RESISTANCE GROUPS

Even though most of the population supported the rulers in the Axis countries many people were against them. Resistance groups emerged in almost all of the countries that the Axis occupied. These groups worked together in an attempt to overthrow the ruling parties and dictators. They published and distributed illegal newspapers to inform the population. They rescued Allied pilots who were shot down and gathered information about the enemy. Bombing bridges and important roads was also a part of their work.

Some of the work of these groups turned out to be very important in the war. The French resistance helped the Allies during the invasion of the Normandy in 1944. Yugoslavia had the most effective groups of all. Partisans drove the Germans out of Yugoslavia in 1944.

Even in Germany itself there was a small underground group that was against the Nazis. In 1944, a group of German army officers planted a bomb that was to kill Hitler. The bomb exploded near the Fuehrer but he escaped with minor injuries.

Those who worked against the Nazis risked a lot. If they got caught they were almost always killed. Sometimes the Germans gathered hundreds of civilians and shot them as an act of revenge.

PROPAGANDA

All the nations that were in the war used propaganda to help support their ideas. Radio broadcasts reached many people and films and posters were also used. In Nazi Germany Joseph Goebbels controlled the media. He wanted to convince people all over the world that Germany was the most powerful nation and that the Germans had the right to rule the world.

Many Germans listened to radio programmes of the Allies. The BBC broadcast news programmes to the mainland to inform the people of the real situation of the war.

LIFE IN GERMANY

Germany’s early victories started to make people believe in the war. There was enough food and clothing during the first years and goods came in form the countries that the Nazis occupied. But the situation changed by 1942. The army was defeated on the Russian front and there were fewer reports of victories to cheer people up. The Allies bombed German cities and towns day and night. Yet the people continued to work for the war.

Everyone was afraid of Hitler’s secret police, the Gestapo. They arrested everyone that was against Nazi beliefs in Germany and other countries.
**LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES**

In the United States and Canada, most people supported the war. They hated the Nazis and wanted to defeat the Axis powers, especially the Japanese, who bombed Pearl Harbour. America produced an enormous amount of weapons for the war. Old factories were turned into weapons industries, car factories began producing tanks and aircraft.

Millions of women started working in the war production after the men had left for Europe. They worked in shipyards and aircraft factories and also replaced men on farms.

**LIFE IN THE SOVIET UNION**

Life was especially difficult in the Soviet Union, where intense fighting went on for four years. Stalin ordered his retreating soldiers to burn down everything in their way, so that they didn't leave anything behind for German soldiers to use. But this also caused great problems for the Soviet population. Millions of civilians died of starvation and other diseases.

**WORDS**

- **act of revenge** = something you do to punish someone who has harmed you
- **Allies** = the countries that fought together against Germany, Japan and Italy during World War II
- **arrest** = to capture a person and hold him in a prison for a certain time
- **attempt** = try
- **Axis** = the countries that fought together against the Allies in World War II (Germany, Japan, Italy and others)
- **BBC** = British Broadcasting System
- **beliefs** = ideas
- **cause** = lead to
- **cheer up** = to make happy if you are sad
- **civilian** = a person who is not in the army
- **convince** = persuade
- **defeat** = to win against
- **distribute** = to give out, send
- **effective** = useful, helpful
- **emerge** = to come up
- **enormous** = massive, a lot
- **escape** = to get away from or to run away from
- **especially** = above all
- **gather** = bring together
- **Gestapo** = the secret police force in Germany during the Nazi period
- **goods** = things that you produce to sell
- **illegal** = against the law, not allowed
- **injury** = wound
- **intense** = very strong
- **mainland** = the main area of land that forms a country; not the islands
- **media** = the information organizations of a country, like TV radio, newspapers
- **minor** = small
- **occupy** = to enter a place with an army and control it for some time
- **overthrow** = to bring down; put an end to
- **Partisans** = soldier of a group who fights against the army of his country
- **plant** = place, put
- **propaganda** = information that is wrong, tells lies or only a part of the truth
- **publish** = bring out
- **radio broadcast** = a programme on the radio
- **replace** = to take the place of
- **rescue** = save, set free
- **resistance** = an organization that secretly fights against an enemy that controls their country
- **retreat** = move back
- **ruler** = leader
- **shipyard** = a place where ships are built or repaired
- **starvation** = hunger; if you don't have enough to eat
- **support** = to agree with an idea and to help someone
- **tank** = Panzer
- **victory** = to win against someone
- **weapons** = things that you use to fight against someone, like a bomb, knife or a gun
- **yet** = but