World War II

Ch. 16

Intro Question – Assuming the date is near August of 1939, what is happening around the world?

(Europe, Asia, North America)

Main Idea:

Using the sudden mass attack called the blitzkrieg, Germany overran much of Europe and North Africa.

Why it Matters Now:

Hitler's actions set off WWII. The results of the war still affect the politics and economics of today's world.

16.1 Hitler's Lightning War

Text pg. 491-496

- Sept. 1, 1939: Hitler attacked Poland

- First test of Germany's military strategy – **The Blitzkrieg**
  - "Lightning War"
  - Used planes and tanks, followed by infantry forces.

  - Swiftly crush opposition with overwhelming force and surprise.

- Britain and France declare war, WWII is on!

German tanks cross into Poland

BLITZKRIEG
THE LIGHTNING WAR
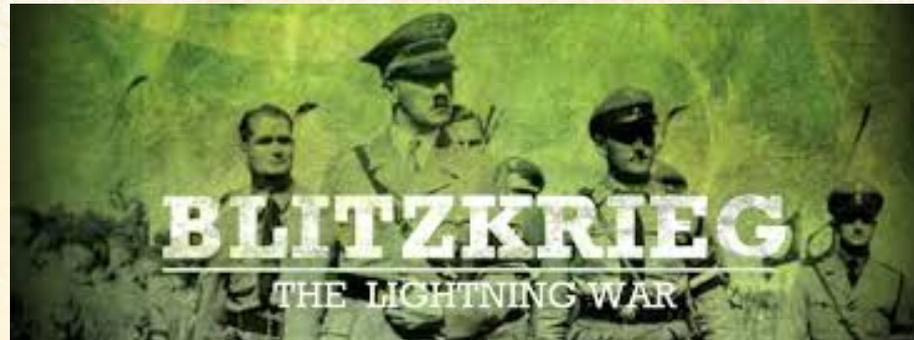
•What advantages does Blitzkrieg give the Germans as they begin their offensive?

- Sept. 17th: Stalin sent Soviet troops to occupy the eastern half of Poland.

- Moved to annex countries north of Poland
  - Annexed Lithuania, Latvia, & Estonia.
  - Finland resisted

- Stalin sent 1million troops to Finland.
  - Not prepared for winter fighting

- Finns were outnumbered and outgunned, but fiercely defended their country.
  - Soldiers on skis attacked Soviet positions

- March, 1940: Stalin forced the Finns to surrender.

•With Stalin now on the offensive alongside Hitler, where should the Allies prioritize their defense?

- Britain and France did little militarily to aid Poland.
  - Britain bombed German warships on September 4, but resisted bombing Germany itself.
  - France did not launch a full-scale attack even though it had mobilized over four times the numbers of Germany.

- French/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"
    - With the exception of a few dramatic clashes at sea, no major military action was taken

- 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

Ardennes Forest

Essen

Antwerp

BELGIUM

Brussels

Maastricht

Cologne

Liège

Namur

LUXEMBOURG

nkfurt

GERMANY

NCE

Strasbourg

Basel

.... Weak fortifications

——— Strong fortifications
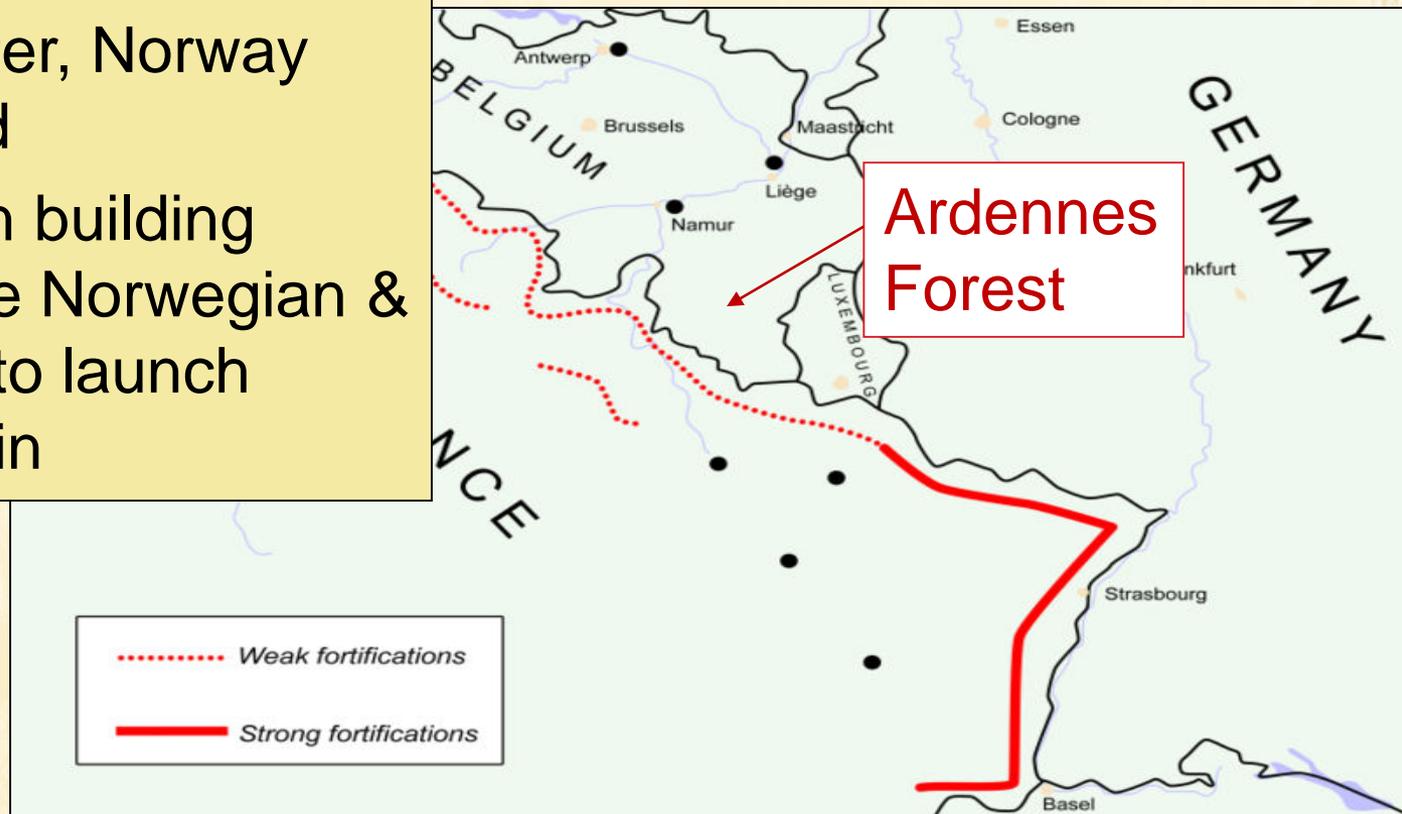
Four Corners Activity – You must identify where you stand in relation to the prompt below.

> 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 student tables on door side**

- Disagree, but… — **Stand by student tables on Norton's desk side**

- Strongly Disagree — **Stand by Mr. Norton's desk**

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

FALL OF FRANCE
1940

German Offensives
Allied Forces Movement
Maginot Line
(44) Number of Divisions

North Sea

ENGLAND

NETHERLANDS

Zuider Zee

Rotterdam

Army Group B
(29)

British Expeditionary Force (BEF)

Antwerp

GERMANY

Dunkirk
Calais
Boulogne

Eben Emael

Brussels

BELGIUM

French 7th Army

French 1st Army

Ardennes Forest

Army Group A
(44)

Cambrai

Dinant

Abbeville

French 9th Army

Sedan

LUXEMBOURG

Army Group C
(19)

de Gaulle's Counterattack, May 18

French 2nd Army

FRANCE

200 km   200 miles

- The French retreated to the beaches of **Dunkirk** and were trapped with their backs to the sea.
- Great Britain set out to rescue the army and evacuate.
  - 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 battle-weary soldiers to safety

- Resistance in France began to crumble
- 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
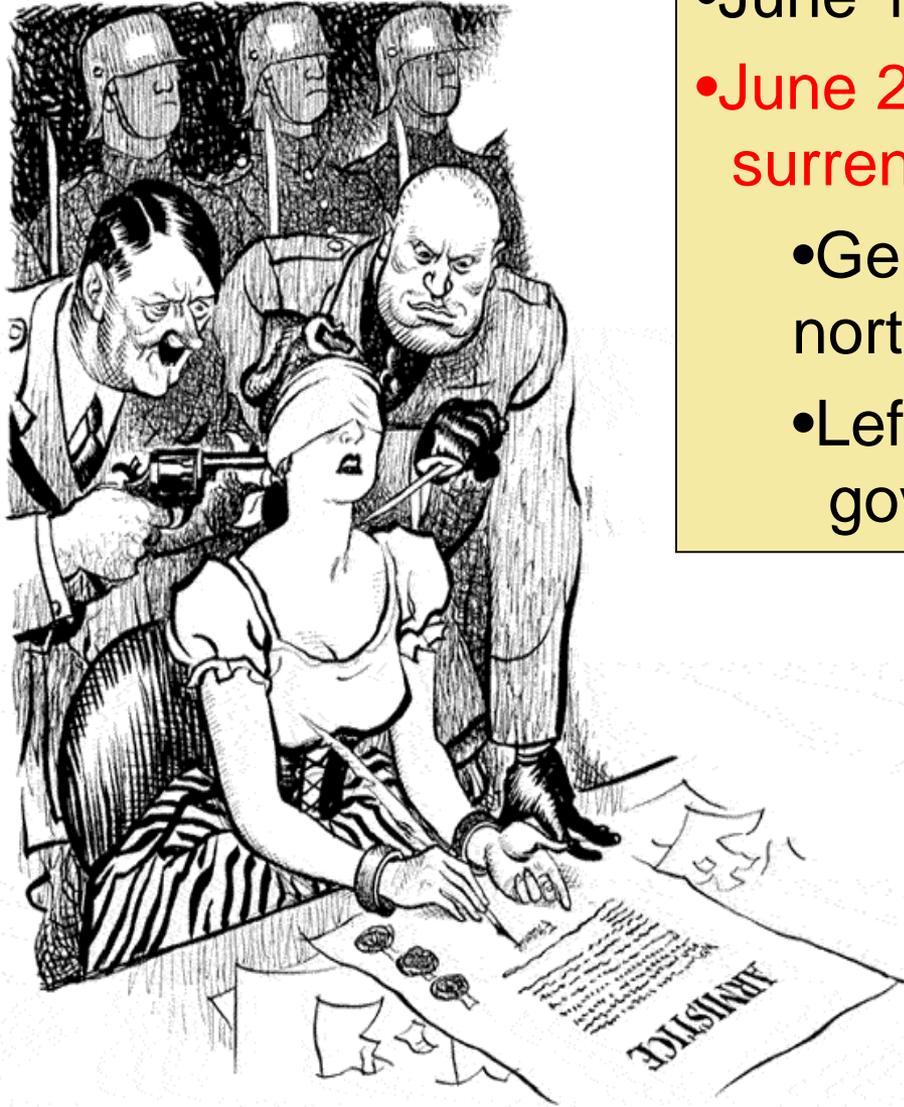
Great Britain now stood alone against the Nazis.

- Winston Churchill
  - New British Prime Minister
  - Had already 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."*
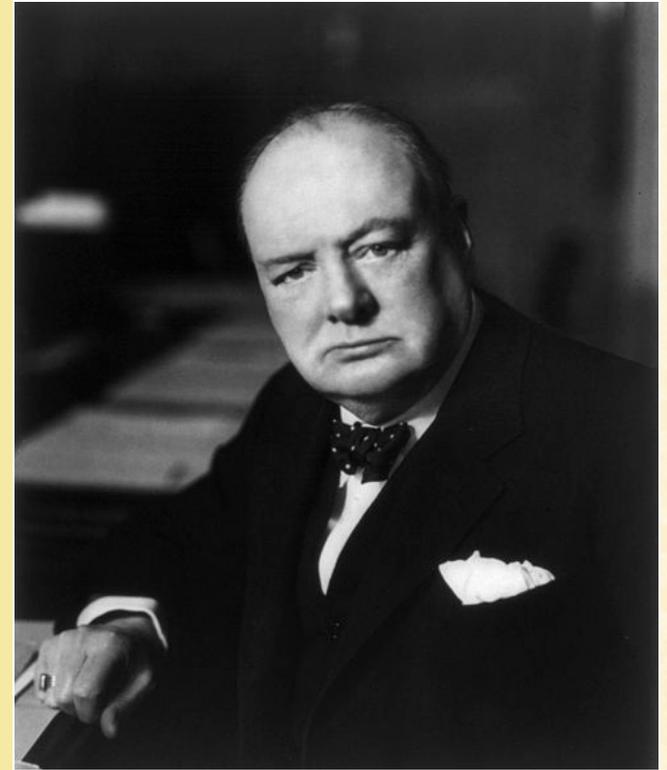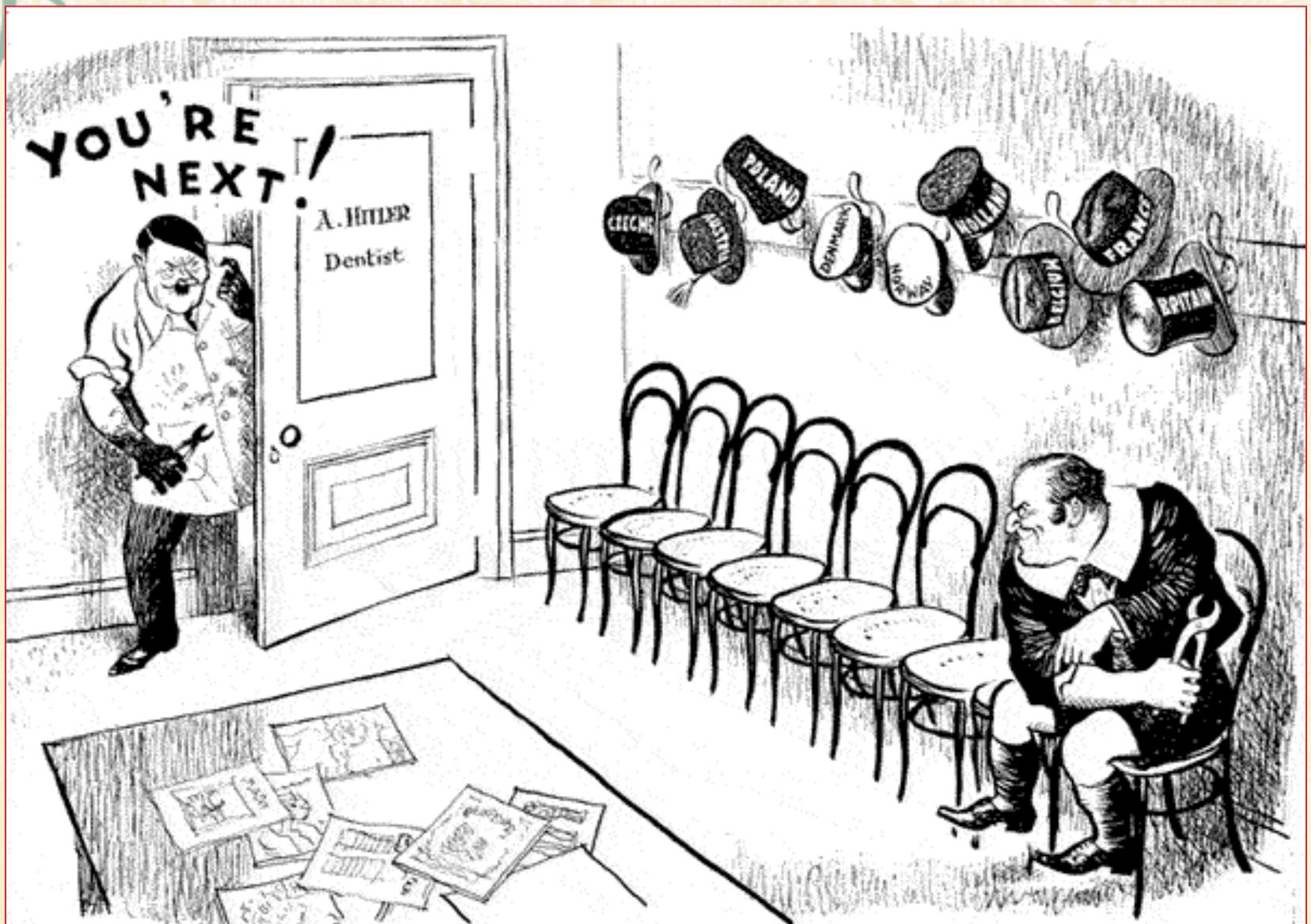
- Summer 1940: Germany began bombing Great Britain
- Sept 7th: Began bombing cities, especially London
  - Purpose: to break British morale
- British Royal Air Force counterattacked
  - New technology
    - Radar: electronic tracking
    - Enigma: German code-making machine
      - Smuggled into Britain
      - Enabled them to decode German messages
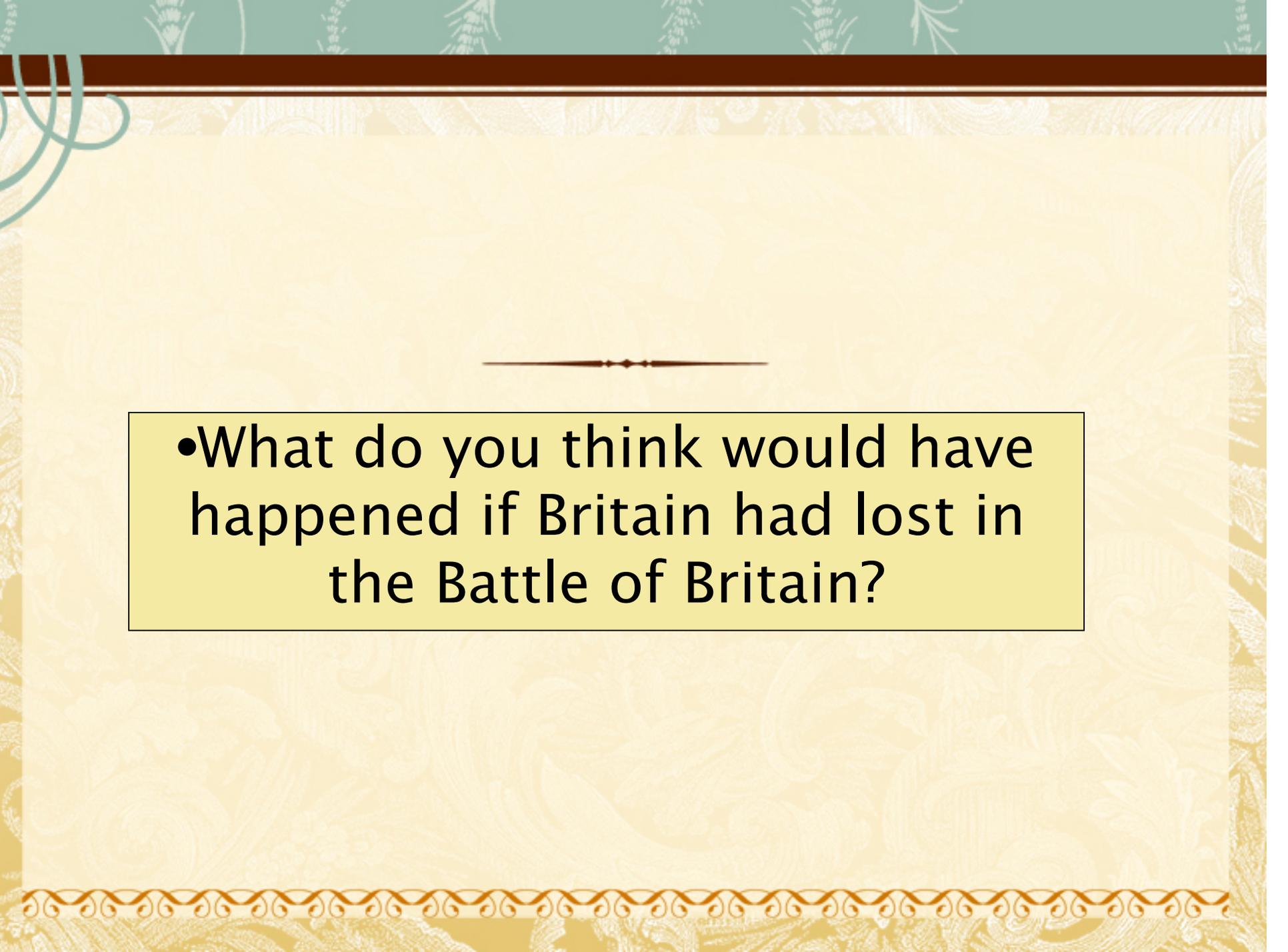
- What do you think would have happened if Britain had lost in the Battle of Britain?

Operation Barbarossa – Hitler Betrays Stalin

- Plan to invade Soviet Union
- June 22, 1941: Germany invaded USSR
  - Soviets unprepared
    - **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
  - But they 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

- 1939 – President Roosevelt asks Congress to allow Allies to buy American arms

- March 1941 – Lend-Lease Act

  - President could lend or lease arms/supplies to other countries

- Roosevelt and Churchill issue the Atlantic Charter declaring free trade among nations and the right of the people to choose their own government

- The United States drew closer to war when a German submarine attacks a US destroyer.

Assignment 16.1

Identify the effects of these early events in WWII

Cause	Effect
Blitzkrieg	
Allies trapped at Dunkirk	
British Radar detects German Aircraft	
Lend–Lease Act by the U.S.	

Main Ideas:

1. Describe the events and outcome of the Battle of Britain.

2. What factors must a country consider when deciding to surrender to Hitler or fight to the end? What would you do?

3. How did Hitler's invasion of Russia compare to that of Napoleon?

4. How did the Lend-Lease Act help the allies before the U.S. entered the war?