

World War II

Reason and legitimation for going to war and war-objectives:

- Help their allied countries like GB and France against the invasion from Germany
- Save the world from the Axis (Germany, Italy, Japan)
- Spread of democracy, freedom

Success/Failure and reasons for outcome/casualties:

- Success: Defeat of the Axis
- Reason: Power of the USA (military, economical)
- Casualties: Atomic bomb (Hiroshima, Nagasaki); 78 Million dead people (→ 418000 Americans)

Reaction/attitude of American public:

- Positive
- They felt like the strongest military power in the world → undefeatable!

Parts played by allies:

- Allies: US, Soviet Union, France, GB, British Empire
- Aim: Defeat the Axis

Reaction of the rest of the world – judgment on America's role/motives:

- positive reaction in the world
- USA as big saviour (→ peace, democracy, freedom, protection against communism)
- Judgment: good motives → legitimation for the US invasion in Europe

Korean War

Reason and legitimation for going to war and war-objectives? Process?

- Communism North Korea invaded South Korea. United States wanted to stop the spread of communism. South Korea and the United Nations drove North Koreans back into and attacked North Korea (to end communism there). China supported North Korea and drove the United Nations' troops back to original border between North and South Korea. Both sides agreed to ceasefire → end of Korean War
- Freedom of all people (especially Koreans); United Nations said it is legal because of the freedom rights

Success/Failure and reasons for outcome? Casualties?

- The borders of North and South Korea did not change and North Korea stayed communistic. South Korea stayed free from communism. About one million South and one million North Korean soldiers died. 34,000 Americans died, 100,00 were wounded and 8,000 were missing.

Reaction/attitude of American public?

- The opinion of the Americans always changed between "I think the war was a mistake" and "It wasn't a mistake". By January 1953, soon after Eisenhower was elected and truce talks began again, the American opinion shifted yet again, with half of Americans saying the war was not a mistake, while a low of 36% said it was a mistake.

Part played by allies?

- United Nations (e.g. United States) fought together with South Korea. So USA fought with a clear mandate from UN, to help an attacked nation! → good legitimation

Reaction of the rest of the world – judgment on America's role/motives?

- A lot of people say that the Korean War was a draw, but the United States achieved their aim to free South Korea from communism, to stop the further expansion of communism and the USA fought a war because they had been asked to do so by the UN

Vietnam War

Reasons and legitimation for going to war and war-objectives?

- The USA didn't want communism to spread from North-Vietnam to South-Vietnam
- They supported the dictatorial leader of S.V. (Ngo Dinh Diem) → they sent troops to S.V to advise the military of S.V
- US presidents increased US engagement/troops repeatedly + actively escalated the conflict → undeclared "war"
- USA unable to win this dirty guerilla war → protests in USA → slow disengagement + withdrawal in 1973
- in 1975 South Vietnam is conquered by communist North Vietnam

Success/Failure and reasons for outcome? Casualties

- 57000 Americans died, 150000 were wounded, 1300 missing
- 3 Million Vietnamese died
- Because of Johnson losing the re-election → Nixon won the election and ended the war

Reaction/attitude of American public?

- Anti-war protests increase, esp. from college students, esp. against draft and after MyLay Massacre
- generally decreasing support as casualties rise and no victory in sight
- American people voted for Nixon because he promised to end the American involvement in the Vietnam-War
- shock: USA lose a war against tiny nation lose against communism

Parts played by allies?

- USA and South Vietnam were the only allies

Reaction of the rest of the world – judgement on America's role/motives?

- The USA got no supporting from other nations, but China and USSR supported North Vietnam
- high casualties among Vietnamese population, mass bombardment of N. Vietnam and deforestation with poisons like Agent Orange, the MyLay massacre led to growing protest against USA

FIRST GULF WAR

REASONS AND LEGITIMATON FOR GOING TO WAR:

- Iraqi troops invaded and occupied Kuwait (oil dispute) in 1990
- in 1991 USA led coalition against Iraq after ultimatum and defeated Iraq + liberated Kuwait under UN mandate!

SUCCESS/FAILURE AND REASONS FOR OUTCOME? CASUALTIES?

- The Iraqi forces quickly retreated and also surrendered
- USA + coalition forces were massively superior (weapons, esp. aircraft, helicopters, tanks)
- 472 US casualties

REACTION/ATTITUDE OF AMERICAN PUBLIC?

Massive support for President Bush's course

→ success helps to overcome Vietnam Syndrome!

PARTS PLAYED BY ALLIES?

- Thirty-three nations supported the USA, including former Soviet Union and many 3rd world and Muslim countries!
- Broad support and acceptance of US leadership
- good + successful cooperation

REACTION OF THE REST OF THE WORLD – JUDGEMENT ON AMERICA'S ROLE/MOTIVES?

- broad approval for US military action, massive engagement
- strong motive: liberation of attacked Kuwait, with approval of UN and after giving Iraq a chance to withdraw under ultimatum
- oil in Kuwait as motive ...?

2nd Gulf War, War in IRAQ 2003 – 2009(?)

Reason and legitimation for going to war and war-objectives?

- The USA claimed that Saddam Hussein produced chemical weapons and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) → mainly Great Britain + USA invaded Iraq. After war → USA helped new government of Iraq to draft a constitution & fight terrorism

Success/Failure and reasons for outcome? Casualties?

- "victory" after 3 weeks → Saddam Hussein overthrown.
- But: since April 2003: fighting to end violent resistance!
- Casualty: casualty numbers rise daily → 4000 Americans died
- Iraq today is a divided nation with an ongoing civil war (esp. bombs against civilians and police/army) and very bad living conditions

Reaction/attitude of American public?

- Many Americans have actively opposed the US invasion, because no concrete evidence discovered linking Hussein to terrorists and WMD
- majority believe what government/G.W. Bush tell them, especially as it is USA's answer to 9/11: Iraq is threat to US A's security as there are WMD and it supports terrorism

Parts played by allies?

- US + troops of few other countries (esp. Britain, Poland)
- but many nations refused (esp. many Europeans: Germany, France ...), as there was no UN mandate and proof for WMD and a link between Al Quaida and Iraq

Reaction of the rest of the world – judgement on America's role/motives?

- no evidence of weapons of mass destruction → doubt of legitimation
- simply revenge/retaliation for 9/11?
- no broad support as for first Gulf War
- many Muslims see Iraq as a war that USA fought against Islam