

### ***Time-line of the main event in Asia during the period 1937 to December 1941.***

- **July 7, 1937:** Japanese forces conducted military exercises outside Yuan Peng County near Peking. The Japanese launched an all-out assault towards Yuan Peng County. The Chinese government in Nanking declared its intent to resist Japan, marking the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War. The incident is later known as the "7.7 Incident" or the "Luokouchiao Incident" by China. (Note: For political reasons, war was not declared by either side at this point. The Chinese declaration of war came on December 8, 1941. However, some historians claim that this is when World War II started in Asia.)
- **August-October, 1937:** Soviet Union invades Republic of China in the Xinjiang War (1937)
- **November, 1937:** Nanking was captured and is subjected to many months of rampage. This is in line with the Three All's Policy: kill all, burn all, loot all.
- **June, 1938:** The Japanese advance along the Yellow River is halted by the breaking of dams by the Chinese. The surprise flood kills many Japanese but also as many as 1,000,000 civilians.
- **July, 1938:** Japanese forces provoke a battle with the Soviets at Lake Hassan in Manchukuo. The Soviets handily defeat the Japanese.
- **November, 1938:** The New Order for East Asia is declared by Japan. This declaration of Japanese plans for dominance of East Asia further deteriorates their relations with western nations.
- **February, 1939:** Japan captures Hainan Island, which is seen to have strategic implications by the British.
- **May-September, 1939:** Japan and the Soviet Union engage in border clashes around the Khalka River. Again, the Japanese suffer crushing defeats. As a result, the Strike South Group influenced future operations to avoid conflict against the powerful Soviet Army, preferring to confront the United States instead.
- **July, 1939:** The United States announces its withdrawal from its commercial treaty with Japan.
- **April, 1941:** American volunteer pilots begin to arrive in China. They begin to wreak havoc upon Japanese forces and are soon named the Flying Tigers by the Chinese because of the distinctive paintings on the nose of the aircraft.
- **August, 1941:** The United States, which at the time supplied 80% of Japanese oil imports, initiates a complete oil embargo. This threatens to cripple both the Japanese economy and military strength once the strategic reserves run dry, unless alternative oil-sources can be found.
- **December 7, 1941:** Japan attacks Pearl Harbor. The United States and the Republic of China formally declare war on Japan the next day.

### ***US involvement in WWII before the attack on Pearl Harbor***

1939, September: **Cash and Carry policy:** As long as the buyer arranged transport themselves and paid in cash at once, this allowed the US to sell materiel to belligerents. In this way the US could help Britain and at the same time create jobs for its own people. The US claimed no responsibility for damage done to materiel during transport.

1940, September: **U.S. enacts draft bill:** Beginning with a registration of all men between 21 and 30, limited to training of no more than 900,000 men at any one time. Eligibility was in December 1941 extended to men between 18 and 45

1941, March: **Lend-Lease Act:** Allowed the US to supply (allied) nations with materiel from 1941-1945, materiel were lent/to be used until return or destruction. Claimed to end the so called pretence of American neutrality and was a definite step away from the US policy of non-interventionism since after the First World War. An example of this is found in September 1940 when 50 destroyers were transferred to Britain from the US. In connection to this the US received the right to use nearby naval bases in British colonies.

1941, July: **The oil embargo and assets-freezing order:** Following the Japanese occupation of the Cam Ranh naval base, the president of the US froze all Japanese assets USA. This meant that Japan lost access to much of its overseas trade and oil import. Although this was a reaction to the actions of Japan rather than something done out of own initiative it did nonetheless affect the on goings.

1941, August: **Atlantic Charter:** This policy statement was drafted by Britain and the US and signed by the Allies. It stated their ideal goals for the post war world and was interpreted by the Axis powers as a potential future alliance against them. This means that the Charter can potentially be seen as part of the reasoning behind the attack on Pearl Harbor. One further claim is that it was one of the first steps towards the formation of the United Nations.

### *Some causes of the WWII in Asia*

- Before WWII started, Japan decided to carve out an empire (in China) in much the same manner as western Europeans did after WWI
- One of the most important reasons for the involvement of Asia in WWII was Japan's need for raw materials. Other than a few coal and iron deposits, Japan lacked true natural resources. Japan, the only Asian country with a burgeoning industrial economy, feared what a lack of raw materials might lead to. Japan invaded Manchuria in order to procure these resources, and hoped to acquire more areas throughout the Asian mainland and Western Pacific
- Japan invaded Manchuria bringing China into the war (Manchurian Crisis 1931-33)
- The war in Asia was triggered by the Japanese invasion of China 1937
- After the invasion of N. China and China, the US placed sanctions and embargoes of oil and steel on Japan. Japan, being a naval power needed both resources, land expansion in China, and glory for the Empire. They were painted into a corner, and felt the only way out of it was to strike
- Unable to comply with the sanctions, Japan figured to knock off the US and British fleets in the Far East and take over the oil and rubber producing areas in the Far East
- The Imperial Japanese Navy attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, hoping to destroy the United States Pacific Fleet at anchor. Even though the Japanese knew that the U.S. had the potential to build more ships, they hoped that they would feed reinforcements in piecemeal and thus the Japanese Navy would be able to defeat them in detail