

Chapter 12 Lesson 3

The war in Europe

The decision was made to attack the Germans and the Italians along the periphery first. Thus the battle for Europe began in North Africa in 1942.

- 1) In early 1942 the Germans had some success in North Africa (Egypt). This was a problem because most of Great Britain's supplies were shipped via the Suez Canal.
- 2) Summer 1942: Rommel's troops are stopped by the British at El Alamein. The second battle of El Alamein occurs in October. In a 12 day battle, the British seize control of the Suez and force "the Desert Fox" to retreat.
- 3) November 1942: GB and US invade French North Africa and push Germany and Italy out (surrender May 1943)
- 4) The Americans invaded Tunisia, commanded by General Dwight D. Eisenhower. At first the Americans (at Kasserine Pass) were outfought. General Eisenhower fired the general in charge and replaced him with General George Patton. The American and British forces forced the Germans to back. The Germans surrendered in Africa (May 13, 1943).

The Battle of the Atlantic:

- 1) German submarines patrolled the Atlantic Ocean near the United States. Citizens would dim their lights to try and protect ships.
- 2) By August 1942, German subs had sunk about 360 American ships.
- 3) America began using a convoy system to protect our ships
- 4) New technology was used to help the situation: radar, sonar and depth charges

The Battle of Stalingrad:

- 1) November 1942-February 1943: The Battle for Stalingrad, Soviet counterattack, Germans surrounded, horrible winter conditions, German Sixth Army gone (Bloody battle, 800,000 Axis missing, wounded or dead, captured sent to USSR prison camps, most died—USSR 1.1 million dead, wounded or captured)
- 2) February 1943: Germany pushed back to June 1942 levels on eastern front

Striking Germany and Italy:

- 1) January 1943: FDR and Churchill met in Morocco to discuss the next stage of the war (after North Africa)
- 2) At the Casablanca Conference, they agreed to increase bombing of Germany and to attack Italy (Sicily first)
- 3) New strategic bombing—between Jan 1943 and May 1945, the Allies dropped 53,000 of explosives each month
- 4) The bombing destroyed railroads, aircraft factories and caused an oil shortage
- 5) July 1943—the Allies attack Sicily

- 6) The Tehran Conference: The Big Three met in Tehran, Iran. They agreed to the following
 - a. USSR would launch a full scale offensive when we invaded France
 - b. Germany would be split after the war
 - c. USSR would help US with Japan
 - d. International peacekeeping organization
- 7) King Victor Emmanuel surrenders Italy to the Allies and has Mussolini arrested however the Germans rescued him and occupied much of Italy (northern half)
- 8) January-May 1944: The Allies battle for Anzio, which was behind enemy lines. The Allies are surrounded by the Germans but finally break through German lines.
- 9) June 6, 1944: The Allies take Rome

The D-Day Invasion:

- 1) Operation Overlord planning began well before the date of June 6th—the biggest challenge was choosing the best location—another issue was to determine who would lead France after the invasion—timing was another issue: tides, weather, darkness, element of surprise, moonlight
- 2) June 6, 1944: D-Day the invasion of France from across the English Channel, led by American General Dwight D. Eisenhower—over 100,000 men brought by 7,000 ships—23,000 paratroopers—there were five beaches: Sword, Omaha, Utah, Gold, Juno—each beach progressed in a different manner
- 3) The Allies fought across a variety of difficulties, barbed wire, embattlements and fortifications, underwater mines and machine gun fire. The Germans believed the battle to be a diversion for the real invasion and responded slowly. This allowed the Allies to establish a beachhead and bring in men and supplies.
- 4) After D-Day, the troops face the battle of the hedgerows—bombers pierce the German lines and the battle of the hedgerows ends July 1944
- 5) August, 1944: The Allies have liberated Paris
- 6) August, 1944- January 1945: The Soviets battle the Germans in Poland, in January they take Warsaw.
- 7) December, 1944-January 1945: The Battle of the Bulge (Belgium) was a German attack (to prevent supplies from coming in to Allies through Belgium) against the Allies which caused a bulge in the Allied lines and the German lines bulged outward (hence, the name of the battle). The Allied lines held. The battle was fought in difficult conditions-snow, cold—General Patton was sent to the rescue. We bombed fuel depots and drove the Germans back.
- 8) March, 1945: The Allies cross the Rhine and move into Germany.
- 9) April, 1945: The Allies in the west move toward the Elbe River and link up with the Soviet army.
- 10) April 28, 1945: Mussolini is killed by Italian partisans
- 11) April 30, 1945: Hitler commits suicide in his bunker
- 12) May 7, 1945: Germany surrenders
- 13) May 8, 1945: V-E Day—Victory in Europe Day

The war is now officially over but there are still problems and issues to arise.

Outcomes and Results:

- 1) World War II resulted in the deaths of approximately 60-65 million people worldwide
- 2) Most of Europe suffered devastation (financial and physical) with Germany, France, Poland and parts of the USSR being hardest hit
- 3) Japan also suffered great damage
- 4) The Nuclear Age began with the dropping of the atomic bombs upon Japan
- 5) The Cold War began

The Cold War was a period of increased tension between the United States and the Soviet Union. It resulted from issues that arose between the two countries after WWII. These issues involved the differences between communism and democracy, differing opinions about Eastern European countries after the war, and suspicion and distrust between the two nations.

- 6) The creation of the United Nations
- 7) The Nuremberg War Trials and the Tokyo Trials
 - a. 22 Germans were prosecuted at the Nuremberg Trials—3 acquitted, 7 given prison sentences and 12 were given a death sentence
 - b. Germans of lesser importance were tried later with over 100 prison sentences and 24 more executions
 - c. 25 Japanese leaders were put on trial at the Tokyo Trials—18 were sentenced to prison, the rest were sentenced to death by hanging
- 8) The development of the Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe