Factors Of Outbreak Of The War In The Pacific

The outbreak of war in the pacific, exclusively with Japan, was caused by many interlocking events and happenings. Japan invaded many provinces such as places in China and Manila and caused many disputes with other countries such as America and other Dutch and colonies. Some of the reasons for the outbreak of war include Japan's desire for resources, Japanese expansionism, and the western response to the Japanese invasion of places like Manchuria in China.

A significant reason as to why the war broke out in the pacific was Japan's desire for resources. To aid in the sustenance of the economy, Japan focused on arms and weapons production. Rather than Japan continuing its reliance on the U.S. for raw materials, they focused more on resource-rich colonies that they could invade, China being one of the countries they were looking into. Manchuria, a region in the east of Asia in China, seemed like an ideal place for invasion as it was rich in resources such as iron, cooking coal, salt, soybeans, and most importantly land, which Japan was severely lacking. Despite looking to become a self-sufficient country by means of producing resources, Japan relied on places such as the U.S. Malaya. This became problematic because these were the very two nations attempting to restrict Japans expansion. The prime minister at the time (1924), Kat? Takaaki, appointed 3 men in senior ministerial posts. One of the men, Baron Shidehara Kijuro, send a letter to America, outlining the growth of the population in Japan, and that they were in need of resources. On the 18th of September, 1931, Japanese troops blew up part of a railway in Manchuria, as a distraction to storm the nation. The Japanese then continued to storm Manchuria in hope of resources and land, later creating the state of Manchukuo in March of 1932. In 1941, America put an oil embargo on Japan, which caused crisis, because 80% of Japan's oil came from America. In World War 2, Japan had a need for resources, thus leading them to invade Chinese provinces and to break away from the League of Nations. This helped contribute to the outbreak of war in the Pacific.

Another contributing factor to the outbreak of the war in the Pacific was Japanese expansionism. During the great depression, Japan used a fascist system, meaning the military and armies had a large sway over the government, and the province of Manchuria seemed like an ideal place for expansion. The Japanese seized Manchuria in 1931, the province of Jehol in late 1932 and Shanghai in November 1937. In late 1937, early 1938, the Japanese viciously pillaged the village of Nanking, murdering hundreds of thousands of both soldiers and civilians. These events are known as the rape of Nanking, as between 20, 000 and 80, 000 women were sexually assaulted. The village was left in ruins and it took decades for the citizens to recover. However, in 1940, Japan and China reached a stalemate until 1944. After Konoe resigned as Prime Minister, and military general Hideki Tojo was appointed, the plans for Japan changed drastically, as whilst Konoe worked for peace, Tojo, had war plans. These plans included a pre-emptive strike against the U.S. pacific fleet at Pearl Harbour, and other strikes at the Philippines, Netherlands East Indies, and other colonies in the proximity. The goal was to eliminate the American threat, allowing Japanese forces to secure Dutch and colonies. The Japanese were ruthless in their invasion of other countries and provinces, which lead to fear and created enemies over the world.

The Western response to Japanese expansion also contributed to the war in the Pacific. The growth of the Japanese navy was a particular concern and threat to Western powers, thus in 1921, the U.S. hosted the Washington conference to discuss this among other issues. When the Japanese were invading Manchuria in September of 1931, they requested aid from the League of Nations, of whom then promptly requested that Japan leave the organisation on the 24th of October, 1931. The Japanese ignored the request and continued to secure Manchuria. When Japan created the new state of Manchukuo, the League of Nations ignored its existence, furthermore urging Japan to leave the organisation again in 1933. Pre WW2, Germany and the Soviet Union stood heavily behind China, as it was seen as protection from Japan, an opinion further solidified after the Rape of Nanking, and the sinking of a gunship, the USS Panay at the battle for Nanking. The way that nations such as America and Britain responded to Japanese expansion also contributed to the outbreak of war in the pacific as this created fear around Japan.

The outbreak of the war in the Pacific was caused by many contributing factors. These factors included, a need for resources, Japanese expansion, and the western response to Japan’s plans and invasions.

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