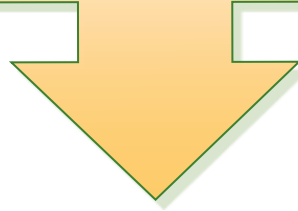


# Early Stages of WWII

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Europe: 1939-1942

**A weak League of Nations did little to stop the aggression of the totalitarian states or of Japan.**



- Many feared involvement in another war.
- Some believed the Soviet Union posed a greater threat than Nazi Germany.
- Others questioned the resolve of their own country and their allies, and embraced a policy of isolationism.

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## The appeasement of Hitler continued with the **Munich Pact in September 1938.**



Britain and France  
sacrificed the  
Sudetenland to  
Germany in return for  
peace.

But peace  
was not to come.

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**Hopes for peace in Europe faded as it became clear that efforts to appease Hitler had failed.**

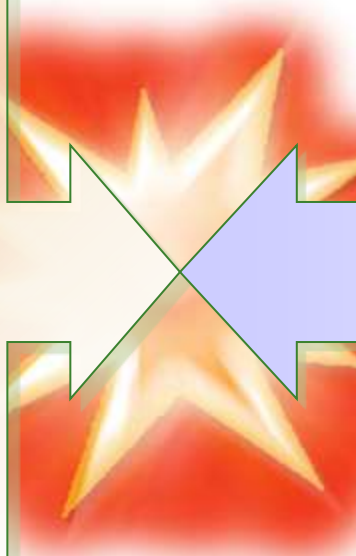


- Hitler violated the Munich Pact, taking over the remainder of Czechoslovakia in March '39.
  - On August 23, 1939 Stalin and Hitler entered a nonaggression treaty.
  - The **Hitler-Stalin Pact** guaranteed Russia the Baltic States & Germany the rest of Western Europe to its east.
  - Hitler promptly invaded Poland in September 1939; in response the Allies declared war
-

**Europe was again at war. In time, major powers around the world joined in alliances.**

### **Axis Powers**

- Germany
- Italy
- Japan



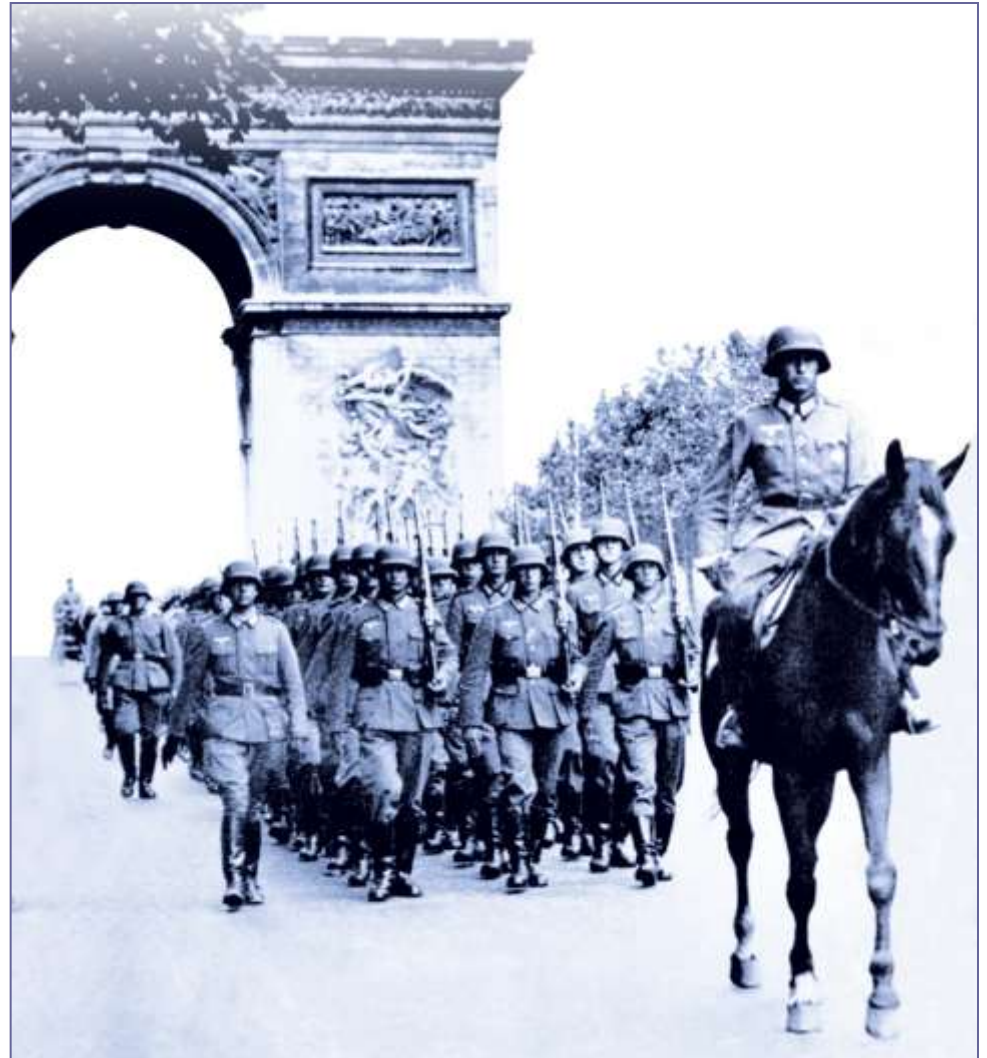
### **Allies**

- Britain
- France
- Soviet Union
- United States
- China

Germany launched a series of attacks on its neighbors marked by speed and massive firepower—a **blitzkrieg**, or “lightning war.”

From April to May of 1940 Denmark, Norway, Belgium and the Netherlands fell.

Then finally France.



**As France fell the British staged a massive rescue endeavor on June 4, 1940.**



The **Rescue at Dunkirk** was a joint civilian and military rescue endeavor of 338,000 Allied troops.

Hitler seized control of Paris and northern France, absorbing it into his empire. He left southern France to be governed by the puppet **Vichy** government.



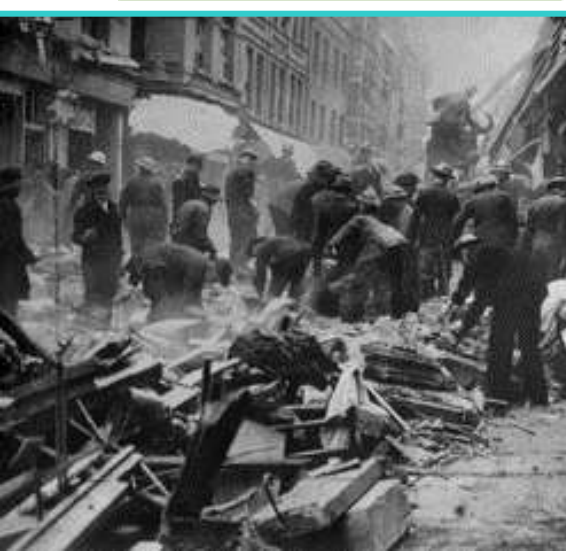


# Hitler then turned to Britain by August of 1940.

The **Battle of Britain** was waged in the air as pilots of the *Luftwaffe* and RAF fought for control of the skies.

The British hid in shelters and darkened homes as nightly bombing raids occurred—London a main target.

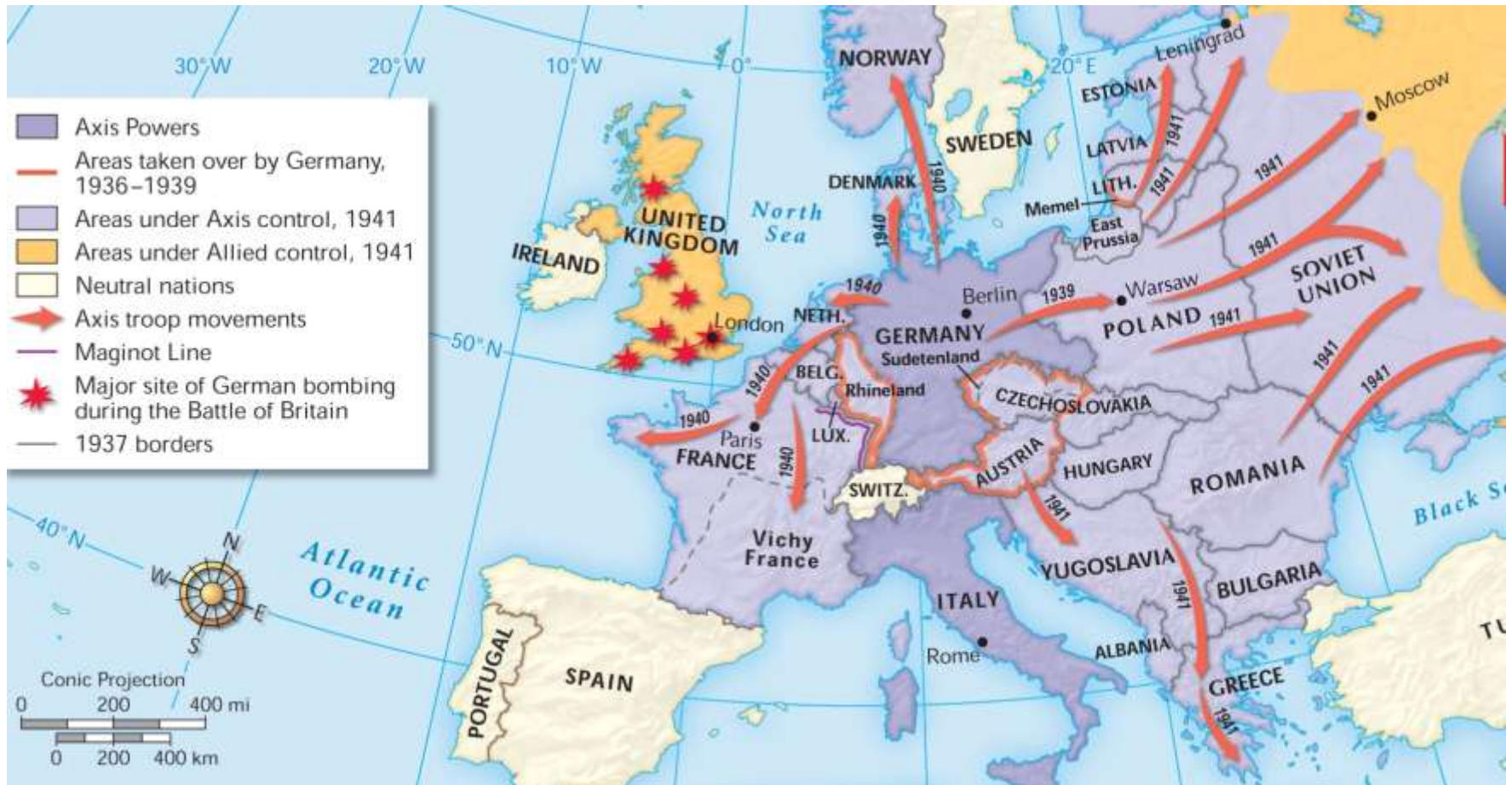
Despite terrible destruction, the British held on and Hitler postponed plans for invasion.



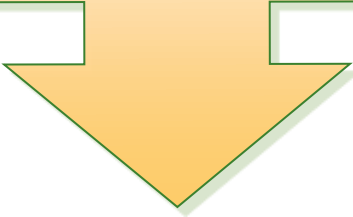


# German Aggression, 1936-1941

Many feared that Hitler was unstoppable.



**In the early days of the war, Congress declared neutrality. But as the war raged on in Europe, the United States began to take steps to support Europe's democracies.**



- The **Neutrality Act of 1939** contained a **cash-and-carry provision** favoring the Allies.
- The **Selective Service Act** provided for a military draft (September 1940).
- FDR agreed to **give Britain battleships** in exchange for defense bases (September 1940).

**Not everyone agreed with FDR's pro-Allies position. A loud debate soon raged between **isolationists** and **interventionists**.**

### Should the United States Enter World War II?

#### Isolationist Viewpoint

- The United States should avoid alliances with other nations.
- Americans should focus on issues at home, such as the depression.
- Complete neutrality was the way to keep the United States safe.
- Intervention in a foreign war would be a mistake, just as World War I was.

#### Interventionist Viewpoint

- The United States should work with other nations to promote collective security.
- Axis aggressions were wrong and threatened American interests.
- The United States should aid the Allies, who were fighting for democracy and freedom.
- The United States should put pressure on the Axis Powers and prepare for war.

**As conditions worsened overseas, Roosevelt described what was at stake in an address to Congress on January 6, 1941.**

He highlighted four freedoms precious to Americans.

- freedom of speech
- freedom of worship
- freedom from want
- freedom from fear



All of these freedoms, he argued, were **threatened** by German and Japanese militarism.

## Congress then took another step to aid the British.

The **Lend-Lease Act**, symbolically numbered 1776, amounted to an economic declaration of war.

Many people, however, remained divided over American involvement in the war.





In 1941, Roosevelt and British prime minister **Winston Churchill** signed the **Atlantic Charter**, deepening the alliance between the two nations.

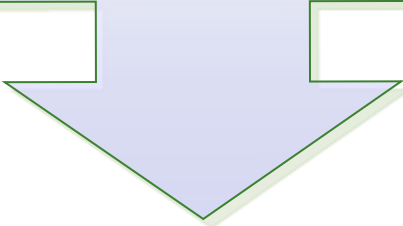
German submarines began to **fire on American ships** supporting the Allies.

Roosevelt ordered the navy to attack the **U-boats** on sight.

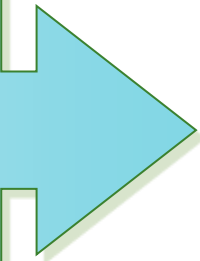
**By the Fall of 1941 the U.S. was engaged in an undeclared naval war with Germany.**



Despite the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on and other Allied holdings on December 7, 1941, Churchill and FDR viewed Germany as the most dangerous Axis Power.



The German military could:

- bomb Britain
  - fight both the U.S. and British navies
  - invade the Soviet Union
- 

**For these reasons, the U.S. and Great Britain under the **ABC-1** agreement engaged in a **"Europe First"** strategy to defeat Hitler.**



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# The United States in WWII

Europe 1942-1945

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# The U.S. moved quickly to produce military supplies and send them to Europe.



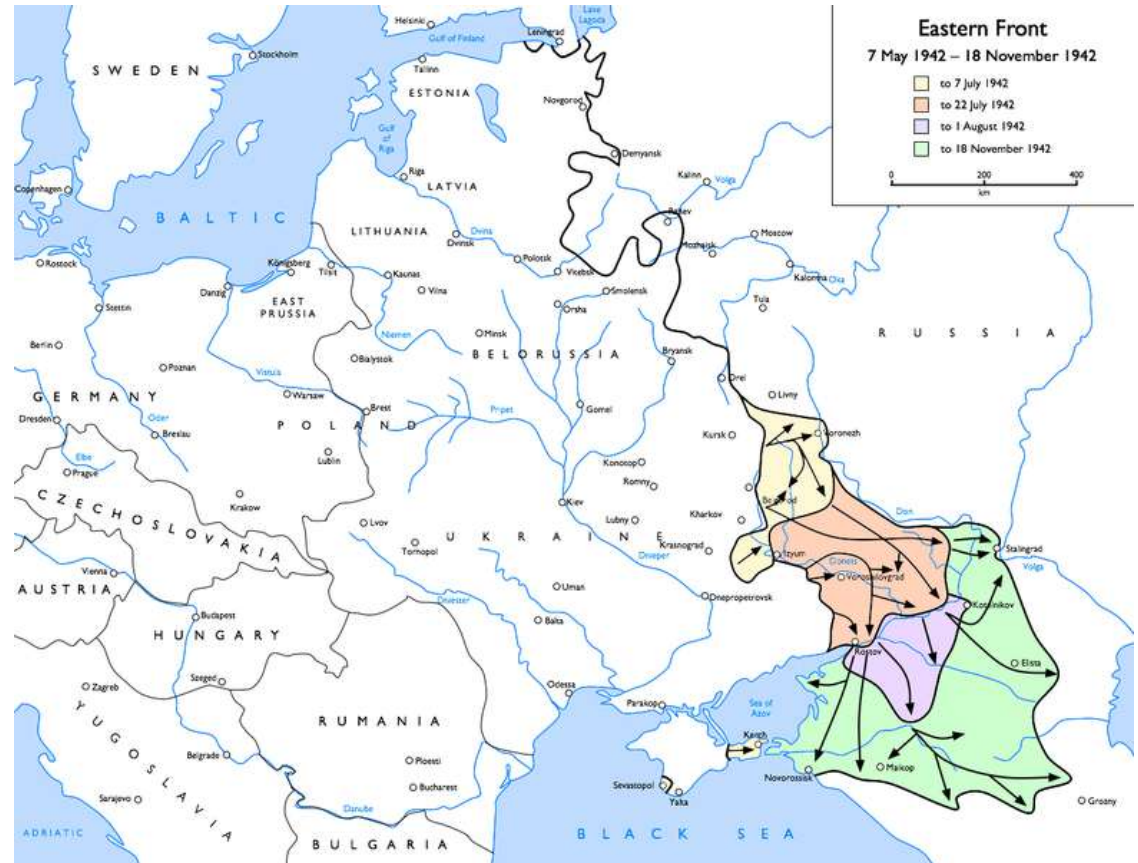
Hitler was determined to **prevent the supplies** from reaching Europe.

During the **Battle of the Atlantic** German **U-boats** sank thousands of supply ships.

New technology such as **radar** helped the Allies target the U-boats and **restore the supply lines** by spring of 1943.

**Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941. Millions of soldiers and civilians died in fierce fighting.**

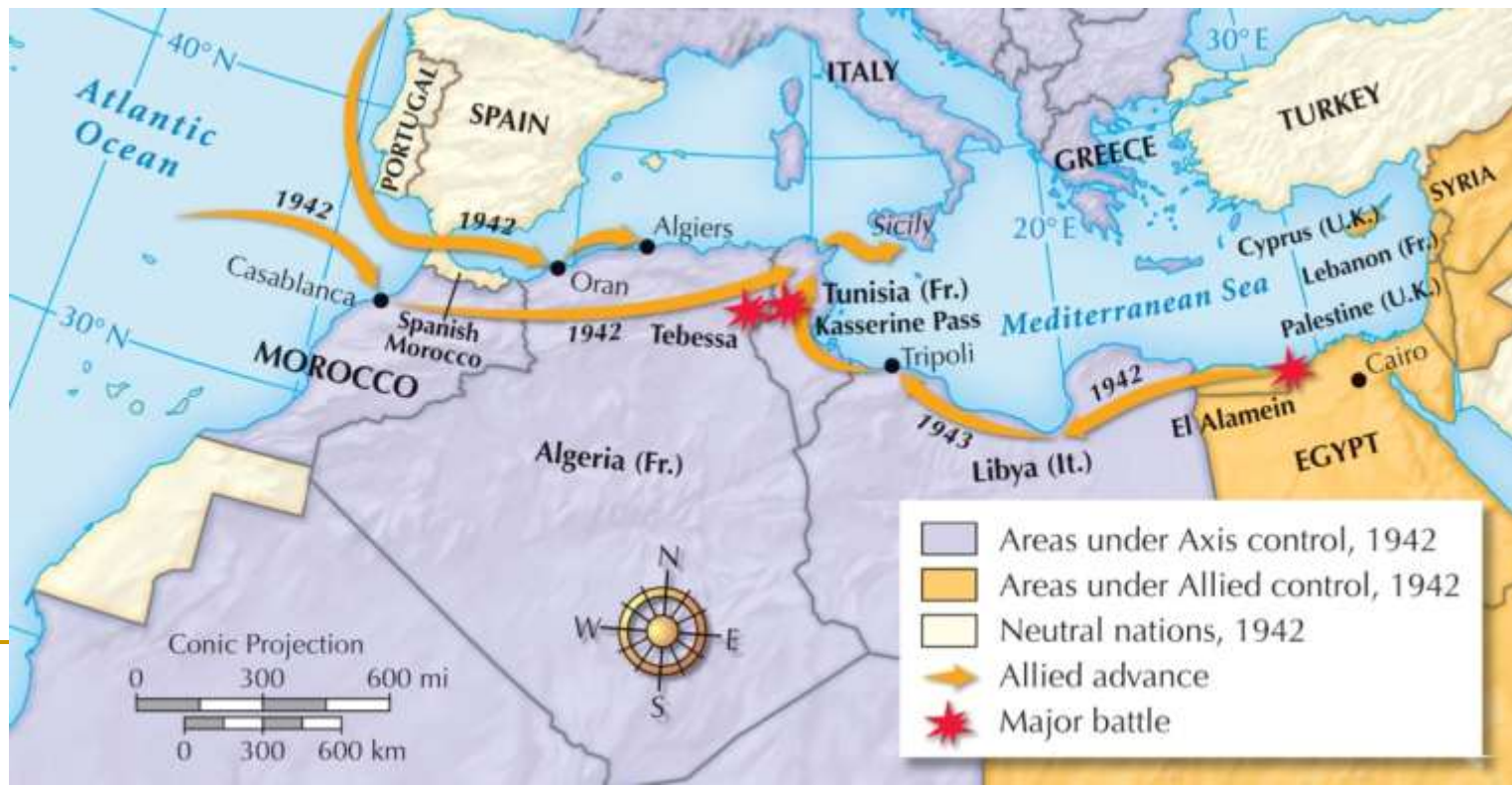
After a long struggle, the Soviets launched a massive counteroffensive at the **Battle of Stalingrad** in November 1942.



By February 1943 90,000 Germans surrendered—1 yr. later Stalin reclaimed 2/3rds Soviet land lost.

**Meanwhile, Allied forces pressured the Axis on another front—the deserts of North Africa.**

- General **Dwight Eisenhower** commanded the Allied invasion.
- Difficult conditions: Heat, sandstorms, & scorpions





The **Battle of El Alamein** pegged Gen. Erwin Rommel "Desert Fox" against Gen. Bernard Montgomery.

By November 1942 "Monty" had forced the **Afrika Corps** to retreat west.


The Allies then launched **Operation Torch**.




Led by Gen. **George S. Patton** American forces landed 100,000+ troops in Morocco and Algeria. The British and Americans cornered Nazi troops at Tunisia by May 1943.

## **The Germans quickly seized control of northern Italy and put Mussolini back in charge.**

On June 4, 1944 the Allies entered Rome as the Germans began to retreat north.



On April 27, 1945, Italian resistance fighters shot Mussolini & hung his body in downtown Milan.



Fighting in Italy continued until Germany surrendered in May of 1945.

## As the war in Africa and Italy raged the Allies conducted intense air raids on German holdings

Throughout the war bombers launched **nonstop attacks** against Germany.

- massive **saturation bombing**
- pinpoint **strategic bombing**
- Cologne (May-Aug 1942)
- Normandy (June 1944)
- Dresden (February 1945)





In December 1943, Allied leaders agreed to open a second front in the war in Europe at the **Tehran Conference**.

American and British troops would cross the English Channel and **invade France**.



# Operation Overlord was a massive operation commanded by Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower.

It required careful planning and involved an elaborate hoax to fool the enemy about where troops would land.

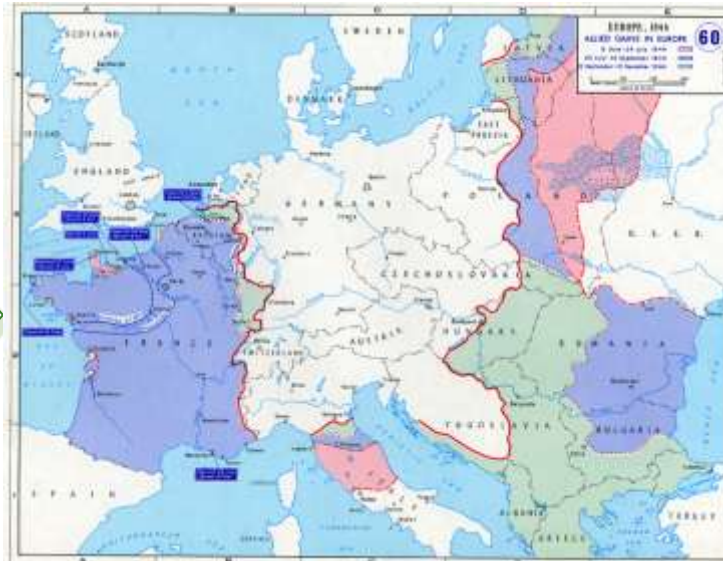
On **D-Day**, June 6, 1944, the Allies landed at Normandy. Amid intense fighting the Allies captured the beaches.



Within a month, more than one million troops landed in France.

# **The Allies seized the momentum of D-Day. In August Allied forces landed in southern France & advanced north**

The Allies advanced from the west and south, liberating Paris.



The Soviets advanced from the east, liberating Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, and Hungary.



**In December of 1944 Hitler launched one last counterattack—creating a bulge in American lines.**

The **Battle of the Bulge** pushed Allied troops west for 10 days—disrupting supply lines.

The Americans led by the **101<sup>st</sup> Airborne at Bastogne**, pushed back, forcing a German retreat.



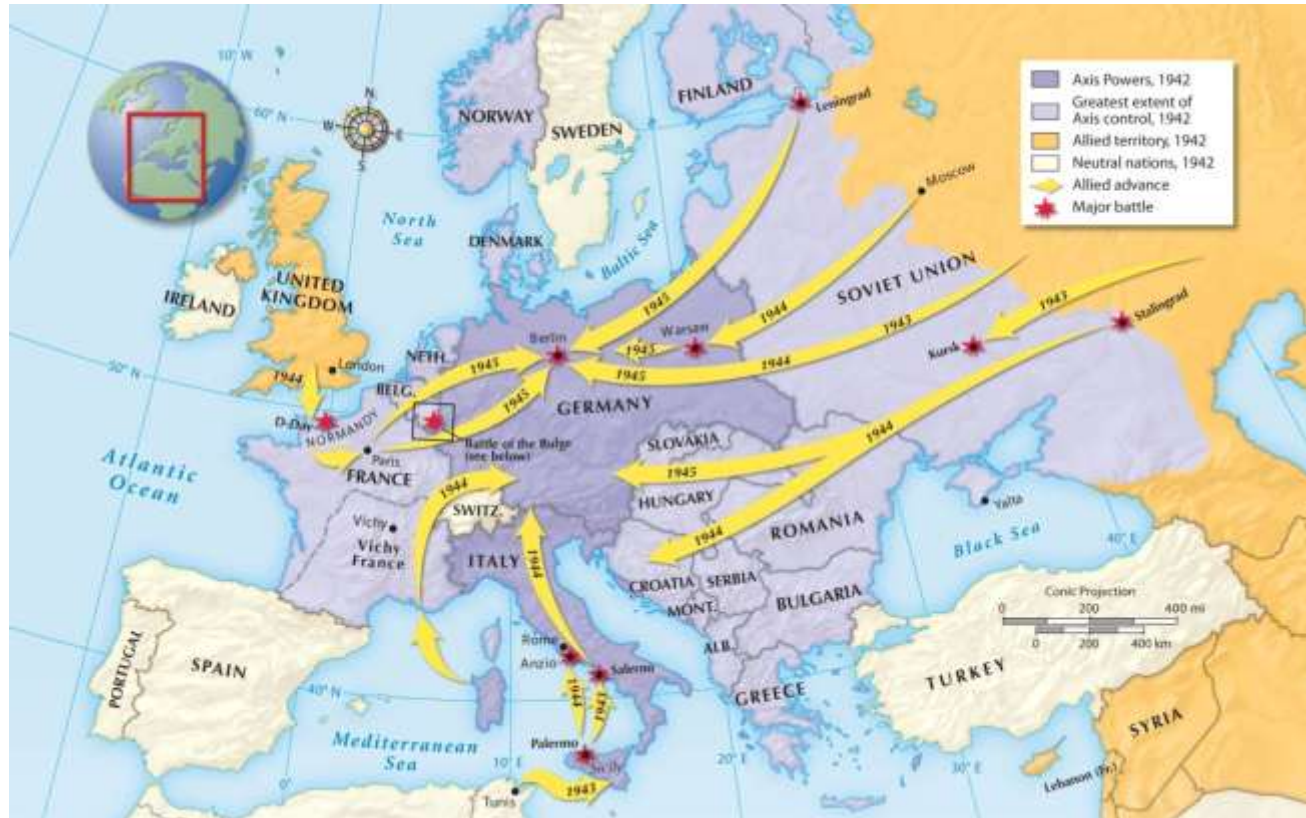
In February 1945, the Big Three met at **Yalta**.

Plan the end of the war occupation.

1. Divide Germany into 4 occupation zones.
2. Allow for European nations to become democracies.
3. Stalin arrests Polish government.
4. Russia invited to join United Nations.
5. Set up a reparations committee.



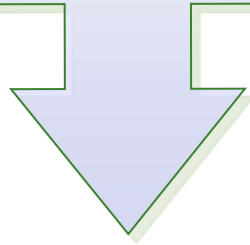
# World War II in Europe, 1942–1945



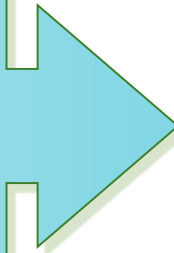
While the Soviets quickly moved on Berlin, the Allies in the west strategically safeguarded the last bridge across the Rhine River—allowed for quick invasion of western Germany.



The Allies soon surrounded Berlin, and began an all-out assault on Hitler by April 1945—Soviets reached it first.



Hitler had fallen into madness, giving orders that were not obeyed and planning attacks that were not carried out.



On April 30, 1945, after a quick marriage to **Eva Braun** Hitler committed suicide. **Germany surrendered.**



With the German surrender on **May 7 1945**, the Allies celebrated **V-E Day**, hailing their hard-fought victory in Europe.

FDR did not live to join the celebrations. He died a few weeks earlier.

The new President **Harry S. Truman** assumed the responsibility for the remainder of the war.

