

GLOSSARY

(National Archives and Records Administration, 111-SC-180495.)

- Alien** Someone who resides in a country but is not yet a citizen of that country.
- Amphibious invasion** A combined ground and naval assault, often supported by attack aircraft.
- Anti-Semitism** Discrimination or prejudice against Jews.
- Appeasement** A policy by which France and Great Britain tried unsuccessfully to prevent Adolf Hitler from starting a European war by conceding to some of his demands to annex territory and reject treaty obligations.
- Armistice** A temporary truce or suspension of wartime hostilities.
- Aryan** An imagined racial category referring to non-Jewish Caucasians, especially of Nordic or northern European origin.
- Belligerent** A nation at war.
- Blitzkrieg** German for “lightning war,” the term refers to a sudden, powerful attack with tanks, infantry, and planes designed to quickly knock out an enemy.
- Conscription** Obligatory military enrollment, also known as a “draft.”
- Counteroffensive** An attempt to retake territory or gains lost as a result of an enemy offensive.
- Coup** A sudden, violent, and illegal seizure of power.
- Destroyer** A relatively small, fast naval ship equipped for defense against submarines and aircraft.
- Fascism** A governing ideology based on absolute authority of a dictator, suppression of opposition and criticism, aggressive nationalism, and often racism.
- Gestapo** Adolf Hitler’s secret police, originally established in 1933. Its agents dressed in civilian clothing.
- Grand Alliance** A coalition led by the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the Free French dedicated to defeating the Axis powers during World War II.
- Intelligence** Information about the activities of an enemy or potential enemy, or an organization that collects such information.



- Isolationism** A policy in which a nation aims to remain at peace by avoiding international obligations and involvement in the affairs of other nations.
- Logistics** The business side of war, especially procuring, maintaining, and transporting equipment and supplies.
- Mobilization** Assembling equipment, supplies, and people for war.
- Nationalism** An ideology in which the interests of one's own nation are more important than the interests of other nations or the common interests of all nations.
- Neutrality** A nation's policy of noninvolvement in a war between other nations.
- Nonaggression pact** An agreement between two or more nations not to attack one another.
- Panzer*** German for "armor." A German tank used in World War II.
- Reichstag*** The German national legislature under both the Weimar Republic and Adolf Hitler's Third Reich. During Hitler's rule, the *Reichstag* was mostly a rubber stamp for his policies.
- Reparations** Money paid by the losers of a war to the winners to compensate for damages and loss of property, lives, and productivity.
- Rout** An overwhelming military defeat that leaves the losing army in complete disorder.
- Second front** After the Soviet Union began fighting Nazi Germany in 1941, Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin demanded that his allies open up another campaign elsewhere in Europe, which would force Adolf Hitler to divide his forces and ease the pressure on the Soviet army.
- Schutzstaffel (SS)*** A paramilitary group organized by the Nazi Party in the 1920s to provide security at party meetings and harass political enemies. The SS ran concentration camps and manned military units known for their extreme brutality and fighting prowess.
- Spheres of influence** Areas in which another country has power and influence even without having formal authority.
- Vichy France** Name given to the government nominally ruling southern France while northern France was occupied by Nazi forces. The regime was headed by Marshal Philippe Pétain and headquartered in the town of Vichy.