

# Pushing the Axis Back

## Guide to Reading

### Connection

In the previous section, you learned about life on the home front. In this section, you will discover how the Allies began to achieve victories on all fronts.

### Main Idea

- At the Casablanca Conference, Roosevelt and Churchill planned a wartime strategy that included increased bombing of Germany and an attack on Sicily. (p. 599)
- The Allied invasion of France took place on June 6, 1944, which was known as D-Day. (p. 601)

- General MacArthur's strategy involved taking back islands in the Pacific, one island at a time, to push back the Japanese. (p. 603)

### Content Vocabulary

amphtrac, kamikaze

### Academic Vocabulary

approximately, code, pose

### People and Terms to Identify

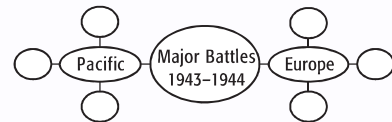
Casablanca Conference, Operation Overlord, D-Day, Omar Bradley, Guadalcanal

### Reading Objectives

- **Describe** the goals of the two major offensives the Allies launched in Europe in 1943.
- **Explain** the American strategy for pushing the Japanese back in the Pacific.

### Reading Strategy

**Organizing** As you read about the major battles of 1943 and 1944, complete a graphic organizer similar to the one below by filling in the names of the battles fought. Indicate whether each battle was an Allied or an Axis victory.



### Preview of Events

◆ 1943

**January 1943**

Casablanca Conference

**July 1943**

The Allies invade Italy

◆ 1944

**November 1943**

Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin meet at Tehran

**June 6, 1944**

D-Day invasion begins

◆ 1945

**October 20, 1944**

MacArthur returns to the Philippines

The following are the main History–Social Science Standards covered in this section.

**11.7.2** Explain U.S. and Allied wartime strategy, including the major battles of Midway, Normandy, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and the Battle of the Bulge.

**11.7.3** Identify the roles and sacrifices of individual American soldiers, as well as the unique contributions of the special fighting forces (e.g., the Tuskegee Airmen, the 442nd Regimental Combat team, the Navajo Code Talkers).

**11.7.4** Analyze Roosevelt's foreign policy during World War II (e.g., Four Freedoms speech).

**11.7.6** Describe major developments in aviation, weaponry, communication, and medicine and the war's impact on the location of American industry and use of resources.

## The Big Idea

**The fate of nations is forever changed by monumental world events.** The United States fought a two-front war. In Europe, the Allies decided to bomb Germany, which led to severe oil shortages, a wrecked railroad system, and significant damage to aircraft factories in that country. At the same time, Allied troops took Italy in a campaign lasting almost a year. The leaders of the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union met to discuss further war plans and a future international peacekeeping organization. The plans led to Operation Overlord, the Allied invasion of France. In the Pacific, the United States adopted a two-pronged attack, retaking the Philippines and advancing toward Japan by island-hopping in the central Pacific.

## Striking Back at the Third Reich

**Main Idea** At the Casablanca Conference, Roosevelt and Churchill planned a wartime strategy that included increased bombing of Germany and an attack on Sicily.

**Reading Connection** Have you ever created a strategy to win a game or to tackle a tough assignment? Read on to learn about Roosevelt’s meetings in Casablanca and Tehran.

The first large Allied invasion of the war—the attack on North Africa in November 1942—had shown that the Allies could mount a large-scale invasion from the sea. Storming a beach under enemy control, however, can be a terrifying ordeal. There is no cover on a beach, no place to hide, and no way to turn back. Launching an invasion from the sea is very risky. Unfortunately, the Allies had no choice. If they were going to win the war, they had to land their troops in Europe and on islands in the Pacific.

### ★ An American Story ★

On the morning of June 6, 1944, Lieutenant John Bentz Carroll of the 16th Infantry Regiment scrambled down a net ladder from his troop ship to a small landing craft tossing in the waves 30 feet (9 m) below. The invasion of France had begun. Carroll’s platoon would be among the first Americans to land in Normandy. Their objective was a beach, code-named “Omaha”:

“Two hundred yards out, we took a direct hit. . . . [A machine gun] was shooting a rat-tattat on the front of the boat. Somehow or other, the ramp door opened up . . . and the men in front were being struck by machine gun fire. Everyone started to jump off into the water. They were being hit as they jumped, the machine gun fire was so heavy. . . . The tide was moving us so rapidly. . . . We would grab out on some of those underwater obstructions and mines built on telephone poles and girders, and hang on. We’d take cover, then make a dash through the surf to the next one, fifty feet beyond. The men would line up behind those poles. They’d say, ‘You go—you go—you go,’ and then it got so bad everyone just had to go anyway, because the waves were hitting with such intensity on these things.”

—quoted in *D-Day: Piercing the Atlantic Wall*

The success of the landings convinced Roosevelt that it was time to meet with Churchill to plan the next step. In January 1943, the president headed to Casablanca, Morocco, to meet the prime minister.

At the **Casablanca Conference**, Roosevelt and Churchill agreed to step up the bombing of Germany. The goal of this new campaign was “the progressive destruction of the German military, industrial, and economic system, and the undermining of the morale of the German people.” The Allies also agreed to attack the Axis on the island of Sicily. Churchill called Italy the “soft underbelly” of Europe and was convinced that the Italians would quit the war if the Allies invaded their homeland.

**Strategic Bombing** The Allies had been bombing Germany even before the Casablanca Conference. Britain’s Royal Air Force had dropped an average of 2,300 tons (2,093 t) of explosives on Germany every month for over three years. The United States Eighth Army Air Force had joined the campaign in the summer of 1942, and they had dropped an additional 1,500 tons (1,365 t) of bombs by the end of the year.

These numbers were tiny, however, compared to the massive new campaign. Between January 1943 and May 1945, the Royal Air Force and the United States Eighth Army Air Force dropped **approximately** 53,000 tons (48,230 t) of explosives on Germany every month.

The bombing campaign did not destroy Germany’s economy or undermine German morale, but it did cause a severe oil shortage and wrecked the railroad system. It also destroyed so many aircraft factories that Germany’s air force could not replace its combat losses. By the time the Allies landed in France, they had total control of the air, ensuring that their troops would not be bombed.

▼ *Men boarding landing craft on D-Day*



**Striking at the Soft Underbelly** As the bombing campaign against Germany intensified, the plan for the invasion of Sicily moved ahead as well. General Dwight D. Eisenhower was placed in overall command of the invasion. General Patton and the British General Bernard Montgomery were put in charge of the actual forces on the ground. The invasion began before dawn on July 10, 1943. Despite bad weather, the Allied troops made it ashore with few casualties. A new vehicle, the DUKW—an amphibious truck—proved very effective in bringing supplies and artillery to the soldiers on the beach.

Eight days after the troops came ashore, American tanks led by General Patton smashed through enemy lines and captured the western half of the island. After capturing western Sicily, Patton's troops headed east, staging a series of daring end-runs around the German positions, while the British, under Montgomery, attacked from the south. By August 18, the Germans had evacuated the island.

The attack on Sicily created a crisis within the Italian government. The king of Italy, Victor Emmanuel, and a group of Italian generals decided that it was time to get rid of Mussolini. On July 25, 1943, the king invited the dictator to his palace. "My dear Duce," the king began, "it's no longer any good. Italy has gone to bits. The soldiers don't want to fight

anymore. At this moment, you are the most hated man in Italy." The king then placed Mussolini under arrest, and the new Italian government began secretly negotiating with the Allies for Italy's surrender.

On September 8, 1943, the Italian government publicly announced Italy's surrender. The following day, American troops landed at Salerno. Although stunned by the surrender, Hitler was not about to lose Italy to the Allies. German troops went into action at once. They seized control of northern Italy, including Rome, attacked the Americans at Salerno, and put Mussolini back in power.

To stop the Allied advance, the German army took up positions near the heavily fortified town of Cassino. The terrain near Cassino was steep, barren, and rocky. Instead of attacking such difficult terrain, the Allies chose to land at Anzio, behind German lines. They hoped the maneuver would force the Germans to retreat. Instead of retreating, however, the Germans surrounded the Allied troops near Anzio.

It took the Allies five months to break through the German lines at Cassino and Anzio. Finally, in late May 1944, the Germans were forced to retreat. Less than two weeks later, the Allies captured Rome.

Fighting in Italy continued, however, until May 2, 1945. The Italian campaign was one of the bloodiest in the war. It cost the Allies more than 300,000 casualties.

### Picturing History

**Softening the Gustav Line** Infantrymen fire an 81-millimeter mortar to soften the German Gustav Line near the Rapido River. [Why do you think the Allies decided to attack first in Italy rather than in France?](#)







**The Big Three** Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill meet at Tehran.

**Roosevelt Meets Stalin at Tehran** Roosevelt wanted to meet with Stalin before the Allies launched the invasion of France. In late 1943 Stalin agreed, and he proposed that Roosevelt and Churchill meet him in Tehran, Iran.

The leaders reached several agreements. Stalin promised to launch a full-scale offensive against the Germans when the Allies invaded France in 1944. Roosevelt and Stalin then agreed to break up Germany after the war so that it would never again threaten world peace. Stalin also promised that once Germany was beaten, the Soviet Union would help the United States defeat Japan. He also accepted Roosevelt's proposal to create an international organization to help keep the peace after the war.

 **Reading Check** **Explaining** What two major decisions did the Allies make at Casablanca?

## Landing in France

**Main Idea** The Allied invasion of France took place on June 6, 1944, which was known as D-Day.

**Reading Connection** Do you know anyone who has served in the armed forces? Read on to find out how General Eisenhower determined the time to invade France.

After the conference in Tehran, Roosevelt headed to Cairo, Egypt, where he and Churchill continued planning the invasion of France. One major decision still had to be made. The president had to choose the

commander for **Operation Overlord**—the code name for the planned invasion.

Roosevelt wanted to appoint General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff for the United States Army, but he depended on Marshall for military advice and did not want to send him to Europe. Instead, the president selected General Eisenhower to command the invasion.

**Planning Operation Overlord** Knowing that the Allies would eventually invade France, Hitler had fortified the coast. Although these defenses were formidable, the Allies did have one advantage—the element of surprise. The Germans did not know when or where the Allies would land. They believed that the Allies would land in Pas-de-Calais—the area of France closest to Britain. To convince the Germans they were right, the Allies placed inflated rubber tanks, empty tents, and dummy landing craft along the coast across from Calais. To German spy planes, the decoys looked real, and they succeeded in fooling the Germans. The real target was not Pas-de-Calais, but Normandy.

By the spring of 1944, everything was ready. Over 1.5 million American soldiers, 12,000 airplanes, and more than 5 million tons (4.6 million t) of equipment had been sent to England. Only one thing was left to do—pick the date and give the command to go. The invasion had to begin at night to hide the ships crossing the English Channel. The ships had to arrive at low tide so that they could see the beach obstacles. The low tide had to come at dawn so that gunners bombarding the coast could see their targets. Before the main landing on the beaches, paratroopers would



be dropped behind enemy lines. They required a moonlit night in order to see where to land. Perhaps most important of all, the weather had to be good. A storm would ground the airplanes, and high waves would swamp the landing craft.

Given all these conditions, there were only a few days each month when the invasion could begin. The first opportunity would last from June 5 to 7, 1944. Eisenhower's planning staff referred to the day any operation began by the letter D. The date for the invasion, therefore, came to be known as **D-Day**. Heavy cloud cover, strong winds, and high waves made it impossible to land on June 5. A day later the weather briefly improved. The Channel was still rough, but the landing ships and aircraft could operate. It was a difficult decision. Eisenhower's advisers were split on what to do. After looking at weather forecasts one last time, shortly after midnight on June 6, 1944, Eisenhower gave the final order: "OK, we'll go."

**The Longest Day** Nearly 7,000 ships carrying more than 100,000 soldiers set sail for the coast of Normandy on June 6, 1944. At the same time, 23,000 paratroopers were dropped inland, east and west of the beaches. Allied fighter-bombers raced up and

down the coast, hitting bridges, bunkers, and radar sites. As dawn broke, the warships in the Allied fleet let loose with a tremendous barrage of fire. Thousands of shells rained down on the beaches, code-named "Utah," "Omaha," "Gold," "Sword," and "Juno."

The American landing at Utah Beach went very well. The German defenses were weak, and in less than three hours American troops had captured the beach and moved inland, suffering less than 200 casualties in the process. On the eastern flank, the British and Canadian landings also went well. By the end of the day, British and Canadian forces were several miles inland.

Omaha Beach, however, was a different story. Under intense German fire, the American assault almost disintegrated. As General **Omar Bradley**, the commander of the American forces landing at Omaha and Utah, grimly watched the carnage, he began making plans to evacuate Omaha. Slowly, however, the American troops began to knock out the German defenses. More landing craft arrived, ramming their way through the obstacles to get to the beach. Nearly 2,500 Americans were either killed or wounded on Omaha, but by early afternoon Bradley received this message: "Troops formerly pinned

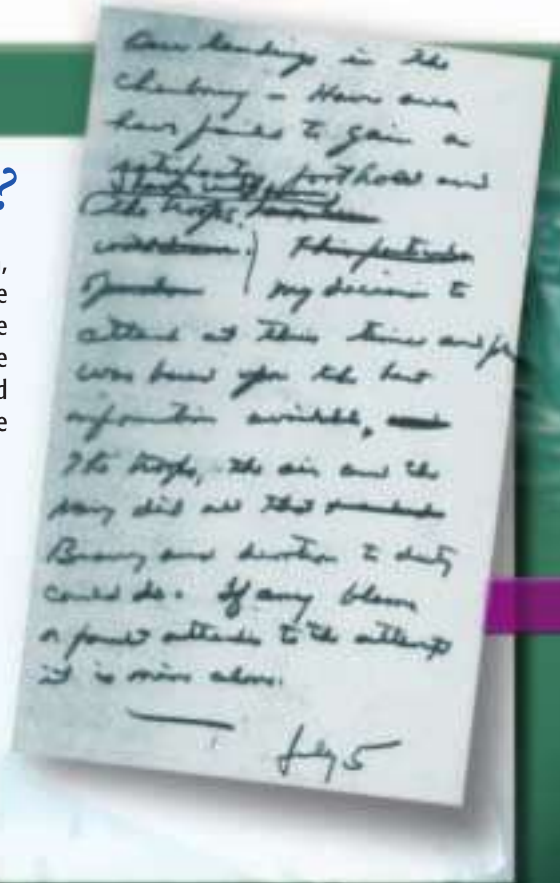
## What If...

### Operation Overlord Had Failed?

In what some historians believe was the most important weather prediction in military history, Group Captain James Stagg, chief meteorologist for the Royal Air Force, predicted gradual clearing for Normandy, France, on June 6, 1944. The prediction was critical for General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces. He had already delayed Operation Overlord once. The invasion forces of Operation Overlord were assembled and ready to go at a moment's notice. Everything depended upon a break in the bad weather so that the assault would take the Germans by surprise. Eisenhower trusted the weather prediction and believed in the battle

plan. The day before the invasion, however, he wrote the following note on a small piece of paper—a message he would deliver in the event the invasion failed. He mistakenly jotted "July 5" on the bottom and stuck the note in his wallet.

“Our landings in the Cherbourg-Havre area have failed to gain a satisfactory foothold and I have withdrawn the troops. My decision to attack at this time and place was based upon the best information available. The troops, the air and the Navy did all that Bravery and devotion to duty could do. If any blame or fault attaches to the attempt it is mine alone.”



down on beaches . . . [are] advancing up heights behind beaches.” By the end of the day, nearly 35,000 American troops had landed at Omaha, and another 23,000 had landed at Utah. Over 75,000 British and Canadian troops were on shore as well. The invasion had succeeded.

**Reading Check** **Summarizing** What conditions had to be met before Eisenhower could order D-Day to begin?

## Driving the Japanese Back

**Main Idea** General MacArthur’s strategy involved taking back islands in the Pacific, one island at a time, to push back the Japanese.

**Reading Connection** Have you ever found it useful to formulate a strategy? Read on to discover how the Allies took back the islands that the Japanese had held.

While the buildup for the invasion of France was taking place in Britain, American military leaders were also developing a strategy to defeat Japan. The American plan called for a two-pronged attack. The Pacific Fleet, commanded by Admiral Nimitz, would advance through the central Pacific by hopping from

one island to the next, closer and closer to Japan. Meanwhile, General MacArthur’s troops would advance through the Solomon Islands, capture the north coast of New Guinea, and then launch an invasion to retake the Philippines.

**Island-Hopping in the Pacific** By the fall of 1943, the navy was ready to launch its island-hopping campaign, but the geography of the central Pacific posed a problem. Many of the islands were coral reef atolls. The water over the coral reef was not always deep enough to allow landing craft to get to the shore. If the landing craft ran aground on the reef, the troops would have to wade to the beach. As the approximately 5,000 United States Marines who landed at Tarawa Atoll learned, wading ashore could cause very high casualties.

Tarawa, part of the Gilbert Islands, was the Navy’s first objective in the Pacific. When the landing craft hit the reef, at least 20 ships ran aground. The marines had to plunge into shoulder-high water and wade several hundred yards to the beach. Raked by Japanese fire, only one marine in three made it ashore. Once the marines reached the beach the battle was still far from over. As reporter Robert Sherrod wrote, the marines faced savage hand-to-hand fighting:

“A Marine jumped over the seawall and began throwing blocks of fused TNT into a coconut-log pillbox. . . . Two more Marines scaled the seawall, one of them carrying a twin-cylindrical tank strapped to their shoulders, the other holding the nozzle of the flame thrower. As another charge of TNT boomed inside the pillbox, causing smoke and dust to billow out, a khaki-clad figure ran out the side entrance. The flame thrower, waiting for him, caught him in its withering stream of intense fire. As soon as it touched him, the [Japanese soldier] flared up like a piece of celluloid. He was dead instantly . . . charred almost to nothingness.”

—from *Tarawa: The Story of a Battle*

Over 1,000 marines died on Tarawa. Photos of bodies lying crumpled next to burning landing craft shocked Americans back home. Many people began to wonder how many lives it would cost to defeat Japan.

Although many troops died wading ashore, one vehicle had been able to cross the reef and deliver its troops onto the beaches. The vehicle was the LVT—a boat with tank tracks. Nicknamed the “Alligator,” the amphibious tractor, or **amphtrac**, had been invented in the late 1930s to rescue people in Florida swamps.



### What might have happened?

1. What might have happened if the weather had not changed and the troops had landed amidst fog and rain?
2. What if the invasion had been delayed and the element of surprise lost?





**Geography Skills**

- Interpreting Maps** Where did the first major battle between the American and Japanese forces in the South Pacific take place?
- Applying Geography Skills** Why do you think Americans adopted the policy of island-hopping?

It had never been used in combat, and not until 1941 did the navy decide to buy 200 of them. Had more been available at Tarawa, the number of American casualties probably would have been much lower.

The assault on the next major objective—Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands—went much more smoothly. This time all of the troops went ashore in amphtracs. Although the Japanese resisted fiercely, the marines captured Kwajalein and nearby Eniwetok with far fewer casualties.

After the Marshall Islands, the navy targeted the Mariana Islands. American military planners wanted to use the Marianas as a base for a new heavy bomber, the B-29 Superfortress. The B-29 could fly farther than any other plane in the world. From airfields in the Marianas, B-29s could bomb Japan. Admiral Nimitz decided to invade three of the

Mariana Islands: Saipan, Tinian, and Guam. Despite strong Japanese resistance, American troops captured all three by August 1944. A few months later, B-29 bombers began bombing Japan.

**MacArthur Returns to the Philippines** As the forces under Admiral Nimitz hopped across the central Pacific, General MacArthur’s troops began their own campaign in the southwest Pacific. The campaign began with the invasion of **Guadalcanal** in August 1942. It continued until early 1944, when MacArthur’s troops finally captured enough islands to surround Rabaul, the main Japanese base in the region. In response the Japanese withdrew their ships and aircraft from the base, although they left 100,000 troops behind to hold the island.

Worried that the navy’s advance across the central Pacific was leaving him behind, MacArthur ordered his forces to leap nearly 600 miles (966 km) past Rabaul to capture the Japanese base at Hollandia on the north coast of New Guinea. Shortly after securing



New Guinea, MacArthur's troops seized the island of Morotai—the last stop before the Philippines.

In order to take back the Philippines, the United States assembled an enormous invasion force. In October 1944, more than 700 ships carrying over 160,000 troops sailed for Leyte Gulf in the Philippines. On October 20, the troops began to land on Leyte, an island located on the eastern side of the Philippines. A few hours after the invasion began, MacArthur headed to the beach. Upon reaching the shore, he strode to a radio and spoke into the microphone: "People of the Philippines, I have returned. By the grace of Almighty God, our forces stand again on Philippine soil."

To stop the American invasion, the Japanese sent four aircraft carriers toward the Philippines from the north and secretly dispatched another fleet to the west. Believing the Japanese carriers were leading the main attack, most of the American carriers protecting the invasion left Leyte Gulf and headed north to stop them. Seizing their chance, the Japanese warships to the west raced through the Philippine Islands into Leyte Gulf and ambushed the remaining American ships.

The Battle of Leyte Gulf was the largest naval battle in history. It was also the first time that the Japanese used **kamikaze** attacks. *Kamikaze* means "divine wind" in Japanese. It refers to the great storm that destroyed the Mongol fleet during its invasion of Japan in the thirteenth century.

Kamikaze pilots would deliberately crash their planes into American ships, killing themselves but also inflicting severe damage. Luckily for the Americans, just as their situation was becoming desperate, the Japanese commander, believing more American ships were on the way, ordered a retreat.



**A Triumphant Return** In October 1944, Douglas MacArthur fulfilled his promise and returned to the Philippines.

Although the Japanese retreated, recapturing the Philippines was a long and grueling process. Over 80,000 Japanese were killed; less than 1,000 surrendered. MacArthur's troops did not capture Manila until March 1945. The battle destroyed the city and killed many civilians. The remaining Japanese retreated into the rugged terrain north of Manila, and they were still fighting when word came in August 1945 that Japan had surrendered.

**Reading Check** **Describing** What strategy did the United States Navy use to advance across the Pacific?

**HISTORY** **Study Central**  
*Online*

For help with the concepts in this section of *American Vision: Modern Times* go to [tav.mt.glencoe.com](http://tav.mt.glencoe.com) and click on **Study Central**.

## SECTION 4 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

1. **Vocabulary** Define: approximately, code, pose, amphtrac, kamikaze.
2. **People and Terms** Identify: Casablanca Conference, Operation Overlord, D-Day, Omar Bradley, Guadalcanal.
3. **Explain** why D-Day's success was so vital to an Allied victory.

### Reviewing Big Ideas

4. **Identifying** How did the geography of the Pacific affect American strategy?

### Critical Thinking

5. **Historical Analysis** **Analyzing** What made the invasion of Normandy so important? **CA HI4**
6. **Organizing** Use a graphic organizer to explain the significance of each leader listed below.

Leader	Significance
Dwight Eisenhower	
George Patton	
George Marshall	
Omar Bradley	
Douglas MacArthur	

### Analyzing Visuals

7. **Examining Photographs** Study the photograph on this page. What effect do you think MacArthur's return had on Philippine morale?

### Writing About History

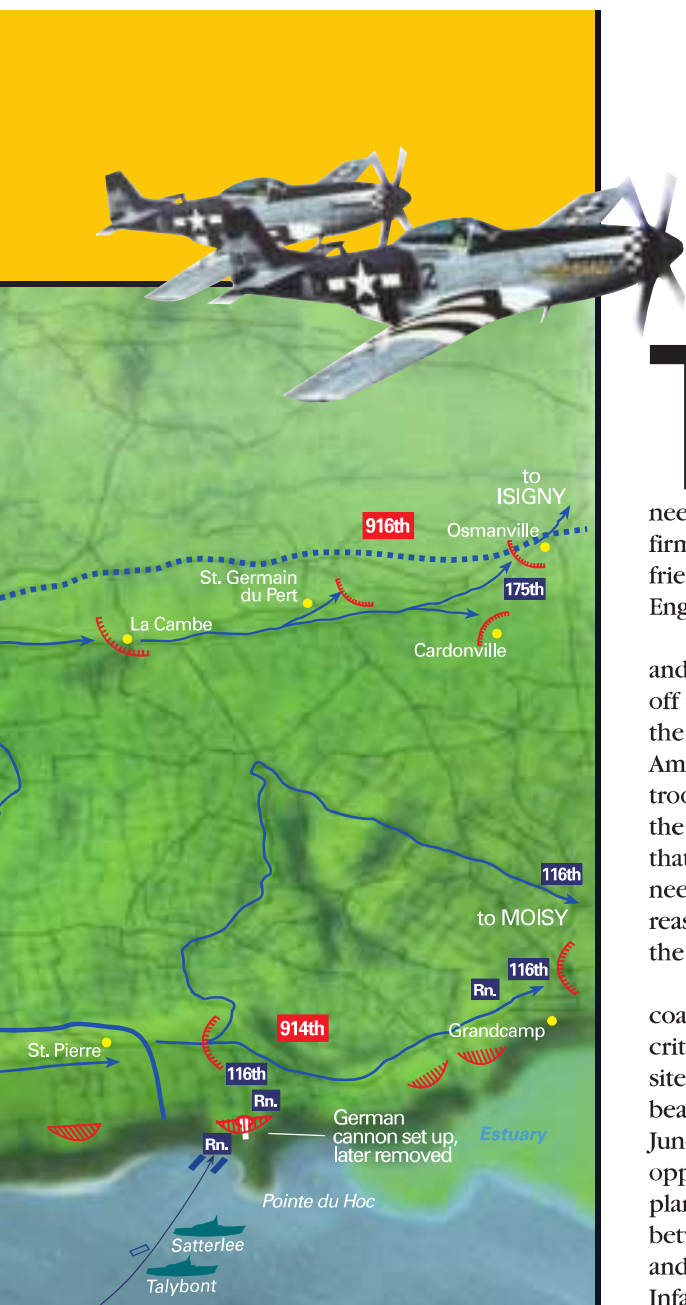
8. **Expository Writing** Using library or Internet resources, find more information on one of the battles discussed in this section. Use the information to write a report detailing the importance of the battle. Share your report with the class.

**CA 11WS1.6; 11WA2.4B**





# A Day for Heroes



The selection of a site for the largest amphibious landing in history was one of the biggest decisions of World War II. Allied planners needed a sheltered location with flat, firm beaches and within range of friendly fighter planes based in England.

There had to be enough roads and paths to move jeeps and trucks off the beaches and to accommodate the hundreds of thousands of American, Canadian, and British troops set to stream ashore following the invasion. An airfield and a seaport that the Allies could use were also needed. Most important was a reasonable expectation of achieving the element of surprise.

Five beaches on the northern coast of Normandy, France, met all the criteria and were chosen as invasion sites. On D-Day the attack on four beaches—Utah in the west and Gold, Juno, and Sword in the east (inset, opposite page)—went according to plan. But at Omaha Beach (map), between Utah and Gold, the bravery and determination of the U.S. 1st Infantry Division was tested in one of the fiercest battles of the war.

Surrounded at both ends by cliffs that rose wall-like from the sea, Omaha was only four miles long. It was the only sand beach in the area, however, and thus the only place for a landing. Unless the Allies were to leave a 20-mile gap between Utah and Gold, they would have to come ashore at Omaha Beach.



Troops crowd into a landing craft to head across the English Channel to Omaha Beach.

To repel the Allies at the water's edge, the Germans built a fortress atop the cliffs at Pointe du Hoc overlooking Omaha from the west. They dug trenches and guns into the 150-foot bluffs lining the beach and along five ravines leading off it (see map).

Wading into the surf, the Americans advanced toward Omaha Beach. Many men were cut down as the doors of their landing craft opened. The survivors had to cross more than 300 yards across a tidal flat strewn with man-made obstacles. Winds and a current pushed landing craft into clumps as the men moved ashore. As a result, soldiers ran onto the beach in groups and became easy targets. Of the more than 9,000 Allied casualties on D-Day, Omaha accounted for about one-third.

Although many died, the Americans took control of the beach and fought their way inland. As General Omar Bradley later wrote, "Every man who set foot on Omaha Beach that day was a hero."

## D-Day Forces

<b>A-L</b>	U.S. Company — 200 men		Battleship
<b>116th</b>	U.S. Battalion — 900 men		Cruiser
<b>Rn.</b>	U.S. Rangers		Transport
<b>916th</b>	German infantry — forces associated with German battalion		German resistance point
	German coastal defense		Hedgerows
	U.S. stronghold		Town
	Landing craft		
	Landing craft — sunk		

Scale varies in this perspective

Bandaged and shell-shocked, infantrymen from the American 1st Division wait to be evacuated after landing on Omaha Beach.



## LEARNING FROM GEOGRAPHY

1. Why did the Allies choose Normandy as the site of the invasion?
2. Why was the landing at Omaha Beach so much more difficult than U.S. leaders expected?



## Guide to Reading

## Connection

In the previous section, you learned how the Allies turned the tide both in Europe and the Pacific. In this section, you will learn about the road to victory against Germany and Japan and the creation of the United Nations.

## Main Idea

- After the Battle of the Bulge, Germany had few military resources to continue fighting the war. (p. 609)
- Hoping to shorten the war, President Truman decided to drop atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. (p. 612)

- The Allied nations attempted to prevent future wars by creating the United Nations and by bringing war criminals to trial. (p. 616)

**Content Vocabulary**  
hedgerow, napalm, charter

**Academic Vocabulary**  
successor, error, reluctant

## People and Terms to Identify

Battle of the Bulge, V-E Day, Harry S. Truman, Curtis LeMay, Manhattan Project, V-J Day, United Nations

## Reading Objectives

- **Explain** the tactics the Allies used to invade Germany and to defeat Japan.

- **Outline** the reasons the Allies created the United Nations and held war crimes trials.

## Reading Strategy

**Taking Notes** As you read about the end of World War II and the organizations set up to maintain global peace, use the major headings of the section to create an outline similar to the one below.

## The War Ends

- I. The Third Reich Collapses
  - A.
  - B.
- II.
  - A.
  - B.

## Preview of Events



The following are the main History–Social Science Standards covered in this section.

**11.7.2** Explain U.S. and Allied wartime strategy, including the major battles of Midway, Normandy, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and the Battle of the Bulge.

**11.7.3** Identify the roles and sacrifices of individual American soldiers, as well as the unique contributions of the special fighting forces (e.g., the Tuskegee Airmen, the 442nd Regimental Combat team, the Navajo Code Talkers).

**11.7.5** Discuss the constitutional issues and impact of events on the U.S. home front, including the internment of Japanese Americans (e.g., *Fred Korematsu v. United States of America*) and the restrictions on German and Italian resident aliens; the response of the administration to Hitler's atrocities against Jews and other groups; the roles of women in military production; and the roles and growing political demands of African Americans.

**11.7.6** Describe major developments in aviation, weaponry, communication, and medicine and the

war's impact on the location of American industry and use of resources.

**11.7.7** Discuss the decision to drop atomic bombs and the consequences of the decision (Hiroshima and Nagasaki).

**11.9.1** Discuss the establishment of the United Nations and International Declaration of Human Rights, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and their importance in shaping modern Europe and maintaining peace and international order.

## The Big Idea

**The fate of nations is forever changed by monumental world events.**

After the D-Day invasion, the Allies fought one last German offensive before defeating the Nazis. In the meantime, the war in the Pacific intensified, despite the firebombing of Japan and slow Allied gains. With the Japanese refusing to surrender unconditionally, commanders became convinced that only an invasion of Japan would end the war. Truman, who became president after Roosevelt's death, decided to use a new weapon—the atomic bomb. After the military dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrendered. The Allies formed a military tribunal to try German and Japanese leaders for war crimes. At the same time, delegates from 39 countries created the United Nations.

## The Third Reich Collapses

**Main Idea** After the Battle of the Bulge, Germany had few military resources to continue fighting the war.

**Reading Connection** What needed resources did the Germans lose at the Battle of the Bulge? Read on to learn how Germany surrendered unconditionally.

Well before the war ended, President Roosevelt and other Allied leaders were aware that the Nazis were committing atrocities. When Allied soldiers arrived in Germany, they witnessed the extent of the Nazis' horrible acts.

### ★ An American Story ★

In 1945 Captain Luther Fletcher entered the German concentration camp at Buchenwald with a group of Germans who were being forced to see what their country had done. In his diary Fletcher described what they witnessed:

“They saw blackened skeletons and skulls in the ovens of the crematorium. In the yard outside, they saw a heap of white human ashes and bones. . . . [The] dead were stripped of their clothing and lay naked, many stacked like cordwood waiting to be burned at the crematory. At one time 5,000 had been stacked on the vacant lot next to the crematory. . . . At headquarters of the SS troops who ran the place were lamp shades made from human skin. . . . Often, the guide said, the SS wished to make an example of someone in killing him. . . . They used what I call hay hooks, catching him under the chin and the other in the back of the neck. He hung in this manner until he died.”

—quoted in *World War II: From the Battle Front to the Home Front*

In 1943 the Allies officially declared that they would punish the Nazis for their crimes after the war. Meanwhile, Roosevelt was convinced that the best way to put an end to the concentration camps was to destroy the Nazi regime. To do that, he believed the Allies had to dedicate their resources to breaking out of Normandy, liberating France, and conquering Germany.

Although D-Day had been a success, it was only the beginning. Surrounding many fields in Normandy were **hedgerows**—dirt walls, several feet

thick, covered in shrubbery. The hedgerows had been built to fence in cattle and crops, but they also enabled the Germans to take cover from the enemy and fiercely defend their positions. The battle of the hedgerows ended on July 25, 1944, when 2,500 American bombers managed to blow a hole in the German lines, enabling American tanks to race through the gap.

As the Allies broke out of Normandy, the French Resistance—a group of French civilians who had secretly organized to resist the German occupation of their country—staged a rebellion in Paris. When the Allied forces liberated Paris on August 25, they found the streets filled with French citizens celebrating their victory. Three weeks later, American troops were within 20 miles (32 km) of the German border.

**The Battle of the Bulge** As the Allies closed in on Germany, Hitler decided to stage one last desperate offensive. His goal was to cut off the Allied supplies coming through the port of Antwerp, Belgium. The attack began just before dawn on December 16, 1944. Six inches (15 cm) of snow covered the ground, and the weather was bitterly cold. Moving rapidly, the Germans were able to catch the American defenders by surprise.

As the German troops raced west, their lines bulged outward, and the attack became known as the **Battle of the Bulge**.

▼ *Jewish prisoners at a German concentration camp*







Part of the German plan called for the capture of the town of Bastogne, where several important roads converged. If the Allies held Bastogne, it would greatly delay the German advance. American reinforcements raced to the town, arriving just ahead of the Germans. The Germans then surrounded the town and demanded that the Americans surrender. The American commander sent back a one-word reply: "Nuts!"

Shortly after the Germans surrounded the Americans, Eisenhower ordered General Patton to rescue them. Three days later, faster than anyone expected in the midst of a snowstorm, Patton's troops slammed into the German lines. As the weather cleared, Allied aircraft began hitting German fuel depots. On Christmas Eve, out of fuel and weakened by heavy losses, the German troops driving

toward Antwerp were forced to halt. Two days later, Patton's troops broke through to Bastogne.

Although fighting continued for three weeks, the United States had won the Battle of the Bulge. On January 8, the Germans began to withdraw. They had suffered more than 100,000 casualties and lost many tanks and aircraft. They now had very little left to prevent the Allies from entering Germany.

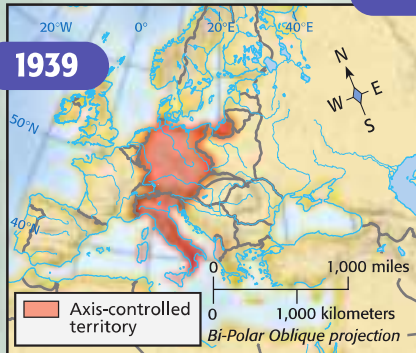
**V-E Day: The War Ends in Europe** While American and British forces fought to liberate France, the Soviet Union began a massive attack on German troops in Russia. By the time the Battle of the Bulge ended, the Soviets had driven Hitler's forces out of Russia and back across Poland. By February 1945, Soviet troops had reached the Oder River. They were only 35 miles (56 km) from Berlin.



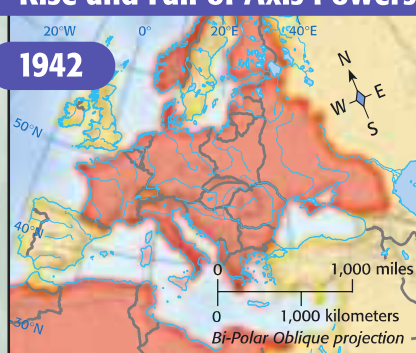


## Rise and Fall of Axis Powers

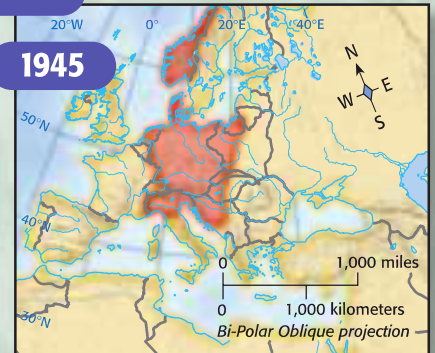
1939



1942



1945



**Axis Expansion** The Axis powers included Germany, Italy, Austria, and the Sudetenland.

**Axis Control** At their height, the Axis controlled almost all of Europe and North Africa.

**Axis Collapse** The Allies invaded Germany from the east and the west.

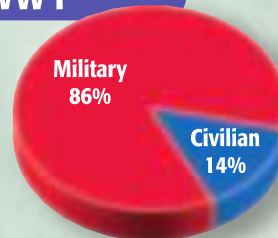
### Military and Civilian Deaths in World War II

Country	Military Deaths	Civilian Deaths
USSR	11,000,000	6,700,000
Germany	3,250,000	2,350,000
Japan	1,740,000	393,000
China	1,400,000	8,000,000
Poland	110,000	5,300,000
United States	405,000	2,000
Great Britain	306,000	61,000
Italy	227,000	60,000
France	122,000	470,000

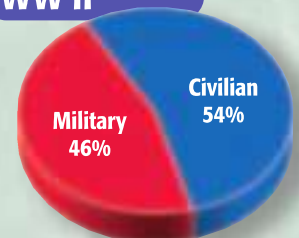
Source: *World War II: A Statistical Survey*. (Figures are approximate.)

As the Soviets crossed Germany's eastern border, American forces attacked Germany's western border. By the first week of March, 1945, American troops had fought their way to the Rhine River, Germany's last major line of defense in the west. Then on March 7, American soldiers captured the heights above the town of Remagen. Gazing down at the town, platoon leader Emmet J. Burrows was amazed at what he saw. The Ludendorf Bridge across the Rhine was still intact. The Germans had not blown it up. The American troops raced across the bridge, driving back the German defenders. By the end of the day, American tanks were across the Rhine. Hearing the news, General Bradley yelled, "Hot dog . . . this will bust them wide open."

WW I



WW II



**War Casualties** World War II took more lives than any other war in history. More civilians than soldiers died in the war.



### Geography Skills

- Interpreting Maps** Which European countries remained neutral during the war?
- Applying Geography Skills** How did the Soviet Union receive supplies during the war?

As German defenses crumbled, American troops raced east, closing to within 70 miles (113 km) of Berlin. On April 16, Soviet troops finally smashed through the German defenses on the Oder River. Five days later, they reached the outskirts of Berlin.

Deep in his Berlin bunker, Adolf Hitler knew the end was near. On April 30, 1945, he put a pistol in his mouth and pulled the trigger. His secretary, Martin Bormann, carried Hitler's body outside, doused it in gasoline, and set it on fire. Before killing himself, Hitler chose Grand Admiral Karl Doenitz to be his **successor**. Doenitz tried to surrender to the Americans and British while continuing to fight the

Soviets, but Eisenhower insisted on unconditional surrender. On May 7, 1945, Germany surrendered unconditionally. The next day—May 8, 1945—was proclaimed **V-E Day**, for “Victory in Europe.”

**Reading Check** **Explaining** Why was the Battle of the Bulge such a disastrous defeat for Germany?

## Japan Is Defeated

**Main Idea** Hoping to shorten the war, President Truman decided to drop atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

**Reading Connection** Do you believe President Truman was justified in dropping atomic bombs on Japan? Read on to discover the events that led to Truman’s decision.

Unfortunately, President Roosevelt did not live to see the defeat of Germany. On April 12, 1945, while vacationing in Warm Springs, Georgia, he suffered a

stroke and died. His vice president, **Harry S. Truman**, became president during this difficult time.

The next day, Truman told reporters: “Boys, if you ever pray, pray for me now. . . . When they told me yesterday what had happened, I felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me.” Despite feeling overwhelmed, Truman began at once to make decisions about the war. Although Germany surrendered a few weeks later, the war with Japan continued to intensify, and Truman was forced to make some of the most difficult decisions of the war during his first six months in office.

**Uncommon Valor on Iwo Jima** On November 24, 1944, bombs fell on Tokyo for the first time since the 1942 Doolittle raid. Above the city flew 80 B-29 Superfortress bombers that had traveled over 1,500 miles (2,414 km) from new American bases in the Mariana Islands.

At first the B-29s did little damage because they kept missing their targets. Japan was simply too far away: By the time the B-29s reached Japan, they did not have enough fuel left to fix their navigational errors or to adjust for high winds. The solution was to capture an island closer to Japan, where the B-29s could refuel. After studying the problem, American military planners decided to invade Iwo Jima.

Iwo Jima was perfectly located, roughly halfway between the Marianas and Japan, but its geography

*“uncommon valor  
was a common  
virtue”*

—Admiral Chester W. Nimitz

### **Picturing History**

**Planting the Flag** Photographer Joe Rosenthal won the Pulitzer Prize for this photo of five marines and a navy medical corpsman raising the flag on Iwo Jima. **How do you think photographs such as this one affected American morale? Why?**



was formidable. At its southern tip was Mount Suribachi, a dormant volcano. The terrain was rugged, with rocky cliffs, jagged ravines, and dozens of caves. Volcanic ash covered the ground. Even worse, the Japanese had built a vast network of caves and concrete bunkers connected by miles of tunnels.

On February 19, 1945, 60,000 U.S. Marines landed on Iwo Jima. As the troops leapt from the amphibtracs, they sank up to their ankles in the soft ash. Meanwhile, Japanese artillery began to pound the invaders. Robert Sherrod, who had been on Tarawa, was shocked: “[The marines] died with the greatest possible violence. Nowhere in the Pacific have I seen such badly mangled bodies. Many were cut squarely in half. Legs and arms lay 50 feet (15 m) away from any body.”

Inch by inch, the marines crawled inland, using flamethrowers and explosives to attack the Japanese bunkers. More than 6,800 marines were killed before the island was captured. Admiral Nimitz later wrote that on Iwo Jima, “uncommon valor was a common virtue.”

**Firebombing Devastates Japan** While American engineers prepared airfields on Iwo Jima, General **Curtis LeMay**, commander of the B-29s based in the Marianas, decided to change strategy. To help the B-29s hit their targets, he ordered them to drop bombs filled with **napalm**—a kind of a jellied gasoline. The bombs were designed not only to explode but also to start fires. Even if the B-29s missed their targets, the fires they started would spread to the intended targets.

The use of firebombs was very controversial because the fires would also kill civilians; however, LeMay could think of no other way to destroy Japan’s war production quickly. Loaded with firebombs, B-29s attacked Tokyo on March 9, 1945. As strong winds fanned the flames, the firestorm grew so intense that it sucked the oxygen out of the air, asphyxiating thousands. As one survivor later recalled:

“The fires were incredible . . . with flames leaping hundreds of feet into the air. . . . Many people were gasping for breath. With every passing moment the air became more foul . . . the noise was a continuing crashing roar. . . . Firewinds filled with burning particles rushed up and down the streets. I watched people . . . running for their lives. . . . The flames raced after them like living things, striking them down. . . . Wherever I turned my eyes, I saw people . . . seeking air to breathe.”

—quoted in *New History of World War II*

The Tokyo firebombing killed over 80,000 people and destroyed more than 250,000 buildings. By the



### **Picturing History**

**Ship Attacks** Kamikaze attacks intensified in 1945, hitting the USS *Bunker Hill* and many other American ships. **Why do you think these Japanese kamikaze pilots were willing to fly suicide missions?**

end of June 1945, Japan’s six most important industrial cities had been firebombed, destroying almost half of their total urban area. By the end of the war, the B-29s had firebombed 67 Japanese cities.

**The Invasion of Okinawa** Despite the massive damage the firebombing caused, there were few signs in the spring of 1945 that Japan was ready to quit. Many American officials believed the Japanese would not surrender until Japan had been invaded. To prepare for the invasion, the United States needed a base near Japan to stockpile supplies and build up troops. Iwo Jima was small and still too far away. After much discussion, military planners chose Okinawa—only 350 miles (563 km) from Japan.

American troops landed on Okinawa on April 1, 1945. Instead of defending the beaches, the Japanese troops took up positions in the island’s rugged mountains. To dig the Japanese out of their caves and bunkers, the Americans had to fight their way up steep slopes against constant machine gun and artillery fire. More than 12,000 American soldiers, sailors, and marines died during the fighting, but by June 22, 1945, Okinawa had finally been captured.



**The Terms for Surrender** Shortly after the United States captured Okinawa, the Japanese emperor urged his government to find a way to end the war. The biggest problem was the American demand for unconditional surrender. Many Japanese leaders were willing to surrender but on one condition—the emperor had to stay in power.

American officials knew that the fate of the emperor was the most important issue for the Japanese. Most Americans, however, blamed the emperor for the war and wanted him removed from power. President Truman was **reluctant** to go against public opinion. Furthermore, he knew the United States was almost ready to test a new weapon that might force Japan to surrender without any conditions. The new weapon was the atomic bomb.

**The Manhattan Project** In 1939 Leo Szilard, one of the world’s top physicists, learned that German scientists had split the uranium atom. Szilard had been the first scientist to suggest that splitting the

atom might release enormous energy. Worried that the Nazis were working on an atomic bomb, Szilard convinced the world’s best-known physicist, Albert Einstein, to sign a letter Szilard had drafted and send it to President Roosevelt. In the letter Einstein warned that by using uranium, “extremely powerful bombs of a new type may . . . be constructed.”

Roosevelt responded by setting up a scientific committee to study the issue. The committee remained skeptical until 1941, when they met with British scientists who were already working on an atomic bomb. The British research so impressed the Americans that they convinced Roosevelt to begin a program to build an atomic bomb.

The American program to build an atomic bomb was code-named the **Manhattan Project** and was headed by General Leslie R. Groves. The project’s first breakthrough came in 1942, when Szilard and Enrico Fermi, another physicist, built the world’s first nuclear reactor at the University of Chicago. Groves organized a team of engineers and scientists

## Different Viewpoints

### ***Dropping the Atomic Bomb: Was It the Right Decision?***

More than half a century later, people continue to debate what some historians have called the most important event of the twentieth century—President Truman’s order to drop the atomic bomb on Japan. Did his momentous decision shorten the war and save lives on both sides, or was it prompted by Truman’s fear that the Soviet Union, poised to invade, would gain control of Japan after the war?

#### **A historian opposes Truman’s decision:**

Historian Gar Alperovitz maintains that Truman possessed alternatives to the atomic bomb but chose to use the weapon in order to force Japan’s surrender before the Soviet Union could mount an invasion and subsequently occupy Japanese territory.

“Quite simply, it is not true that the atomic bomb was used because it was the only way to save the ‘hundreds of thousands’ or ‘millions’ of lives as was subsequently claimed. The readily available options were to modify the surrender terms and/or await the shock of the Russian attack.

Perhaps it is here, most poignantly, that we confront our own reluctance to ask the difficult questions—for even if one were to accept the most inflated estimates of lives saved by the atomic bomb, the fact remains that it was an act of violent destruction aimed at large concentrations of noncombatants.”

—quoted in *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb, and the Architecture of an American Myth*

*Hiroshima in the aftermath of the atomic bomb*



to build an atomic bomb at a secret laboratory in Los Alamos, New Mexico. J. Robert Oppenheimer led the team. On July 16, 1945, they detonated the world's first atomic bomb near Alamogordo, New Mexico.

**The Decision to Drop the Bomb** Even before the bomb was tested, American officials began to debate how to use it. Admiral William Leahy, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, opposed using the bomb because it killed civilians indiscriminately. He believed that an economic blockade and conventional bombing would convince Japan to surrender.

Secretary of War Henry Stimson wanted to warn the Japanese about the bomb while at the same time telling them that they could keep the emperor if they surrendered. Secretary of State James Byrnes, however, wanted to drop the bomb without any warning to shock Japan into surrendering.

President Truman later wrote that he “regarded the bomb as a military weapon and never had any doubts that it should be used.” His advisers had warned him to

expect massive casualties if the United States invaded Japan. Truman believed it was his duty as president to use every weapon available to save American lives.

The Allies threatened Japan with “prompt and utter destruction” if the nation did not surrender unconditionally, but the Japanese did not reply. Truman then ordered the military to drop the bomb. On August 6, 1945, a B-29 bomber named the *Enola Gay* dropped an atomic bomb, code-named “Little Boy,” on Hiroshima, an important industrial city. The bomb was dropped at 8:15 A.M. Forty-three seconds later, it exploded. Heat, radiation, and an enormous shock wave slammed into Hiroshima.

The bomb destroyed 76,000 buildings—about 63 percent of the city. Somewhere between 80,000 and 120,000 people died instantly, and thousands more died later from burns and radiation sickness. Everywhere, as witness Nozaki Kiyoshi recalled, were “horrific scenes”:

“The center of the city was still burning bright red, like live charcoal. Roof tiles were popping. We passed numerous war dead who had been carbonized. . . . We found five or six half-burned roofless streetcars. Inside were piles of corpses smoldering under white smoke. . . . A young mother lay face down, her baby tucked under her breast. They looked more like pink wax dolls than human beings.”

—quoted in *Senso: The Japanese Remember the Pacific War*

The bombing stunned Japan. Three days later, on August 9, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan. Later that day, the United States dropped another atomic bomb, code-named “Fat Man,” on the city of Nagasaki, killing between 35,000 and 74,000 people.

Faced with such massive destruction and the shock of the Soviets joining the war, the Japanese emperor ordered his government to surrender. On August 15, 1945—**V-J Day**—Japan surrendered. On the other side of the world, Americans celebrated. For American soldiers the news was especially good. As one veteran recalled: “We would not be obliged to run up the beaches near Tokyo assault firing while being mortared and shelled. . . . We were going to live. We were going to grow up to adulthood after all.” The long war was finally over. The United States and its allies, after a tremendous effort, had freed Europe from Nazi tyranny and put an end to Japanese aggression in Asia.

**Reading Check Analyzing** What issues did Truman consider before using the atomic bomb?

#### A historian defends Truman's decision:

Historian Herbert Feis argues that Truman's desire to avoid an invasion of Japan, thus saving thousands of lives on both sides, motivated his decision to drop the bomb.

“Our right, legal and historical, to use the bomb may thus well be defended; but those who made the decision to use it were not much concerned over these considerations, taking them for granted. Their thoughts about its employment were governed by one reason which was deemed imperative: that by using the bomb, the agony of war might be ended more quickly.

The primary and sustaining aim from the start of the great exertion to make the bomb was military, and the impelling reason for the decision to use it was military—to end the war victoriously as soon as possible.”

—quoted in *Japan Subdued: The Atomic Bomb and the End of the War in the Pacific*

#### Learning From History

1. Which of the above interpretations do you think is the most valid? Why?
2. Using the Internet or other resources, find an account of the bombing from the point of a Japanese citizen. How does it differ from the accounts above, and why?