Fierce fighting in both Europe and the Pacific during 1945 led to the defeat of the Axis powers. The Allies began war crimes trials and set up a peacekeeping organization to prevent another global war.

The Third Reich Collapses

MAIN Idea  The war in Europe ended in spring 1945 after major battles, as the Allies moved west toward Germany.

HISTORY AND YOU  Have you ever been in a competition in which you persevered, despite fatigue, to win? Read to learn how the Allies fought in Europe to defeat Germany.

Although D-Day had been a success, it was only the beginning. Surrounding many fields in Normandy were hedgerows—dirt walls, several feet thick, covered in shrubbery. The hedgerows had been built to fence in cattle and crops, but they also enabled the Germans to fiercely defend their positions. The battle of the hedgerows ended on July 25, 1944, when 2,500 American bombers blew a hole in the German lines, enabling American tanks to race through the gap.

As the Allies broke out of Normandy, the French Resistance—French civilians who had secretly organized to resist the German occupation of their country—staged a rebellion in Paris. When the Allied forces liberated Paris on August 25, they found the streets filled with French citizens celebrating their victory.

The Battle of the Bulge

As the Allies advanced toward the German border, Hitler decided to stage one last desperate offensive. His goal was to cut off Allied supplies coming through the port of Antwerp, Belgium. The attack began just before dawn on December 16, 1944. Six inches (15 cm) of snow covered the ground, and the weather was bitterly cold. Moving rapidly, the Germans caught the American defenders by surprise. As the German troops raced west, their lines bulged outward, and the attack became known as the Battle of the Bulge.

Shortly after the Germans surrounded the Americans, Eisenhower ordered General Patton to rescue them. Three days later, faster than anyone expected in the midst of a snowstorm, Patton’s troops slammed into the German lines. As the weather cleared, Allied aircraft began hitting German fuel depots.

On Christmas Eve, out of fuel and weakened by heavy losses, the German troops driving toward Antwerp were forced to halt. Two days later, Patton’s troops broke through to the German line. Although
fighting continued for three weeks, the United States had won the Battle of the Bulge. On January 8, the Germans began to withdraw. They had suffered more than 100,000 casualties and lost many tanks and aircraft. They had very few resources left to prevent the Allies from entering Germany.

The War Ends in Europe

While American and British forces fought to liberate France, the Soviets began a massive attack on German troops in Russia. By the time the Battle of the Bulge ended, the Soviets had driven Hitler’s forces out of Russia and back across Poland. By February 1945, Soviet troops were only 35 miles (56 km) from Berlin.

As the Soviets crossed Germany’s eastern border, American forces attacked Germany’s western border. By the end of February 1945, American troops had fought their way to the Rhine River, Germany’s last major line of defense in the west. On March 7, American tanks crossed the Rhine.

As German defenses crumbled, American troops raced east to within 70 miles (113 km) of Berlin. On April 16, Soviet troops finally smashed through the German defenses and reached the outskirts of Berlin five days later.

Deep in his Berlin bunker, Adolf Hitler knew the end was near. On April 30, 1945, he committed suicide. Before killing himself, Hitler chose Grand Admiral Karl Doenitz as his successor. Doenitz tried to surrender to the Americans and British while continuing to fight the Soviets, but Eisenhower insisted on unconditional surrender. On May 7, 1945, Germany accepted the terms. The next day—May 8, 1945—was proclaimed V-E Day, for “Victory in Europe.”

Explaining Why was the Battle of the Bulge such a disastrous defeat for Germany?
Japan Is Defeated

MAIN Idea  The United States decided to end the war with Japan by using napalm and atomic bombs.

HISTORY AND YOU  When was the last time you had to make a difficult decision, with no really good choice? Read to learn about the decision President Truman made in 1945.

Unfortunately, President Roosevelt did not live to see the defeat of Germany. On April 12, 1945, while vacationing in Warm Springs, Georgia, he died of a stroke. His vice president, Harry S. Truman, became president during this difficult time.

The next day, Truman told reporters: “Boys, if you ever pray, pray for me now. . . . When they told me yesterday what had happened, I felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me.” Despite his feelings, Truman began at once to make decisions about the war. Although Germany surrendered a few weeks later, the war with Japan continued, and Truman was forced to make some of the most difficult decisions of the war during his first six months in office.

The Battle of Iwo Jima

On November 24, 1944, bombs fell on Tokyo. Above the city flew 80 B-29 Superfortress bombers that had traveled more than 1,500 miles (2,414 km) from new American bases in the Marianas Islands.

At first the B-29s did little damage because they kept missing their targets. By the time the B-29s reached Japan, they did not have enough fuel left to fix their navigational errors or to adjust for high winds. The pilots needed an island closer to Japan so the B-29s could refuel. American military planners decided to invade Iwo Jima.

Iwo Jima was perfectly located, roughly halfway between the Marianas and Japan, but its geography was formidable. At its southern tip was a dormant volcano. The terrain was rugged, with rocky cliffs, jagged ravines, and
dozens of caves. Volcanic ash covered the ground. Even worse, the Japanese had built a vast network of concrete bunkers connected by miles of tunnels.

On February 19, 1945, some 60,000 Marines landed on Iwo Jima. As the troops leapt from the amphitrac, they sank up to their ankles in the soft ash. Meanwhile, Japanese artillery began to pound the invaders.

The marines crawled inland, using flamethrowers and explosives to attack the Japanese bunkers. More than 6,800 marines were killed capturing the island. Admiral Nimitz later wrote that, on Iwo Jima, “uncommon valor was a common virtue.”

**Firebombing Japan**

While American engineers prepared airfields on Iwo Jima, General Curtis LeMay, commander of the B-29s based in the Marianas, decided to change strategy. To help the B-29s hit their targets, he ordered them to drop bombs filled with napalm—a kind of jellied gasoline. The bombs were designed not only to explode but also to start fires. Even if the B-29s missed their targets, the fires they started would spread to the intended targets.

The use of firebombs was very controversial because the fires would also kill civilians; however, LeMay could think of no other way to destroy Japan’s war production quickly. Loaded with firebombs, B-29s attacked Tokyo on March 9, 1945. As strong winds fanned the flames, the firestorm grew so intense that it sucked the oxygen out of the air, asphyxiating thousands. As one survivor later recalled:

**Primary Source**

“The fires were incredible . . . with flames leaping hundreds of feet into the air. . . . With every passing moment the air became more foul. . . the noise was a continuing crashing roar. . . . Fire-winds filled with burning particles rushed up and down the streets. I watched people . . . running for their lives. . . . The flames raced after them like living things, striking them down. . . . Wherever I turned my eyes, I saw people . . . seeking air to breathe.”

—quoted in *New History of World War II*
The Tokyo firebombing killed more than 80,000 people and destroyed more than 250,000 buildings. By the end of June 1945, Japan’s six most important industrial cities had been firebombed, destroying almost half of their total urban area. By the end of the war, the B-29s had firebombed 67 Japanese cities.

The Invasion of Okinawa

Despite the massive damage the firebombing caused, there were few signs in the spring of 1945 that Japan was ready to quit. Many American officials believed the Japanese would not surrender until Japan had been invaded. To prepare for the invasion, the United States needed a base near Japan to stockpile supplies and build up troops. Iwo Jima was small and still too far away. Military planners chose Okinawa—only 350 miles (563 km) from Japan.

American troops landed on Okinawa on April 1, 1945. Instead of defending the beaches, the Japanese troops took up positions in the island’s rugged mountains. To dig the Japanese out of their caves and bunkers, the Americans had to fight their way up steep slopes against constant machine gun and artillery fire. More than 12,000 American soldiers, sailors, and marines died during the fighting, but by June 22, 1945, Okinawa had finally been captured.

The Terms for Surrender

Shortly after the United States captured Okinawa, the Japanese emperor urged his government to find a way to end the war. The biggest problem was the American demand for unconditional surrender. Many Japanese leaders were willing to surrender, but on one condition: the emperor had to stay in power.

American officials knew that the fate of the emperor was the most important issue for the Japanese. Most Americans, however, blamed the emperor for the war and wanted him removed from power. President Truman was reluctant to go against public opinion. Furthermore, he knew the United States was almost ready to test a new weapon that might force Japan to surrender without any conditions. The new weapon was the atomic bomb.

The Manhattan Project

In 1939 Leo Szilard, one of the world’s top physicists, learned that German scientists had split the uranium atom. Szilard had been the first scientist to suggest that splitting the atom might release enormous energy. Worried that the Nazis were working on an atomic bomb, Szilard convinced the world’s best-known physicist, Albert Einstein, to sign a letter Szilard had drafted and send it to President Roosevelt. In the letter, Einstein warned that by using uranium, “extremely powerful bombs of a new type may . . . be constructed.”

Roosevelt responded by setting up a scientific committee to study the issue. The committee remained skeptical until 1941, when they met with British scientists who were already working on an atomic bomb. The British research so impressed the Americans that they
convinced Roosevelt to begin a program to build an atomic bomb.

The secret American program to build an atomic bomb was code-named the Manhattan Project and was headed by General Leslie R. Groves. The first breakthrough came in 1942, when Szilard and Enrico Fermi, another physicist, built the world’s first nuclear reactor at the University of Chicago. Groves then organized a team of engineers and scientists to build an atomic bomb at a secret laboratory in Los Alamos, New Mexico. J. Robert Oppenheimer led the team. On July 16, 1945, they detonated the world’s first atomic bomb in New Mexico.

**Hiroshima and Nagasaki**

Even before the bomb was tested, American officials began debating how to use it. Admiral William Leahy, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, opposed using the bomb because it killed civilians indiscriminately. He believed an economic blockade and conventional bombing would convince Japan to surrender. Secretary of War Henry Stimson wanted to warn the Japanese about the bomb while at the same time telling them that they could keep the emperor if they surrendered. Secretary of State James Byrnes, however, wanted to drop the bomb without any warning to shock Japan into surrendering.

President Truman later wrote that he “regarded the bomb as a military weapon and never had any doubts that it should be used.” His advisers had warned him to expect massive casualties if the United States invaded Japan. Truman believed it was his duty as president to use every weapon available to save American lives.

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**YES**

**Harry S. Truman**  
President of the United States  

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

“The world will note that the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, a military base. . . . If Japan does not surrender, bombs will have to be dropped on her war industries and, unfortunately, thousands of civilian lives will be lost. . . . Having found the bomb we have used it. We have used it against those who attacked us without warning at Pearl Harbor, against those who have starved and beaten and executed American prisoners of war, against those who have abandoned all pretense of obeying international laws of warfare. We have used it in order to shorten the agony of war, in order to save the lives of thousands and thousands of young Americans.”

—from Public Papers of the Presidents

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**NO**

**William Leahy**  
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff  

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

“It is my opinion that the use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender because of the effective sea blockade and the successful bombing with conventional weapons. . . . The lethal possibilities of atomic warfare in the future are frightening. My own feeling was that in being the first to use it, we had adopted an ethical standard common to the barbarians of the Dark Ages. I was not taught to make war in that fashion, and wars cannot be won by destroying women and children.”

—from I Was There

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**DBQ Document-Based Questions**

1. **Explaining** What reasons does Truman offer to justify the use of the atomic bomb?
2. **Summarizing** Why does Leahy say he was against using the bomb?
3. **Evaluating** Whom do you think makes the more persuasive argument? Explain your answer.
The Allies threatened Japan with “prompt and utter destruction” if the nation did not surrender, but the Japanese did not reply. Truman then ordered the military to drop the bomb. On August 6, 1945, a B-29 bomber named Enola Gay dropped an atomic bomb, code-named “Little Boy,” on Hiroshima, an important industrial city.

The bomb destroyed about 63 percent of the city. Between 80,000 and 120,000 people died instantly, and thousands more died later from burns and radiation sickness. Three days later, on August 9, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan. Later that day, the United States dropped another atomic bomb, code-named “Fat Man,” on the city of Nagasaki, killing between 35,000 and 74,000 people.

Faced with such massive destruction and the shock of the Soviets joining the war, the Japanese emperor ordered his government to surrender. On August 15, 1945—V-J Day—Japan surrendered. The long war was over.

**Analyze** What arguments did Truman consider when deciding whether to use the atomic bomb?

**Building a New World**

**Main Idea** The victorious Allies tried to create an organization to prevent future wars.

**HISTORY AND YOU** What are some of your most noble goals? Read to learn about the goals of the Allied forces after the war.

Well before the war ended, President Roosevelt had begun thinking about what the world would be like after the war. The president had wanted to ensure that war would never again engulf the world.

**Creating the United Nations**

President Roosevelt believed that a new international political organization could prevent another world war. In 1944, at the Dumbarton Oaks estate in Washington, D.C., delegates from 39 countries met to discuss the new organization, which was to be called the United Nations (UN). The delegates at the conference agreed that the UN would have a General Assembly, in which every member

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The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Issued by the United Nations, December 10, 1948

1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
2. Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.
3. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude . . .
4. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
5. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law.
6. Everyone has the right to freedom of movements and changes of his place of residence . . .
7. Everyone has the right to own property . . .
8. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion . . .
9. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression . . .
10. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
11. Everyone has the right to education . . .
12. Everyone has the right to work . . .
13. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age or other lack of livelihood . . .
14. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and changes of his place of residence . . .
15. Everyone has the right to marriage, the enjoyment of its benefits and protection of the family . . .
16. Everyone has the right to education . . .
17. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age or other lack of livelihood . . .
18. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age or other lack of livelihood . . .
19. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age or other lack of livelihood . . .
20. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age or other lack of livelihood . . .
21. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age or other lack of livelihood . . .
22. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age or other lack of livelihood . . .
23. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age or other lack of livelihood . . .
24. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age or other lack of livelihood . . .
25. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age or other lack of livelihood . . .
26. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age or other lack of livelihood . . .
nation in the world would have one vote. The UN would also have a Security Council with 11 members. Five countries would be permanent members of the Security Council: Britain, France, China, the Soviet Union, and the United States—the five big powers that had led the fight against the Axis. These five permanent members would each have veto power.

On April 25, 1945, representatives from 50 countries came to San Francisco to officially organize the United Nations and design its charter, or constitution. The General Assembly was given the power to vote on resolutions, to choose the non-permanent members of the Security Council, and to vote on the UN's budget. The Security Council was responsible for international peace and security. It could investigate any international problem and propose settlements. It could also take action to preserve the peace, including asking its members to use military force to uphold a UN resolution.

Soon after its founding, the UN created a Commission on Human Rights and chose Eleanor Roosevelt to serve as its first chair. The Commission drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the UN issued it in 1948. The document strongly reflects the ideas and principles that Eleanor Roosevelt espoused during her life. It lists 30 rights that are said to be universally applicable to all human beings in all societies.

**Putting the Enemy on Trial**

Although the Allies had declared their intention to punish German and Japanese leaders for war crimes, they did not work out the details until the summer of 1945. In August, the United States, Britain, France, and the Soviet Union created the International Military Tribunal (IMT). The Tribunal held trials in Nuremberg, Germany, where Hitler had staged Nazi Party rallies.

Twenty-two leaders of Nazi Germany were prosecuted at the Nuremberg Trials. Three were acquitted and seven were given prison sentences. The remaining 12 were sentenced to death. Trials of lower-ranking officials and military officers continued until April 1949. Those trials led to the execution of 24 more German leaders. Another 107 were given prison sentences.

Similar trials were held in Tokyo. The IMT for the Far East charged 25 Japanese leaders with war crimes. Significantly, the Allies did not indict the Japanese emperor. They feared that any attempt to put him on trial would lead to an uprising by the Japanese people. Eighteen Japanese defendants were sentenced to prison. The rest were sentenced to death by hanging.

The war crimes trials punished many of the people responsible for World War II and the Holocaust, but they were also part of the American plan for building a better world. As Robert Jackson, chief counsel for the United States at Nuremberg, observed in his opening statement to the court: “The wrongs we seek to condemn and punish have been so calculated, so malignant and so devastating, that civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored because it cannot survive their being repeated.”

**Vocabulary**


**Main Ideas**

2. Explaining What was the significance of the Battle of the Bulge?

3. Identifying What was the advantage of using napalm bombs?

4. Synthesizing How was the United Nations designed to prevent global wars?

**Critical Thinking**

5. Big Ideas If you had been a member of President Truman’s cabinet, what advice would you have given him about dropping the atomic bomb?

6. Organizing Using a graphic organizer like the one below, indicate the steps to victory in Europe and over Japan. Add boxes as needed.

   ![Graphic Organizer]

   **Allied Victory**

   Victory in Europe

   Victory over Japan

7. Analyzing Visuals Look at the photo of the Japanese delegation on page 521. What do you observe about the scene?

**Writing About History**

8. Descriptive Writing Imagine that you are in a large American city when news of victory over Japan comes. Describe the celebrations and the mood of the people.
Chapter 14  America and World War II

**The Pacific**
1941
- Japan attacks Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7
1942
- The United States defeats Japan in the Battles of the Coral Sea and Midway
1943
- The United States begins its island-hopping campaign
1944
- The United States retakes the Philippines
1945
- The United States drops the atomic bomb; Japan surrenders on August 15

**Europe and North Africa**
1941
- Germany invades the Soviet Union
1942
- The Allied turn the tide in the Battle of the Atlantic
1943
- The Allies invade Italy; German forces in North Africa and Stalingrad surrender to Allies
1944
- The Allies invade Normandy on June 6
1945
- Germany surrenders unconditionally on May 7

**The Home Front**
1941
- President Roosevelt forbids race discrimination in defense industries
1942
- Congress establishes WAAC; War Department relocates Japanese Americans to internment camps
1943
- Race riots occur in Detroit and Los Angeles; Roosevelt establishes OWM
1944
- Supreme Court hears case of Korematsu v. United States
1945
- Nearly 40 nations sign the United Nations charter
Reviewing Vocabulary

Directions: Choose the word or words that best complete the sentence.

1. One complaint of African Americans at the beginning of World War II was that they were
   A integrated.
   B employed.
   C empowered.
   D disenfranchised.

2. Winston Churchill wanted to attack the ______, or edges, of the German Empire.
   A eastern front
   B periphery
   C left flank
   D western front

3. To aid in the war effort, American citizens accepted the ______ of some items.
   A rationing
   B disappearance
   C abundance
   D commandeering

4. Japanese suicide pilots were known as ______ pilots.
   A Shinto
   B Samurai
   C kamikaze
   D amphtrac

Reviewing Main Ideas

Directions: Choose the best answers to the following questions.

Section 1 (pp. 486–493)

5. The Liberty ship was superior to many warships because it was
   A welded instead of riveted.
   B riveted instead of welded.
   C painted in camouflage colors.
   D painted red, white, and blue.

6. African Americans pushed for a ______ victory in the war effort.
   A Tuskegee
   B Triple C
   C Double V
   D Carver

Section 2 (pp. 494–499)

7. The Japanese were determined to destroy the American fleet in the Pacific after
   A they were successful at Pearl Harbor.
   B the Americans surrendered at Bataan.
   C the crew of the Enola Gay dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima.
   D James Doolittle dropped bombs on Tokyo.

8. To prevent huge shipping losses in the Atlantic, Americans used
   A antisubmarine devices.
   B a convoy system.
   C an air force escort.
   D minesweepers.
Section 3 (pp. 500–507)
9. During the war, Americans ______ to collect materials that could be used for the war effort.
   A planted victory gardens
   B held scrap drives
   C conserved energy
   D sold war bonds

Section 4 (pp. 508–515)
10. Where did the Allies begin their invasion of Italy?
   A Sicily
   B Casablanca
   C Tehran
   D Normandy

11. Planning for D-Day was complicated by concerns for the
   A German army.
   B amphibtracs.
   C weather.
   D air forces.

Section 5 (pp. 518–525)
12. What was the code name for the plan to build the atomic bomb?
   A Manhattan Project
   B Doolittle Raid
   C Operation Overlord
   D V-J Day

Critical Thinking
Directions: Choose the best answers to the following questions.
13. The invasion of Normandy was important because it
   A brought the Soviet Union into the war.
   B forced the Germans to fight a two-front war.
   C marked the first successful invasion by sea.
   D protected the Pacific fleet.

Base your answer to question 14 on the map below and your knowledge of Chapter 14.

14. Most of the relocation camps were located in what region of the United States?
   A the West
   B the Southeast
   C the Deep South
   D the Midwest

15. What was the purpose of the Japanese American Citizens League?
   A to fight the Japanese invasion of California
   B to fight Roosevelt’s order to declare the western United States a military zone
   C to help Japanese Americans recover lost property from the relocation
   D to encourage Japanese Americans to join the U.S. armed forces
16. Women were able to serve in noncombat positions in the military and in factories at home because
   A there were not enough men to fill the positions.
   B no one else wanted the jobs.
   C people realized it was unfair to keep them out.
   D women organized, as they did to win the vote.

17. According to the cartoon, why were Americans encouraged to turn out their lights?
   A The British could use the lights to create a blockade.
   B The lights prevented American ships from seeing the British ships.
   C The lights provided a silhouette for ships, making them targets for German submarines.
   D The lights used too much electricity, creating city-wide blackouts.

18. How did the war change the status of African Americans in American society?

19. Why do you think the war forced the government to take a stronger position on discrimination in the workplace?

Document-Based Questions

Directions: Analyze the document and answer the short-answer questions that follow the document.

Many historians believe that the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s had its roots in the "Double V" campaign and the march on Washington. Alexander Allen, a member of the Urban League during the war, believed that World War II was a turning point for African Americans.

"Up to that point the doors to industrial and economic opportunity were largely closed. Under the pressure of war, the pressures of government policy, the pressures of world opinion, the pressures of blacks themselves and their allies, all this began to change. . . . The war forced the federal government to take a stronger position with reference to discrimination, and things began to change as a result. There was a tremendous attitudinal change that grew out of the war. There had been a new experience for blacks, and many weren’t willing to go back to the way it was before."

—quoted in Wartime America

18. How did the war change the status of African Americans in American society?

19. Why do you think the war forced the government to take a stronger position on discrimination in the workplace?

Extended Response

20. At the end of World War I, President Wilson asked Congress to join the League of Nations, but the United States did not join. As World War II ended, the United States hosted a conference to create another international organization, the United Nations. Discuss what had changed so that the American people were willing to participate in the United Nations. Also discuss the likelihood of the UN succeeding. Write an essay that supports your answer with relevant facts, examples, and details.