

Ch. 24 Sec. 4: Toward Victory

Why It Matters By mid-1942, the Allies had begun to turn back Axis advances in the Pacific, in North Africa, and in Europe. Ultimately, the Allies were victorious. After the war, the United States assumed the lead in a new global conflict—the Cold War.

Victory in Europe

In 1943, _____ was bearing the brunt of the Nazi assault. _____ urged the Americans and British to open up a " _____ " in Europe by invading France. However, Roosevelt and Churchill did not think their forces were ready for such a difficult task. Instead, they chose a more realistic goal— removing Italy from the war.

Italy Surrenders In July 1943, American and British troops crossed the _____ from Tunisia. They swiftly took control of the Italian island of _____. By fall, they were fighting their way northward along the _____.

The king of Italy dismissed _____ from office. On September 8, 1943, the new government surrendered to the Allies. Even so, German troops in Italy continued to fight. The Allies would face a long struggle before they finally controlled Italy.

D-Day In 1944, Allied forces were ready to undertake the invasion of France. Under the command of _____, the Allies carefully planned the landing. It would be an operation of massive dimensions, involving thousands of ships and aircraft.

On June 6, 1944—known as _____—more than 155,000 American, British, and Canadian troops crossed the English Channel. They landed on five beaches at _____, in western France. Troops at four of the beaches quickly overcame German opposition.

On _____ Beach, however, Americans met an especially fierce German defense. One American survivor of the assault later recalled being wounded by a shell as he tried to come ashore:

“The shrapnel hit my right shoulder and leg. The explosion and concussion seemed to push me into the ground and knocked the breath out of me. The force of the explosion blew my helmet off and cut the corner of my left eye. The Germans were firing everything they could.”

—Roy Arnn, letter, November 10, 1990

By day's end, some 2,500 American soldiers lay dead on Omaha Beach. However, they had succeeded in their mission. Within a month, a million Allied troops had stormed ashore.

On August 25, 1944, the Allies entered _____. After four years under Nazi rule, French men, women, and children greeted their liberators with joy.

Battle of the Bulge Allied forces pushed eastward. But on December 16, 1944, the Germans counterattacked in _____. Hitler poured his remaining reserves into the attack. Bad weather grounded Allied aircraft for the first week of the battle. This allowed German troops to create a " _____ " in the American lines.

The Germans came close to breaking through Allied lines. But, in the end, their attempt to fight off defeat proved futile. German troops were short of critical supplies, especially fuel. Also, though each side lost tens of thousands of men, the Allies had additional troops in reserve. Germany was running out of soldiers.

Fighting in Northern Europe's coldest winter in 40 years, American forces won the Battle of the Bulge. Germany now lay wide open from both east and west.

Germany Invaded In January 1945, a huge Soviet force entered Germany from the east. Soon, the Western Allies also entered in large numbers from the west. While the Allied armies advanced on the ground, their planes bombed German industries and cities.

On April 12, 1945, President _____ died of a stroke. His death shattered Americans. Many could hardly remember anyone else as their leader. At a critical moment, Vice President _____ was suddenly thrust into the highest office in the country. Truman had little experience dealing with important policy issues. Would he be a decisive leader?

Victory in Europe Meanwhile, Germany was collapsing. On April 16, Soviet troops began an assault on _____. Hitler took shelter in a bunker built beneath the city's streets. There, with his Nazi empire in ruins, he committed suicide on April 30, 1945.

A week later, representatives of Germany's armed forces unconditionally surrendered at Eisenhower's headquarters in France. On May 8, the Allies celebrated _____, Victory in Europe.

Victory in the Pacific

The Battle of Midway in 1942 had halted Japan's advance in the Pacific. After that, the Americans went on the offensive.

Island Hopping American commanders adopted a strategy known as _____, in which American forces would capture some Japanese-held islands and go around others. Each island taken was a stepping stone toward Japan.

On August 7, 1942, U.S. Marines landed on _____ (gwah dal cah nal) in the south Pacific. Hampered by hunger and disease, the Americans fought for six grueling months until they controlled the *island*. The fierce combat on Guadalcanal was typical of what U.S. Marines would face throughout the island-hopping campaign.

Navajo soldiers made a key contribution to the island-hopping strategy. Using their own language, these code-talkers radioed _____ messages from island to island. The Japanese intercepted the messages but were unable to understand the rare Navajo language.

In January 1945, army units landed on _____, in the Philippines, and then advanced on Manila. After nearly a month of urban warfare, the Americans secured the city. MacArthur had fulfilled his _____ to return to the Philippines. The Philippine campaign cost the lives of over 14,000 Americans and 350,000 Japanese, as well as some 100,000 Filipino civilians.

Japan Holds Firm Meanwhile, island-hopping marines approached Japan. Their last two stops were _____ (EE woh JEE muh), in February, and _____ (oh kuh NAH wuh), in April. The Americans paid a terrible price for the two islands. Six thousand Americans died at Iwo Jima; twelve thousand at Okinawa.

Even more startling, however, was the willingness of the Japanese to die rather than surrender. Only 1 percent of Iwo Jima's defenders survived. On Okinawa, Japanese soldiers jumped off cliffs to their deaths rather than be captured.

In the last days of the war, the Japanese unleashed a deadly new form of combat. It was based on an ancient code, which taught that surrender dishonored a warrior. In _____ (kah muh KAH zee) missions, suicide pilots crashed their planes into American ships. These events convinced American war planners that only a full-scale invasion of Japan's home islands would force a surrender.

After Hitler's defeat in Europe, the Allies were able to turn their full attention to the Pacific. By the spring of 1945, American bombers were pounding the Japanese home islands. American ships bombarded the coast and destroyed shipping. Millions of Japanese were short of food. Yet, Japanese leaders still talked of winning a glorious victory.

The Atomic Bomb President Truman made plans for invading Japan in the autumn. His military advisers warned him that the invasion might cost half a million American casualties. In July, Truman learned that a secret weapon— _____—had been successfully tested in the New Mexico desert. The new weapon could destroy an entire city. Truman decided to use it and save American lives.

On August 6, 1945, an American plane dropped an atomic bomb on the city of _____. The destruction was like nothing the world had ever seen. Within minutes, the blast and searing heat had killed more than _____ people. Still, the Japanese refused to surrender.

On August 9, a second atomic bomb was dropped on the city of _____. Some _____ people died instantly. Many more both cities would die slower deaths from radiation poisoning.

At last, on August 14, 1945, the emperor of Japan announced that the nation would surrender. That day became known as _____. On September 2, 1945, MacArthur formally accepted Japan's surrender aboard the battleship _____, anchored in Tokyo Bay. World War II was over at last.

The Holocaust

World War II was the bloodiest conflict in human history. It took the lives of up to 60 million people, including about 400,000 Americans. Some two thirds of those killed were civilians. Still, some of the worst horrors were not fully revealed until after Germany's defeat. Only then did the world learn the full extent of Nazi brutality.

Victims of the Nazis As you have read, Nazism was built on racism and extreme _____. During the war, Hitler moved beyond restrictions on Jews to what he termed the "final solution to the Jewish problem"—the attempt to annihilate all Jews in Europe.

Some _____ Jews were murdered under the Nazis. Entire families, from grandparents to infants, were wiped out. This mass slaughter is today known as the _____. As a result of the Holocaust, a new word entered the English language: _____. Genocide is the deliberate attempt to wipe out an entire nation or group of people.

Other groups also became victims of the Nazis. The Nazis murdered millions of Poles, Slavs, Gypsies, communists, and people with physical or mental disabilities.

Death Camps The Nazis developed an _____ system of mass murder. They built six death camps in Poland. Millions of women, men, and children were transported to these camps in railway cattle cars. Hundreds at a time were killed in gas chambers. Others were subjected to torture or horrifying medical experiments.

As Allied soldiers liberated the death camps, they were shocked by the sight and smell of piles of corpses. The survivors were living skeletons. One American radio reporter told his listeners:

“In another part of the camp they showed me the children, hundreds of them. Some were only 6 years old. One rolled up his sleeves, showed me his number. It was tattooed on his arm. B-6030, it was. The others showed me their numbers. They will carry them till they die.... I could see their ribs through their thin shirts.”

-Edward R. Murrow *PM*, April 16, 1945

Murrow Concluded, "I reported what I saw and heard, but only part of it. For most of it, I have no words."

War Crimes Trials Shocked by the Holocaust and other Nazi actions, the Allies took an unprecedented step. For the first time in history, victors in a war prosecuted leaders of the losing side for war crimes. War crimes are wartime acts of cruelty and brutality that are judged to be beyond the accepted rules of war and human behavior.

In the German city of _____, Allied judges tried prominent Nazis for plunging the world into war and for the horrors of the death camps. In 1946, at the first

Nuremberg Trials, 12 defendants were sentenced to death by hanging. Similar trials were held in Manila and Tokyo to try leaders of the Japanese war machine.