

SS7H3c

# Rebuilding Japan

After World War II



# Standards

**SS7H3 The student will analyze continuity and change in Southern and Eastern Asia leading to the 21st century.**

c. Explain the role of the United States in the rebuilding of Japan after WWII.



# Background Information



# Pearl Harbor

- On December 7, 1941, Japanese airplanes made a surprise attack on the US naval base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.
- More than 2,400 people were killed, and many US battleships and airplanes were destroyed.



The USS Arizona  
After the Japanese  
Surprise Attack on  
Pearl Harbor.

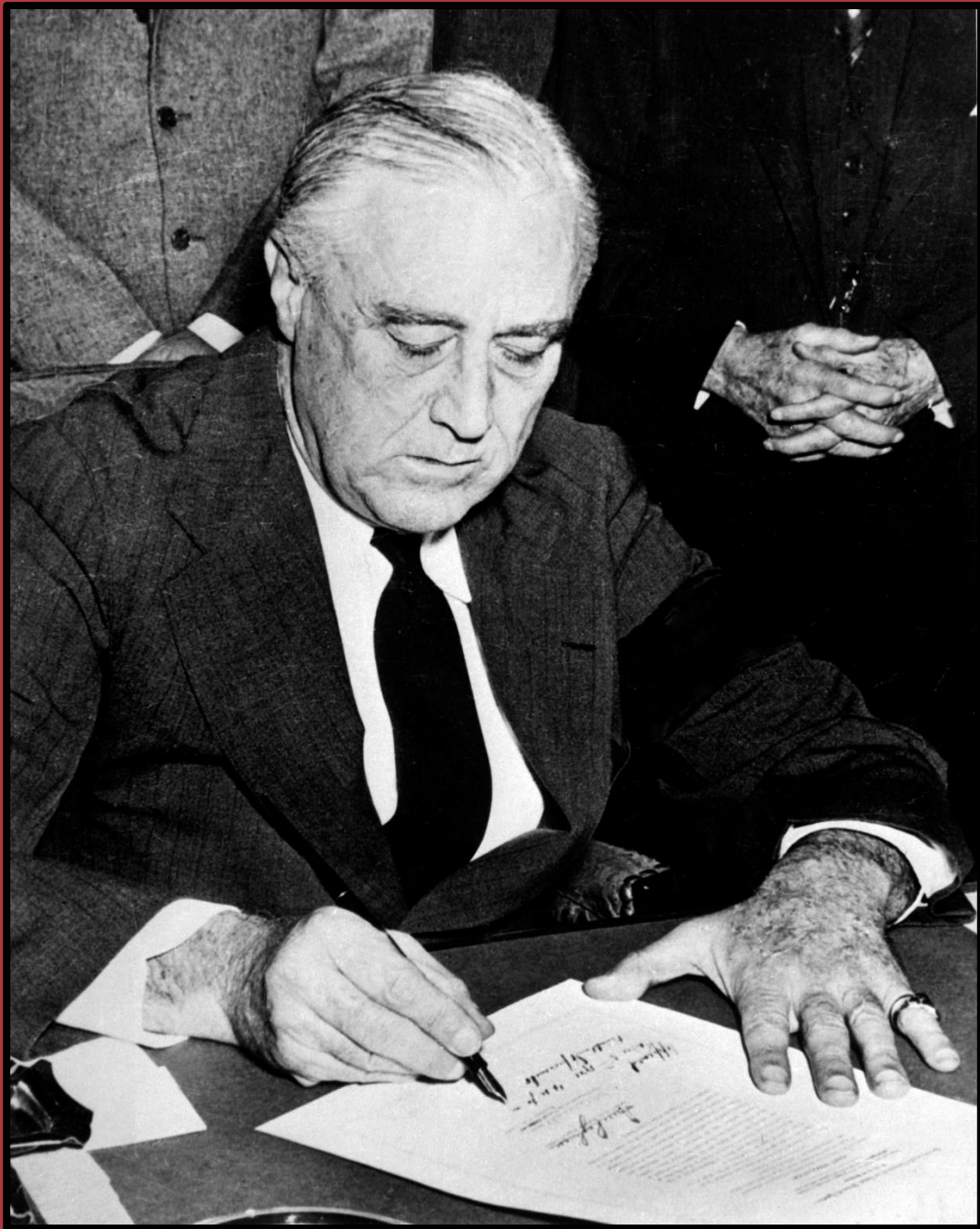


President Roosevelt called December 7, 1941, “a day that will live in infamy.”



# US Enters WWII

- The next day, President Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war on Japan.
- They agreed and the US officially entered WWII on December 8, 1941.
- On December 11, Germany and Italy declared war on the US.
- The US was now deeply involved in WWII on the side of the Allies.



Roosevelt Signing Declaration of War  
Against Japan.



# Hitler Declares War on the US – 1941.



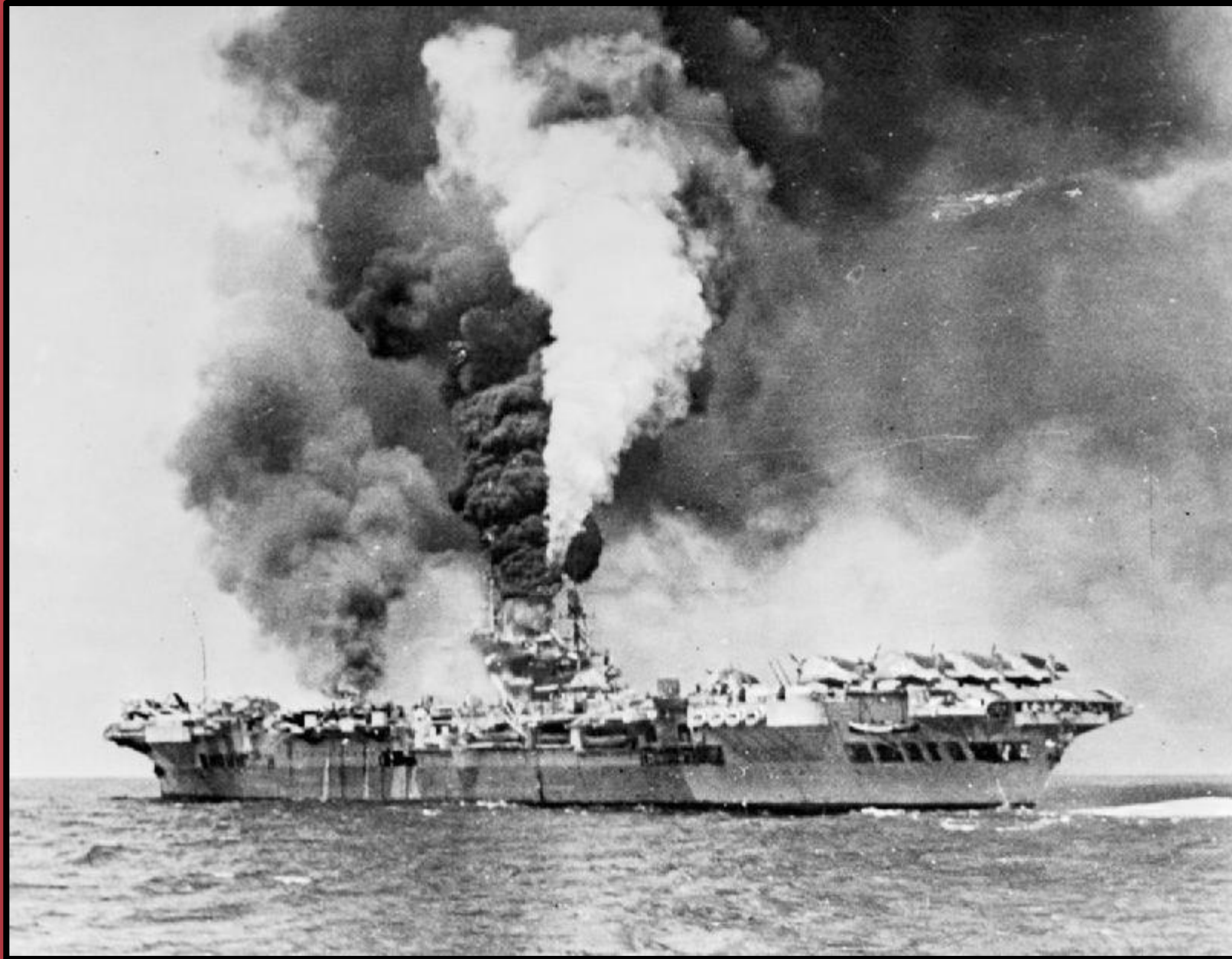
# Island Hopping

- In 1944, the US followed an “island-hopping” campaign in the Pacific.
- US forces attacked island after island held by the Japanese.
- This campaign brought American troops closer and closer to Japan.

# Japan's Soldiers

- Fighting Japan was difficult because the Japanese were fierce warriors.
- The Japanese soldiers never gave up and were willing to sacrifice themselves for their country.
- Japanese kamikaze pilots crashed their planes into US ships on purpose, fully expecting to die.





An Aircraft Carrier Hit  
By Kamikaze Planes –  
1945.

# Iwo Jima

- In February 1945, American forces invaded the island of Iwo Jima.
- The island was important because it was close to Japan and it was a good place for US planes to land.
- The Japanese protected the island with traps and underground tunnels.
- It was a fierce battle, but the US Marines eventually took the island.



US Marines Approach Iwo Jima.





US Marines Fire at  
Japanese Cave  
Positions in Iwo  
Jima.



US Marines finally reached the highest point on the island and raised the American flag in victory.

# Atomic Bombs

- The Allies thought about invading Japan, but were worried that too many soldiers would die.
- President Harry Truman made a difficult decision to use nuclear weapons against Japan.
- He warned the Japanese government to surrender, but they refused to give up.



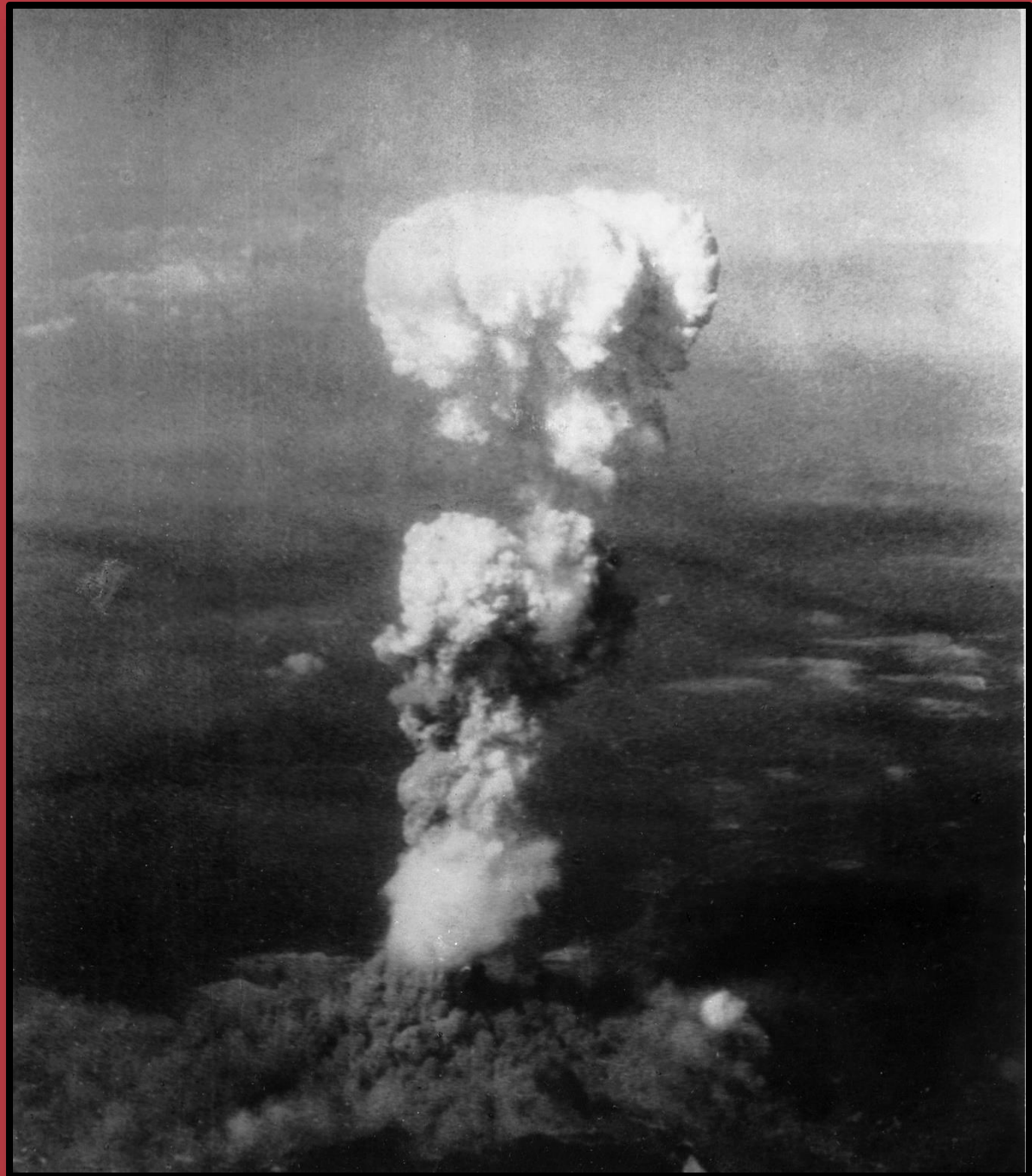
# Atomic Bombs

- On August 6, 1945, an American bomber plane dropped the first atomic bomb ever used in war on the Japanese city of Hiroshima.
- A few days later, the US dropped a second bomb on Nagasaki.
- Both cities were completely devastated, and the Japanese finally agreed to surrender.
- Japan is the only country in the world that has been attacked by nuclear weapons.

The Enola Gay dropped the “Little Boy” Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima.



# Mushroom Cloud Over Hiroshima.





Paul W. Tibbets  
Col. USAF  
Pilot, The Enola Gay



Hiroshima Aftermath

# Mushroom Cloud Over Nagasaki.





# VJ Day

- The two sides signed formal surrender papers on the US battleship *Missouri* on September 2, 1945.
- This day is officially known as VJ Day – Victory in Japan Day.



Japan Surrenders  
Aboard the USS  
*Missouri*,  
September 2, 1945.









# Rebuilding Japan



# Destruction

- After Japan's surrender, Japan's economy and government were devastated.
- Industries and farms were destroyed and the emperor was exposed as a mere mortal and not a god.
- The country's infrastructure (transportation, communication, sewage, water, and electric systems) was demolished.



# US Occupation

- The US had a plan to occupy and rebuild Japan in a way that would guarantee the country would not pose a military threat to others in the future.
- General Douglas MacArthur was sent to oversee Japan's restoration.
- The US occupied Japan from 1945 to 1952.



# MacArthur's Help

- General MacArthur ordered Japan's military to be disbanded and closed all weapons factories.
- He also directed that government and military leaders involved in World War II were brought to trial and punished.
- In addition, MacArthur helped Japan install a new democratic government.

General Douglas MacArthur  
and  
Emperor Hirohito



# Government

- MacArthur decided that Japan would be a constitutional monarchy in order to preserve the emperor's role in the country's culture.
- He wrote Japan's constitution, still referred to as The MacArthur Constitution, and it is still considered one of the most democratic documents in the world today.
- The constitution set up a two-house parliament called a Diet.
- Japanese citizens were granted many of the same rights as American citizens.





Elections in Tokyo  
1952

# Reparations

- Japan's constitution also prevents the country from declaring war or fighting with other countries (unless they are attacked first).
- After signing the new constitution, the Japanese government pledged to pay reparations to the countries that they harmed during WWII.
- The Japanese were also not allowed to rebuild their military in any way.

裕仁

昭和二十一年十一月三日

内閣總理大臣 吉田  
外務大臣 幣原喜重郎  
國務大臣



司 法 大 臣  
内 務 大 臣  
文 部 大 臣  
農 林 大 臣  
國 務 大 臣  
遞 信 大 臣  
商 工 大 臣  
厚 生 大 臣  
國 務 大 臣  
運 輸 大 臣

木村篤太郎  
大村清一  
田中耕太郎  
高橋隆夫  
一松定吉  
星亨二郎  
河合良成  
植原悦二郎  
平塚常次郎

Japan's Constitution



# Economy

- The US offered financial support to help kick start Japan's economy after WWII.
- This money coupled with a strong Japanese work ethic led to a boom in Japan's economic growth.
- Much like the US, Japan leans towards a market economy, which motivates its citizens to develop new ideas and expand businesses.

# Japan Today

- On April 28, 1952, Japan became a fully sovereign nation.
- America's occupation and MacArthur's rebuilding of Japan has had a positive lasting effect.
- Today, the country has one of the most stable democratic governments in the world.
- Japan also has one of the most powerful industrialized economies in the world.



# Tokyo, Japan

