank force to reinforce troops**
  - ▶ **Britain forced to retreat**
- ▶ **Balkans**
  - ▶ **Hitler persuaded Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary to join Axis powers**
  - ▶ **Yugoslavia & Greece resisted & were invaded in April 1941**
    - ▶ **Both quickly surrender**



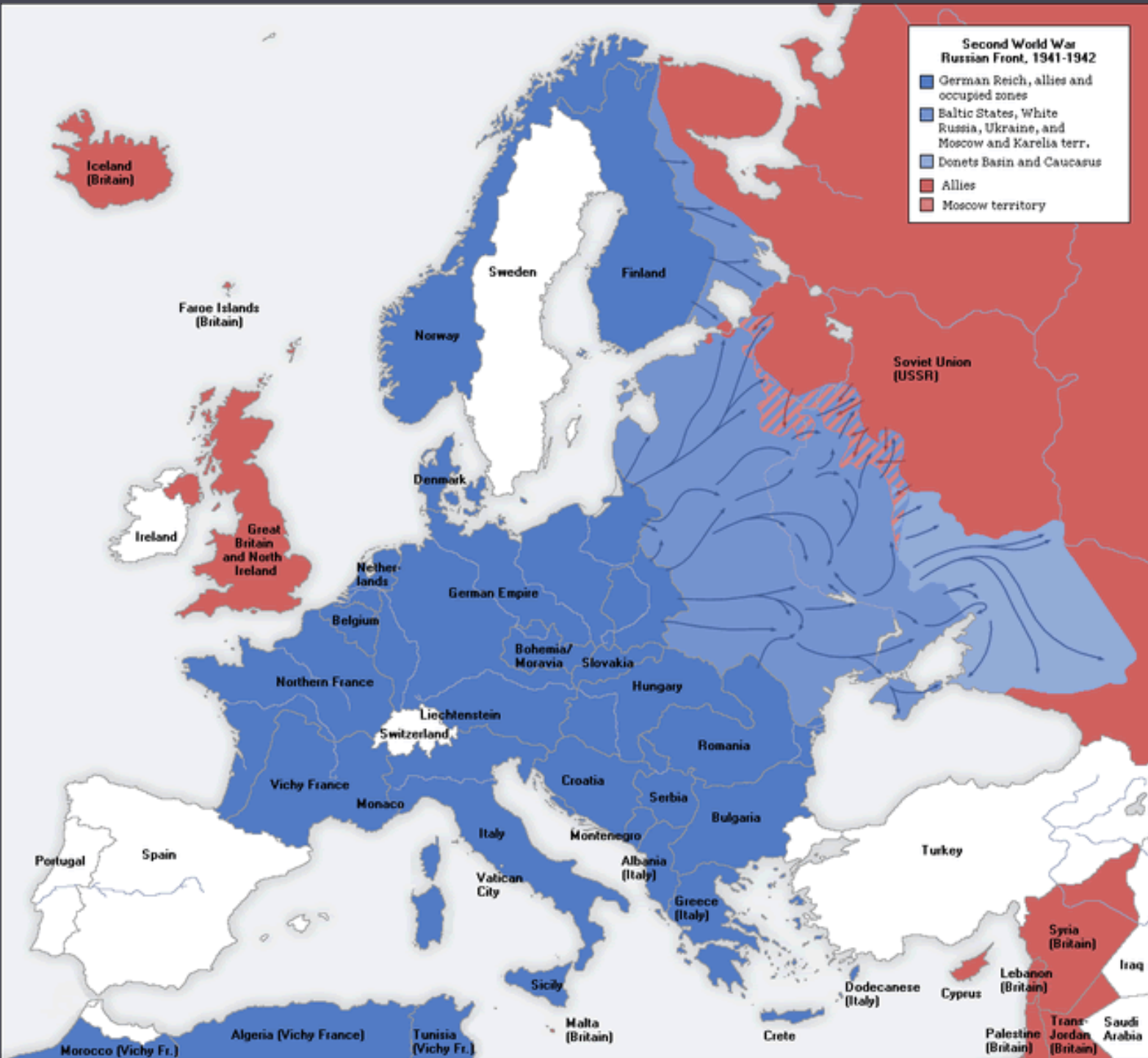
# Mediterranean & Eastern Europe

- ▶ June 22, 1941: Germany invaded USSR - **Operation Barbarossa**
  - ▶ Soviets unprepared
    - ▶ **Used the Scorched-earth strategy**
      - Burned and destroyed everything as they retreated
- ▶ Sept. 8th: **Put Leningrad under siege**
  - ▶ Purpose: starve the 2.5 million inhabitants into surrender
  - ▶ Winter 1941-42: Nearly 1 million die
    - ▶ Refuse to surrender
- ▶ **Hitler send troops to capital city of Moscow**
  - ▶ As winter sets in, Hitler orders no retreat
  - ▶ Hold line against Soviets but do not capture the city
  - ▶ Advance **cost 500,000 lives and gained nothing**



**Second World War  
Russian Front. 1941-1942**

- German Reich, allies and occupied zones
- Baltic States, White Russia, Ukraine, and Moscow and Karelia terr.
- Donets Basin and Caucasus
- Allies
- Moscow territory



# The U.S. Aids Its Allies

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- ▶ Roosevelt and Churchill issue the Atlantic Charter declaring free trade among nations and the right of the people to choose their own government
- ▶ March 1941 – Lend-Lease Act
  - ▶ President could lend or lease arms/supplies to other countries
- ▶ The United States drew closer to war when a German submarine attacks a US destroyer.



# The United States Aids Its Allies

- ▶ Roosevelt and Churchill meet, issue statement of principles
- ▶ **Atlantic Charter**— supports free trade, right to form own government





# Four Corners Activity

You must identify where you stand in relation to the prompt below.

You are a leader of a smaller country in Europe and Hitler begins a full-scale invasion of your country.

The best thing for you to do would be to give up immediately, avoiding massive conflict and casualties.

- Strongly Agree      [Stand by the door](#)
- Agree, but...      [Stand by "College Corner"](#)
- Disagree, but...      [Stand by Geoffrey the Giraffe](#)
- Strongly Disagree      [Stand by Mrs. Hughes' desk](#)

