The Geneva Convention and the treatment of prisoners of war (POWs) during World War II.
What was the purpose of the Geneva Convention?

- A meeting in 1929 the Geneva Convention dealt with the Treatment of Prisoners of War and the document was signed by 47 governments.
- The **Geneva Convention** attempted to ensure the humane treatment of prisoners of war by establishing rules to be followed by all nations.

(National Archives Photo)

Captured soldiers should be given food, shelter, clothing and medical treatment.

(National Archives Photo)
How did the treatment of prisoners differ?

- The conduct of war often reflects social and moral codes of a nation.
- The treatment of prisoners of war also often reflected the savage nature of the conflict.
The treatment of prisoners in the Pacific Theater often reflected the savagery of the fighting there.

- Japanese soldiers often committed suicide rather than surrender.
- As fighting was more fierce, the treatment of POWs in Asia did not follow the accords from the Geneva Convention.
American POWs suffered brutal treatment by Japanese after the surrender of the Philippines.

Nearly 70,000 American and Filipino soldiers were forced to surrender to the Japanese at Bataan in 1942. These troops were then marched through intense heat to a camp over 60 miles away. Somewhere between 5,000 and 11,000 soldiers died due to the lack of food and water.
The treatment of prisoners in Europe more closely followed the ideas of the Geneva Convention.