

World War II

1939 - 1945

Hitler's Lightning War

After WWI, the new country of Poland included a corridor of land to allow access to the sea. In 1939, Hitler demanded this land be returned to Germany.

Germany Sparks a New War in Europe

- On September 1, 1939, German tanks and troops rumbled across the Polish border. Aircraft and artillery began a merciless bombing of Poland's capital, Warsaw.



Hitler's Lightning War

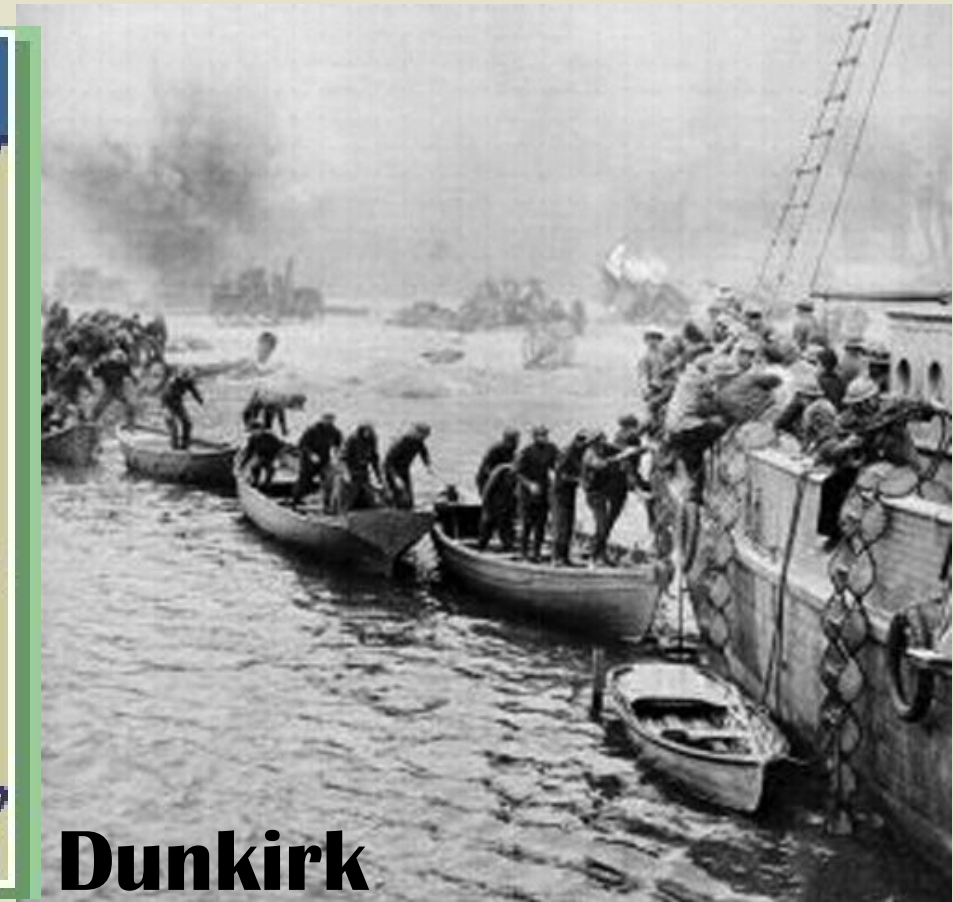
- The invasion of Poland was Germany's newest military strategy, the blitzkrieg: a "lightning war" using fast-moving airplanes and tanks, followed by massive infantry forces, to surprise and overwhelm defenders.
- On September 17, 1939, Stalin sent Soviet troops to occupy the eastern half of Poland.



Hitler's Lightning War

Allies	Axis
France	Germany
Gr. Britain	Italy
USA	Japan
USSR	

Hitler's Lightning War



Hitler's Lightning War

The Fall of France

- In June 1940, German forces took Paris and the rest of northern France, forcing French leaders to surrender.

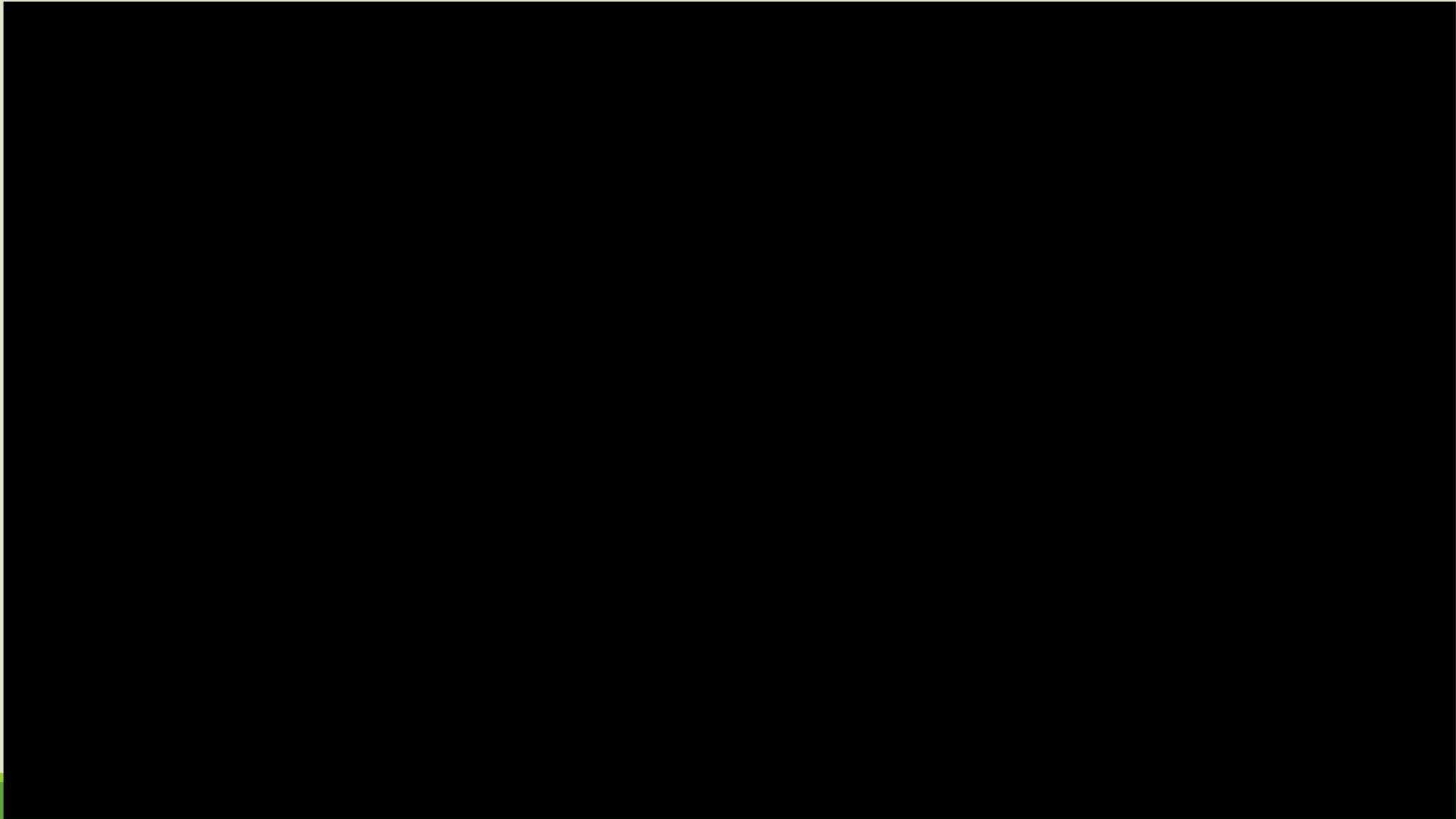


Hitler's Lightning War

The Battle of Britain

- Winston Churchill , the British Prime Minister, declared that his nation would never give in.
- With control of France, Hitler began bombing Britain. After targeting airfield and factories, they began focusing on the cities, especially London, to break British morale.
- The British did not waver.





Hitler's Lightning War

The Battle of Britain

- In October 1940, Germans gave up daylight raids in favor of night bombing. Londoners spent their nights in subways, basements, or small air-raid shelters.
- After 7 months of bombing, Hitler decided to call off his attacks to focus on the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe.



Hitler's Lightning War

The Mediterranean and Eastern Front

- Italy remained neutral at the beginning of the war. After the conquest of France, Mussolini declared war and moved into France. Next, Italian forces attacked British-controlled Egypt with eyes on the Suez Canal.
- Italy was initially successful. When British forces started pushing back, Hitler sent in a German tank force and the British were forced to retreat. The battle was back and forth for two years.





Hitler's Lightning War

The Mediterranean and Eastern Front

- In the Balkans, Hitler used threats to force countries to join the Axis Powers. He invaded and conquered Yugoslavia and Greece to gain complete control of the Balkans.



Hitler's Lightning War

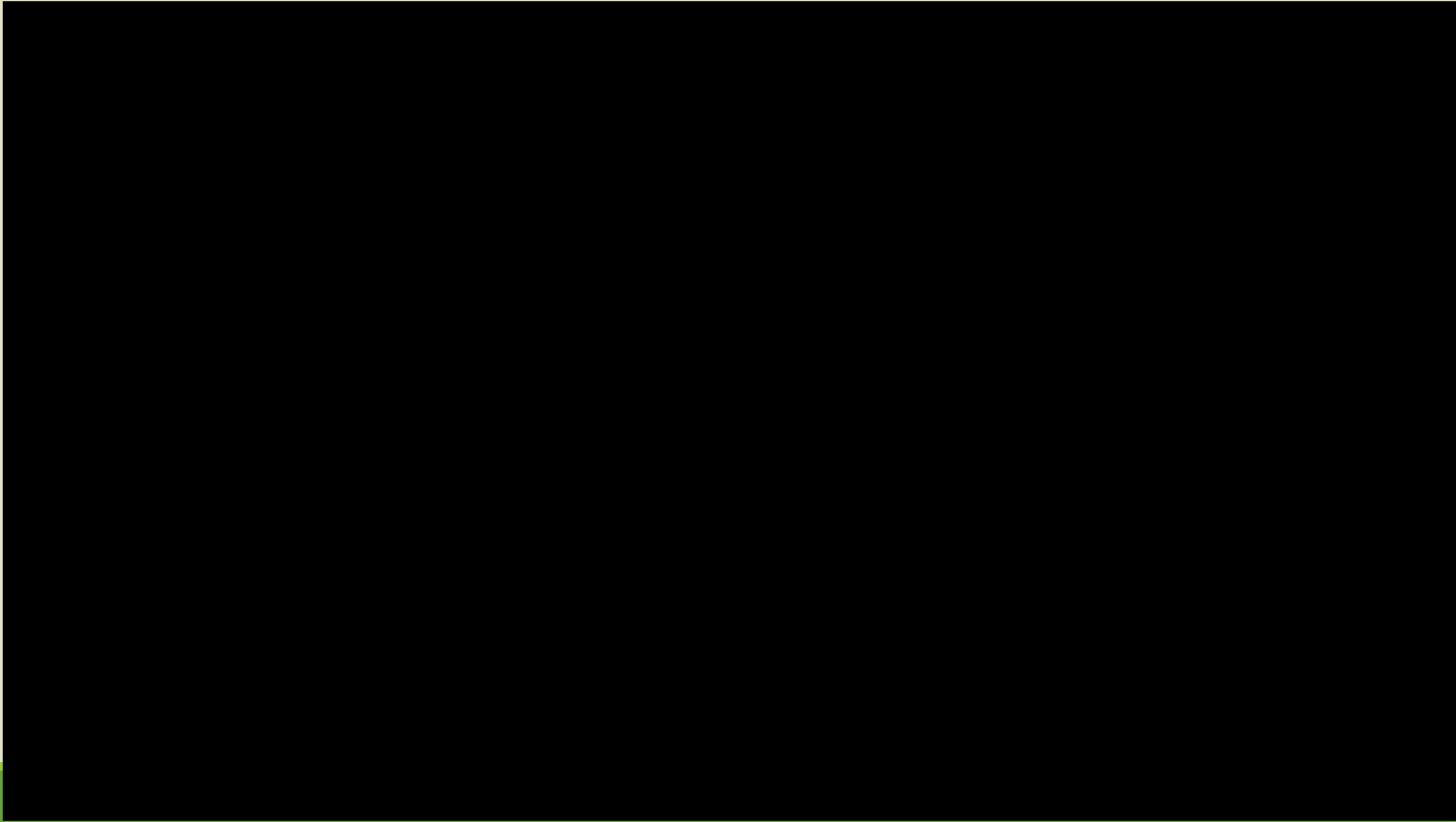
- In June 1941, German tanks and aircraft began an invasion of the Soviet Union.
- As Soviet troops retreated, they used scorched-earth strategy to slow the Germans.



Hitler's Lightning War

- German forces put the city of Leningrad under siege to force a surrender. Nearly one million people died in Leningrad.
- Hitler looked to Moscow during the winter of 1941. The Soviets held the line for over a year. Casualties were high on both sides. Germany lost 500,000 men and the Soviets lost over 1 million.





Hitler's Lightning War

The United States Aids Its Allies

- Most Americans felt the United States should not get involved in the war. Isolationism
- President Roosevelt got permission from Congress to allow the Allies to buy American arms.
- In September 1941, a German U-boat fired on a U.S. destroyer. Navy commanders were ordered to shoot German submarines on sight.

