

HITLER'S FOREIGN POLICY & APPEASEMENT



Hitler's Foreign Policy was built on four aims

- To reverse the Treaty of Versailles
- To create a "Greater Germany" by uniting all German speaking people
- The creation of *Lebensraum* - living space for the German people.
- Make Germany strong again

The Treaty Of Versailles



- ◉ The German Army was limited to 100,000 men
- ◉ Germany had to pay reparations to the allies
- ◉ Germany had to accept the War Guilt Clause (231)
- ◉ Germany lost 13% of its territories and all her colonies

LEBENSRAUM

- Hitler's Greater Germany would have a population of over 85 million people
- Germany's land would be insufficient to feed this many people
- Hitler intended to expand eastward towards Poland and Russia
- Russians and Poles were Slavs-Hitler believed them to be inferior and so Germany was entitled to take their land.

Creation of a Greater Germany



- Hitler wanted a single homeland for all German speaking people
- After Versailles millions of Germans were living in Foreign countries
- The Treaty of Versailles had forbidden the union of Germany and Austria- The *Anschluss*

APPEASEMENT

- ⦿ A policy aimed to prevent aggressors from starting wars by finding out what they want and agreeing to demands that seem reasonable
- ⦿ Neville Chamberlain was the British Prime Minister that negotiated with Hitler in 1938



LANDMARKS OF APPEASEMENT

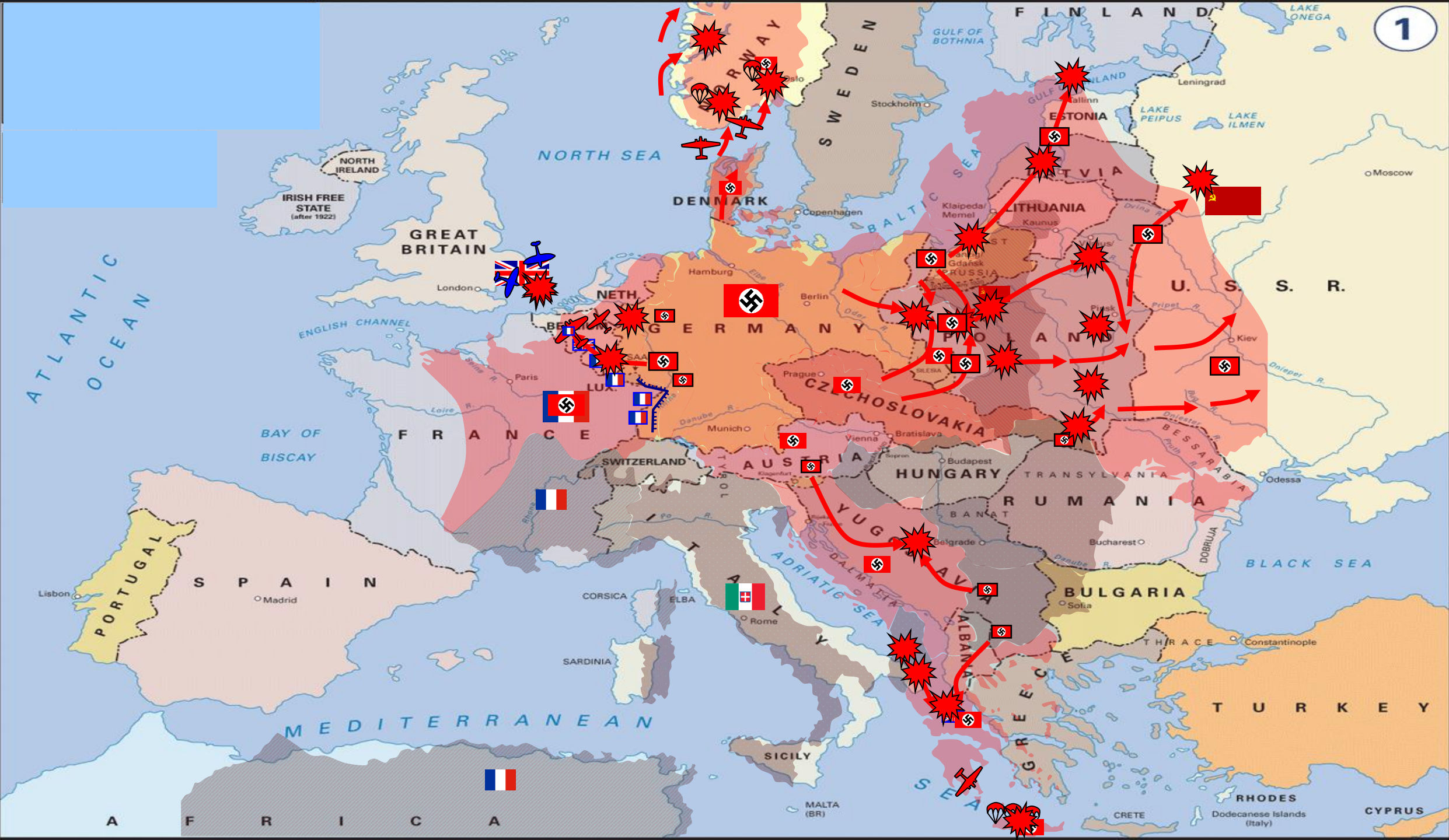
- ⦿ 1933-Germany leave the L of N - start to rearm in secret
- ⦿ 1935-Anglo-German Naval Agreement, Abyssinian Crisis, German announces conscription.
- ⦿ 1936- Remilitarization of the Rhineland
- ⦿ 1938 (March) Anschluss
- ⦿ 1938 (Sept) Sudetenland crisis and the Munich agreement
- ⦿ 1939- Germany take over the rest of Czechoslovakia
- ⦿ 1939 Britain and France abandon appeasement and guarantee to defend Poland

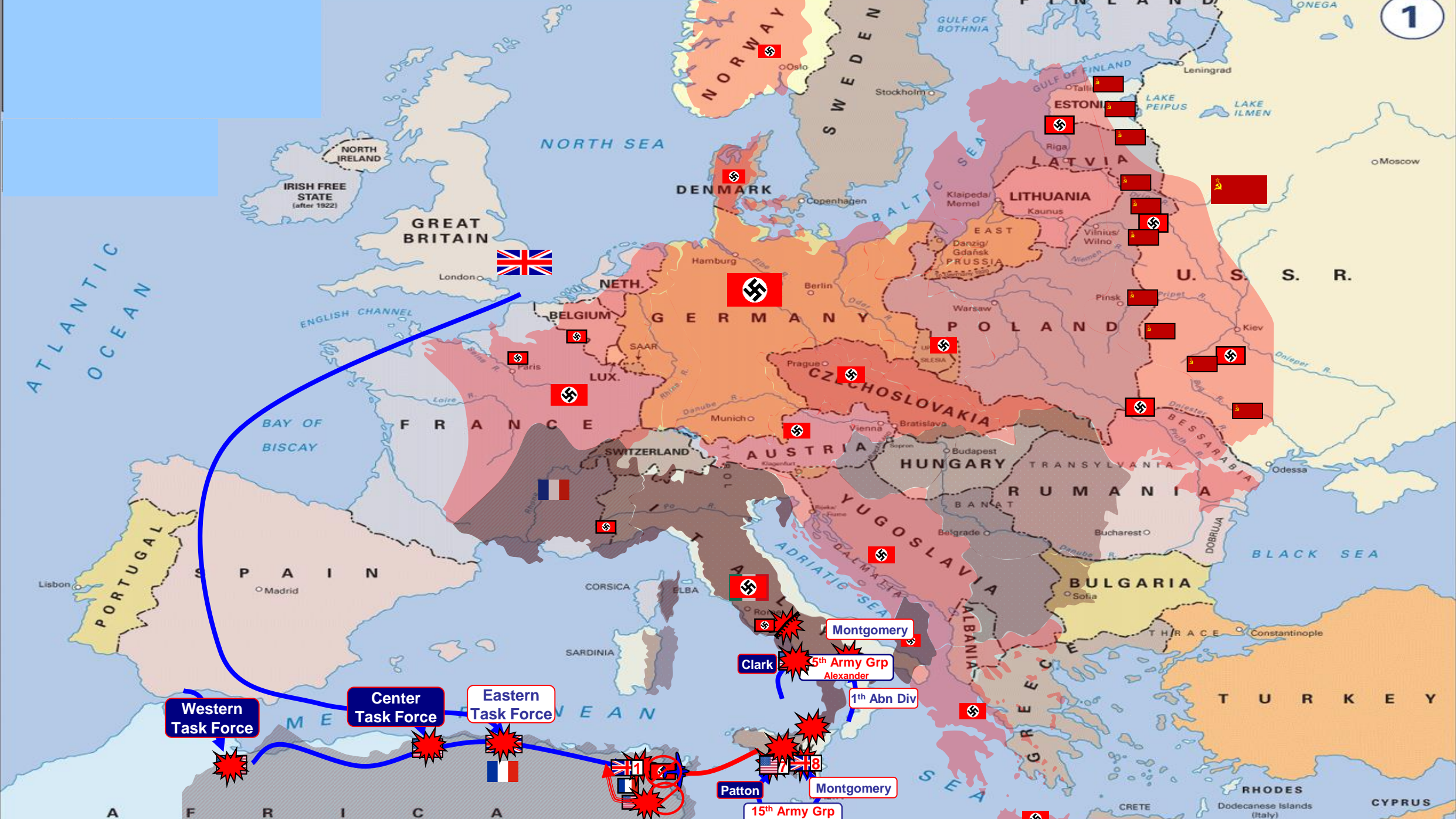
World War II

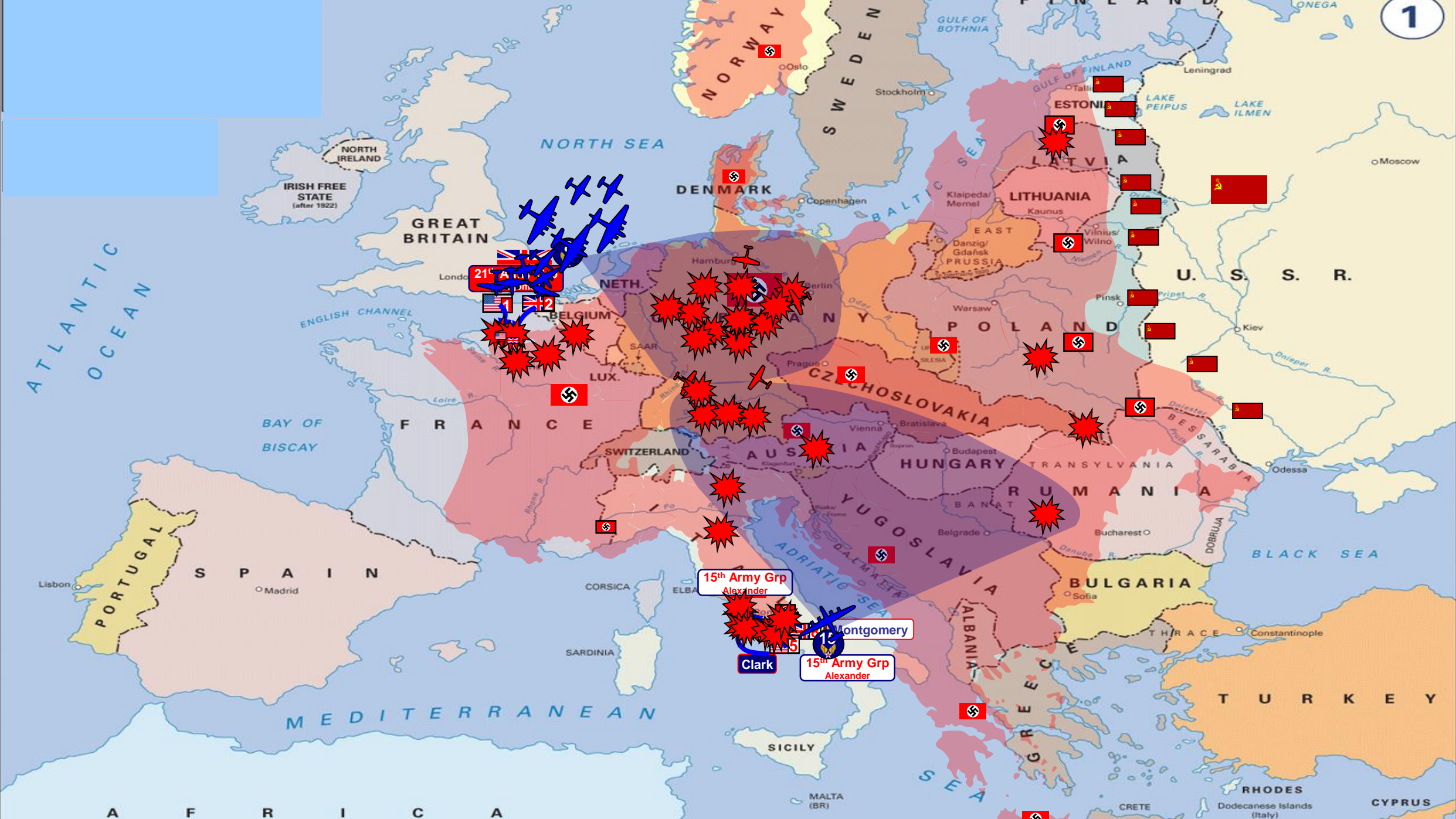


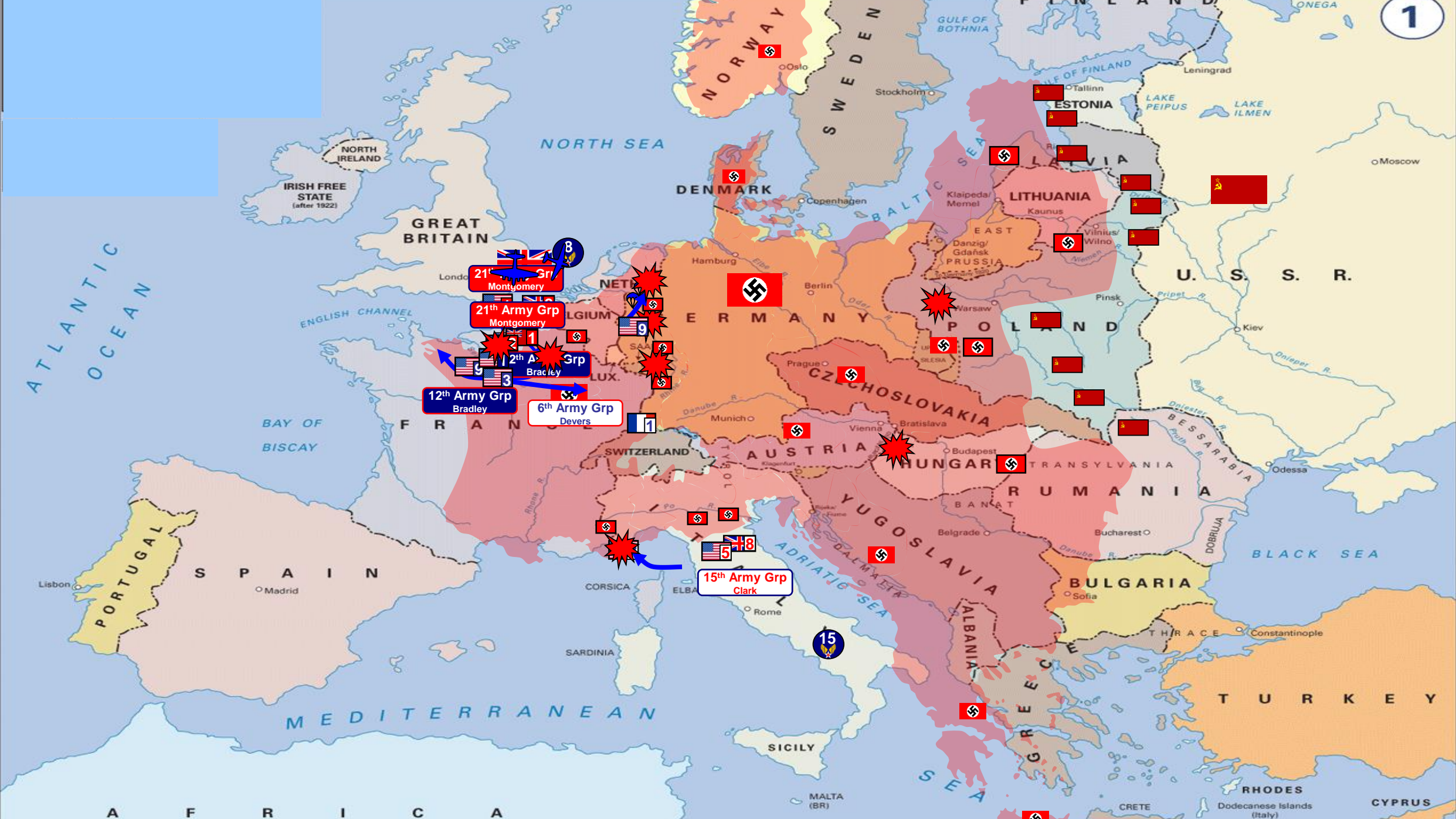
European Theater

Prelude & November 1942-May 1945









21st Army Grp
Montgomery

21st Army Grp
Montgomery

2nd Army Grp
Bradley

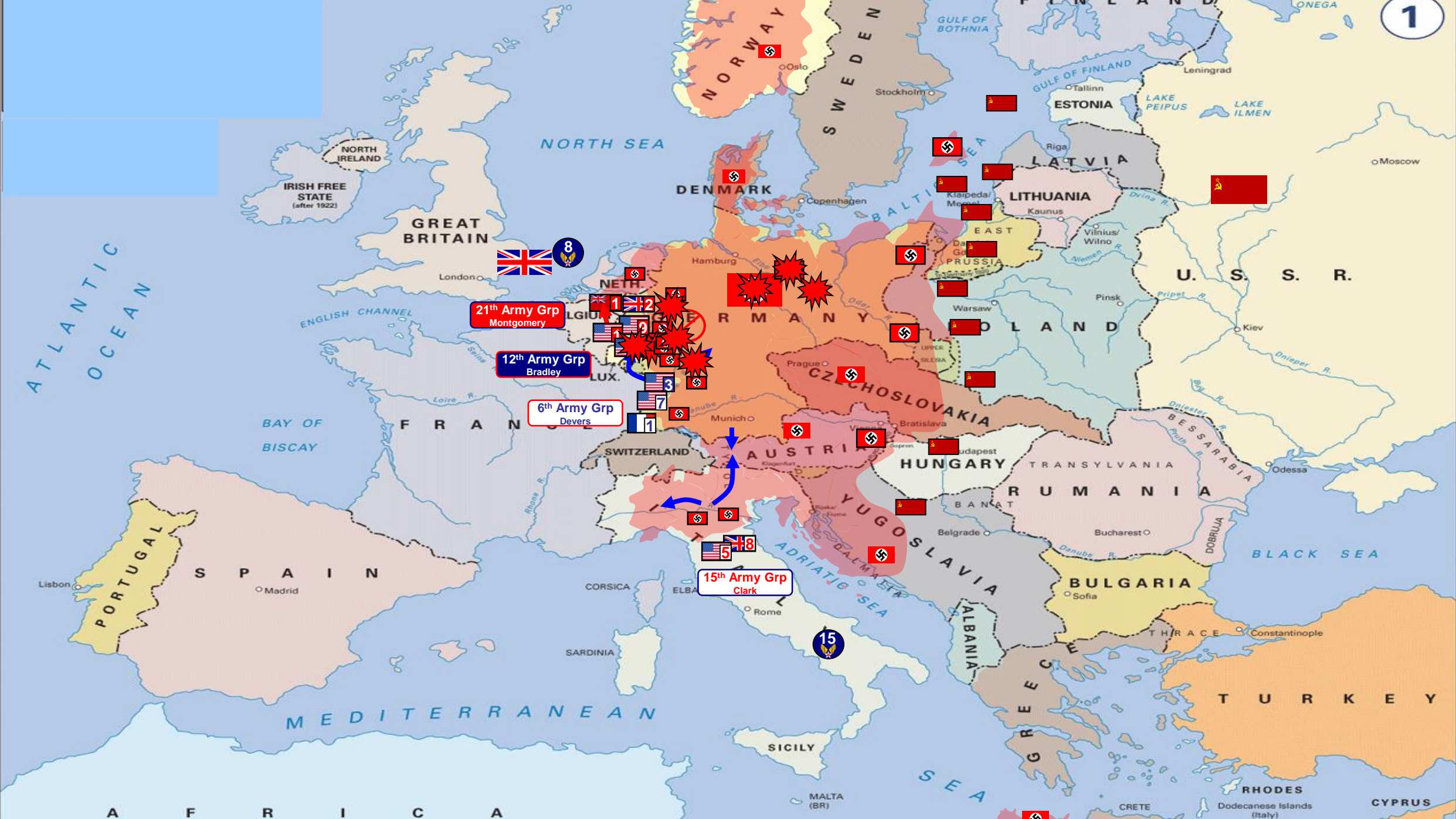
12th Army Grp
Bradley

6th Army Grp
Devers

15th Army Grp
Clark

8

15





Re-militarisation of the Rhineland

March 1936

Hitler's viewpoint

'The 48 hours after the march into the Rhineland were the most nerve-racking of my life. If the French had then marched into the Rhineland, we would have had to withdraw with our tails between our legs.'

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Why March 1936?

- The French Parliament had just agreed the Franco-Soviet pact in February 1936. Both countries agreed to come to the other's assistance if they were attacked.
- Mussolini assured Hitler that he no longer supported the Stresa Front a few days beforehand.
- France was between governments and were in the middle of a general election.

7th March 1936

- 22,000 German troops reoccupied the Rhineland. The Generals had secret orders to retreat if the French resisted.
- The invasion took place on a Saturday when politicians were away for the weekend.
- Events were a 'fait accompli' by the time politicians could formulate a response.

Austria 1938

Nazis in Austria

- ⦿ Inside Austria some Nazis were convinced Anschluss was about to happen.
- ⦿ 1934 they attempted to start one by murdering Austrian Chancellor, Dollfuss, believing Germany would then charge in and take over Austria.
- ⦿ Hitler decided the time was not right as he did not know how other powers would react.

Why Anschluss?

- ⦿ Suggested Hitler's Austrian birth gave him sense of destiny.
- ⦿ Control of Danube River Basin.
- ⦿ Railway links to the Balkans.
- ⦿ Surrounding of Czechoslovakia.
- ⦿ Military and economic benefits.

Increasing Control

- In 1936 an agreement between Germany and Austria meant that Nazi supporters were given to jobs in Austrian government.
- Between 1936 and 1938 Nazis kept up pressure mainly organised by Austrian Nazi, Arthur Seyss-Inquhart.
- Hitler was trying to undermine and destabilise the Austrian government.

Meeting with Schuschnigg

- ⦿ In February 1938 Hitler met with Austrian leader Schuschnigg. He made a number of demands which were aimed at giving more power to Austrian Nazis.
- ⦿ He demanded:
 1. Lifting of ban on Austrian Nazi Party;
 2. Appointment of 3 top Austrian Nazis to lead important ministries in government;
 3. Stronger economic and military links with Austria.
- ⦿ Effectively an end to independent Austria.

Schuschnigg's Actions

- ⦿ Schuschnigg refused to give into Hitler's demands.
- ⦿ Schuschnigg planned a plebiscite on 12th March 1938 to ask Austrian people if they wanted to join Germany.
- ⦿ Hitler threatened military action and demanded cancellation of plebiscite, the resignation of schuschnigg and the appointment of Seyss-Inquart as Chancellor.
- ⦿ Schuschnigg new he could not get help from Britain and France, so resigned.

Anschluss complete

- On 12th March German troops marched into Austria.
- 13th March 1938 the new Austrian government passed a law stating that Austria was now part of the German Reich.

Czechoslovakia
&
The Munich Agreement

Sudetenland

- ◉ German speaking people lived in area of Czechoslovakia called the Sudetenland which had never belonged to Germany.
- ◉ Hitler claimed Germans in Sudetenland persecuted by the Czech government.
- ◉ Special party created by Nazis called the Sudeten German Party (SDP) lead by Konrad Henlein.
- ◉ **Henlein's job was to destabilise Czech government.**
- ◉ If Hitler could control Czechoslovakia then implementing lebensraum would be easier.

The Three Meetings

Meeting 1

- Chamberlain agreed to give Germany Sudetenland.
- Would need time to convince France and persuade Czechoslovakia this was good idea.

Meeting 2

- Hitler threatened to send in German army. Wanted land immediately.
- Hitler looking for fight.
- Chamberlain rejected Hitler's demands.

Meeting 3 – Munich Conference

- Leaders of Britain, France, Germany and Italy all present.
- No invitation to Czechoslovakia or Russia.
- Godesberg terms agreed and Czechoslovakia given 12 hours to accept and 10 days to implement them.
- No war over Czechoslovakia.
- Hitler, in writing agreed to a policy of discussion rather than war.
- Chamberlain felt this was a guarantee of future peace.

Result

- ⦿ Czechoslovakia lost 30% of its territory; 30% of its population; 50% of its industry; 90% of its lignite fuel; 55% of its coal; and 46% of its electrical energy.
- ⦿ Lost its strong natural defence line so rest of country vulnerable to attack.
- ⦿ March 1939 German army marched in and took Bavaria and Moravia (Western end of Czech state).
- ⦿ Czech arms industry fell into Hitler's hands including Skoda Arms Works.
- ⦿ Slovakia (East) became so weak asked Germany if it could become a German protectorate.

Result

- ⦿ Hitler therefore got whole of Czechoslovakia by March 1939.
- ⦿ **Britain and France did nothing.**
- ⦿ Military balance of power in Europe now in Germany's favour.
- ⦿ Taking of Czechoslovakia meant Germany could now attack Poland and from different directions.
- ⦿ Hitler's air force only 25 mins flying time from Poland's industrial centre.

Main Causes of WWII

- ⦿ Aftermath of WWI
 - Treaty of Versailles was a “Treaty of Vengeance”.
- ⦿ Weak League of nations following WWI. (United States did not sign on).
- ⦿ Global Depression of 1929 (The Great Depression).
- ⦿ Rise of Hitler to power and policies of “appeasement” amongst major European powers (still leery of conflict because of WWI).
- ⦿ Hitler’s continued greed and violation of the Munich Pact.

Policies of Appeasement

- 1933 Hitler became Chancellor of Germany and began to rearm the country, defying the Treaty of Versailles.
 - Created an airforce, enacted conscription, builds military-industrial complex, increases infrastructure.
- 1935 Germany/Hitler withdraws from the League of Nations.
- 1936 Occupation of the Rhineland, territories lost during WWI and the Treaty of Versailles.
- “Annexation” of Austria, March of 1938.
- Munich Pact September, 1938.
- Czechoslovakia crisis.
 - September 1938 Hitler takes the Sudetenland.
- Nazi/Soviet Non aggression Pact between Hitler and Stalin (Molotov-Ribbentop Pact). August, 24 1939.
 - Pact would give parts of Poland to USSR in exchange for the soviets not protecting Poland were Germany to invade.

Final Steps to War

1938-1939:

Poland



Why Poland?

- ⦿ Treaty of Versailles meant East Prussia split from Germany by Polish Corridor.
- ⦿ City of Danzig still under control of League of Nations.
- ⦿ Poland economically stronger by gaining German industrial provinces of Posen and Silesia.
- ⦿ Population of 1.5 million Germans now living in Polish territory under government of Slav race which he considered inferior.

Events:

Sept 1938 – Aug 1939

- Hitler did not believe Britain and France would do anything to protect Poland.
- Hitler worried about what Russia would do.
- Russia may feel threatened and mutual assistance may mean France and Russia fighting against Germany.
- But Stalin was suspicious of Britain and France. This worked in Germany's favour.

Non Aggression Pact

- On 23rd Aug 1939 Russian foreign minister Molotov agreed to a **Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact**.
- Both countries agreed not to attack each other, not to support anyone who attacked the other, nor join any alliances against the other.
- Hitler now knew he could attack Poland when it suited him without war with Russia.

Beginning of War

- On 1st September 1939 German air force began to bomb Poland and the German army smashed forward.
- March 1939 British government had made the **Anglo-Polish Alliance**.
- Germany was given ultimatum to pull out of Poland which was **IGNORED**.
- On 3rd September 1939 Chamberlain announced to British people they were at war with Germany.

Two “Theaters” of WWII

1. **European Theater**: The Allies vs. The Axis in Europe and North Africa.
 - Allies=France, Britain, Soviet Union (?!) and later the United States.
 - Axis= Nazi Germany, Italy, Japan, and Soviet Union (?!).
2. **Pacific Theater**: The Allies vs. The Axis in the pacific region.

European Theater

- ◉ Nazis occupied most of the European continent for almost 4 years May of 1940-summer of 1944.
- ◉ Hitler's goal was gain territory to create Lebensraum or "living space" for the Third Reich.

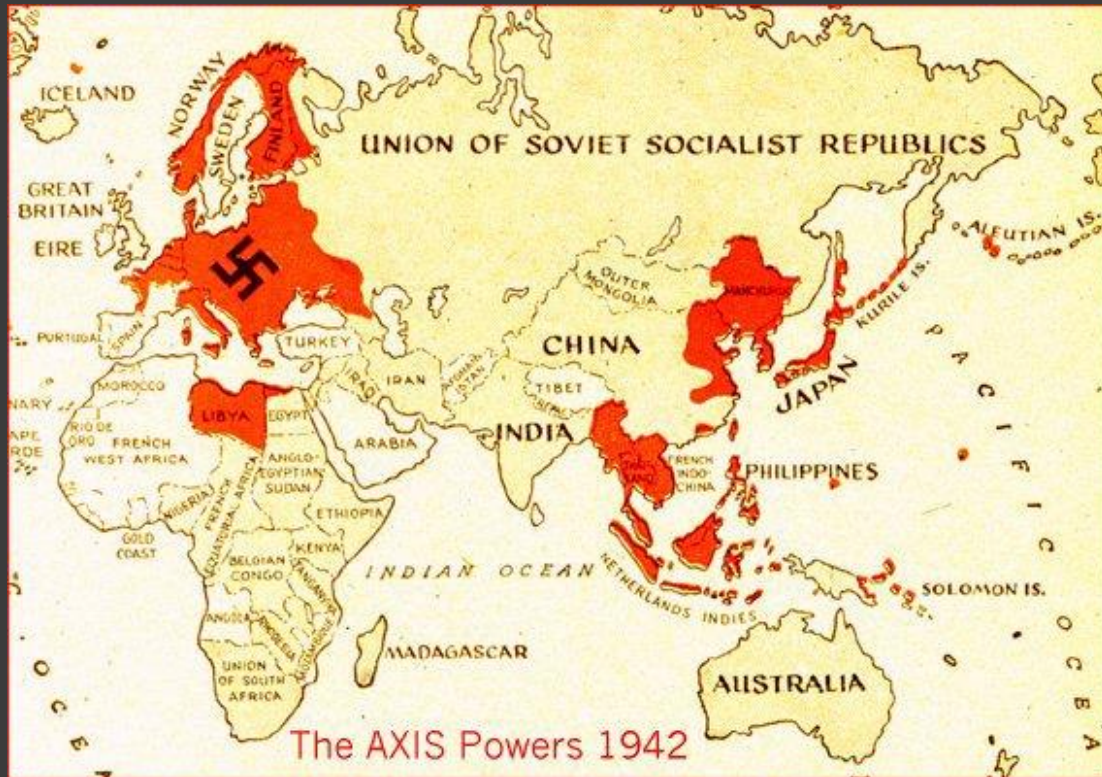


Area of maximum Axis expansion (Sep. 42)

Neutral Country

WWII Combat Europe

Axis Powers



<http://regentsprep.org/Regents/global/themes/conflict/images/axis%201942.jpg>

- Axis powers represented the totalitarian states.
- Consisted of: Germany, Italy, and Japan.
- “Rome, Berlin, Tokyo Axis.”

Allied Powers



www.americaslibrary.gov/assets/jb/wwii/jb_wwii_stalin_2_e.jpg

- Great Britain, France, Soviet Union (at times), and the United States (starting in 1941).
- Represented the “Free” nations of the world.

German Invasion of Poland (September 1, 1939)

- ◉ With USSR now at Germany's side Hitler felt he could do as he pleased.
 - He intended to deal with Russia later and take it over at his leisure.
- ◉ Poland was overrun and surrendered in 28 days.
 - Blitzkrieg tactics huge success.
- ◉ France, GB declare war on Germany and vice versa.
- ◉ U.S. remained neutral.



The Invasion of Poland

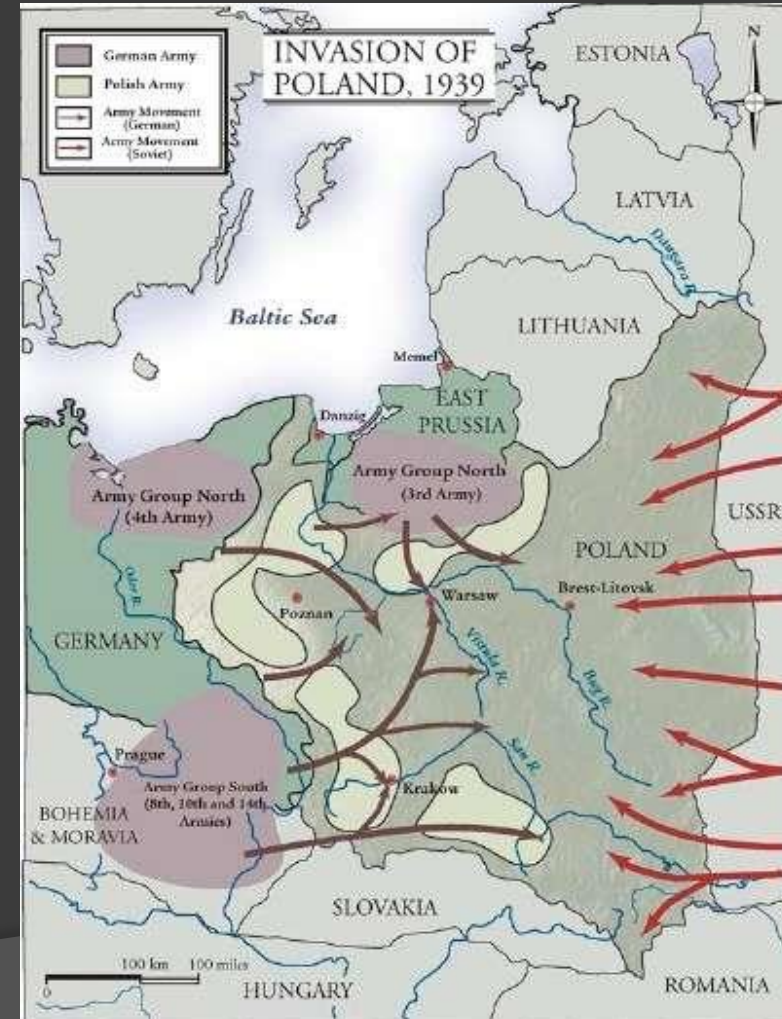
September 1st, 1939



www.euronet.nl/users/wilfried/ww2/network/polen.gif



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Schleswig_Holstein_firing_Gdynia_13.09.1939.jpg



<http://static.howstuffworks.com/gif/start-world-war-2-2.jpg>



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:British_prisoners_at_Dunkerque,_France.jpg



<http://techcenter.davidson.k12.nc.us/Group9/mons.jpg>

attle of France

- “Phony War:” After France, Great Britain and Germany declared war on each other no fighting took place for 9 months.
- Both sides prepared for war. Fortified troops along the Maginot line.
- May 10, 1940 after 10 months of preparation Germany attacked France and the “Low” countries.
- France only able to hold out for 2 weeks before partial surrender. Vichy government Hitler’s puppet government, and Free French government.
- Germany 130 infantry and 10 tank divisions France only 40 infantry divisions.

Battle of France cont.

- ⦿ The Nazis sweep through the “low” countries, Belgium and the Netherlands, to the north and the Ardennes Forrest to the south.
- ⦿ Nazi “Blitzkrieg” Lighting War.
- ⦿ May 10th Nazis on the move in Europe.
 - Netherlands fall in 8 days.
 - Belgium falls in 14.
 - Denmark in 6 days.
 - France falls in 20 days.
- ⦿ By June 14th, 1941 Hitler has overrun most of Western Europe (only took 10 months).

Hitler in Paris



<http://xaf.xanga.com/5b3b60201913346652484/z31450138.jpg>

Hitler enters Paris June, 14 1940. The Nazi's occupy France until June, 1944 when Allied forces invade Normandy on D-day.

Dunkirk



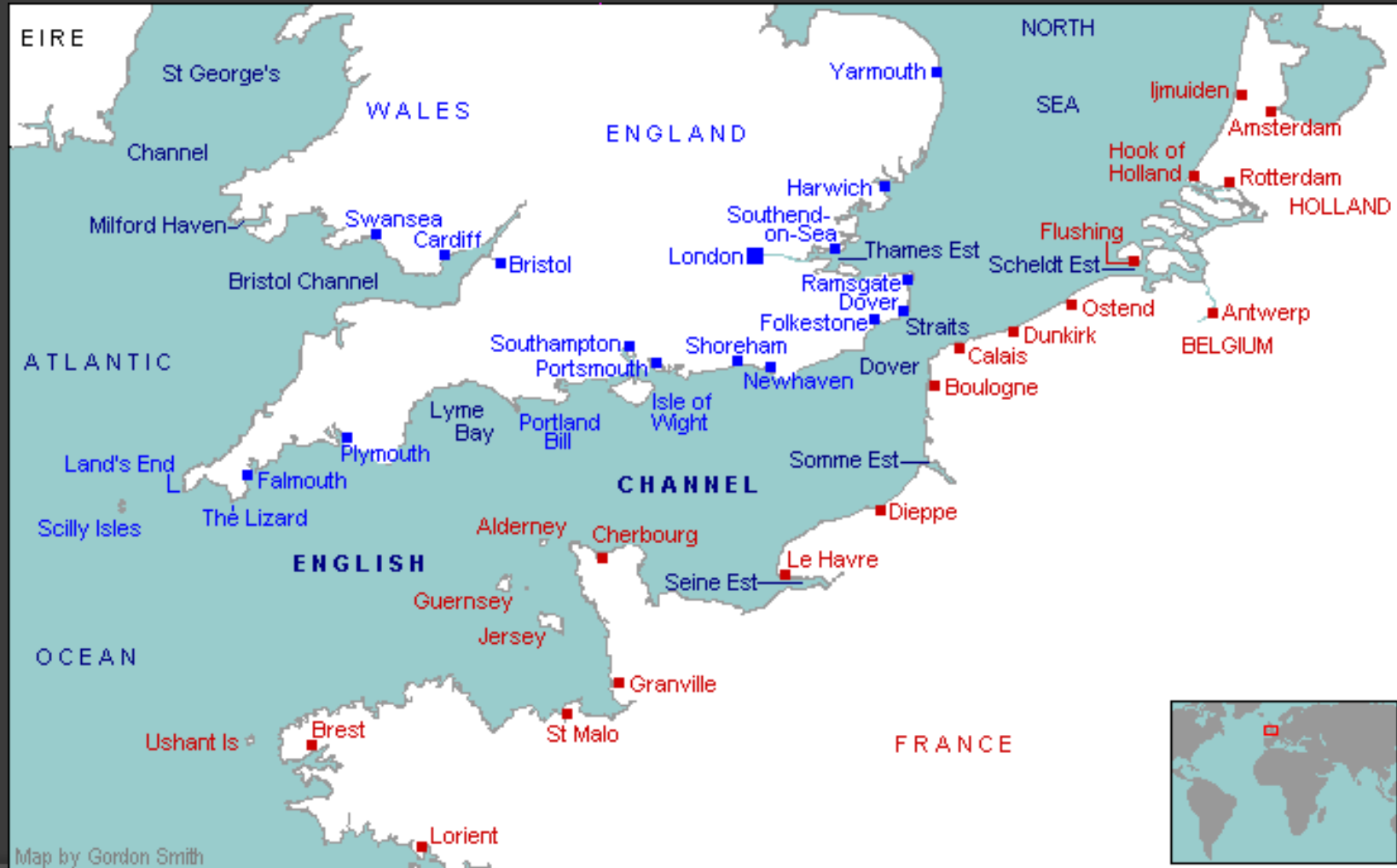
www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/ww2-pix/dunkirk.jpg



http://www.dover-kent.co.uk/history/images/pic_ww2_dunkirk.jpg

- May 28th to June 4th 1940.
- Retreat and evacuation at Dunkirk. British rescue their troops and Allied troops from mainland Europe following a failed campaign to defend Belgium, Luxemburg, the Netherlands and France from the Third Reich.
- British forces retreat to the coastal city of Dunkirk to be evacuated back to Britain. French forces too.
- Total of nearly 400,000 Allied troops evacuated.

Dunkirk location map



“Atonement”

- Film features a 5 minute long continuous shot depicting the scene of some 300,000 men waiting to be evacuated from the beaches at Dunkirk, France.
- The novel discusses the main character’s trial of trying to make it back to England after the disastrous loss of the Battle of France (Spring 1940).
- Describes evading Nazi soldiers, getting strafed by the Luftwaffe.



Battle of Britain

Summer of 1940-Spring 1941

- German air campaign by the Luftwaffe against Britain to gain air superiority. August 1940 - May 1941 (after France is subdued). Called “The Blitz.”
- Started bombing ports, then RAF airstrips, then infrastructure in Britain. Later moved onto terror bombing of civilian targets (cities).
- Churchill vowed “never to surrender” & “finest hour” [speech](#).



“The Blitz”



- By the end of May 1941, over 43,000 civilians, half of them in London, had been killed by bombing and more than a million houses were destroyed or damaged in London alone.
- The failure of Germany to achieve its objectives of destroying Britain's air defenses, or forcing Britain to negotiate an armistice or an outright surrender is considered both its first major defeat and one of the crucial turning points in the war







B-17 Flying Fortress



- Potent, high-flying, long-ranging bomber capable of unleashing great destruction, able to defend itself, and having the ability to return home despite extensive battle damage.
- Ten man crew, 3000 mile range, 220 mph, 2000 pound payload (bombs).

German Invasion of USSR

(June, 22 1941)



- Hitler believed he had crippled the Allied powers enough in the West, he now turned his troops toward the East and attacked USSR.
- Operation “Barbarossa.”
- Brutally cold winter, Germans would not retreat, costly for Germany (and Russia).
- Stalingrad (August 1942) --> Germany had taken over city with house to house battles.
- Russian counter-attack became the turning point in war, with Soviets taking back Stalingrad.



Allied invasion of North Africa (August 1942-April 1943)

- Africa/Mid East a stronghold for oil so the Axis had a strong interest in taking the area.
- Germans were active in the whole Mediterranean area, Italy, Greece, North Africa, Turkey.
- First attempts at taking the area by the Allies was massive failure (lessons learned for D-day).
- British troops under General Montgomery won decisive battle at El Alamein and pushed Germany (Erwin Rommel "Desert Fox") toward U.S. troops under General Patton. Germans were caught in the pinchers.
- 250,000 German POWs taken.



[www.ww2survivorstories.com/More Photos/Rommel-1.JPG](http://www.ww2survivorstories.com/More%20Photos/Rommel-1.JPG)



www.ww2incolor.com/d/151337-2/_____gr

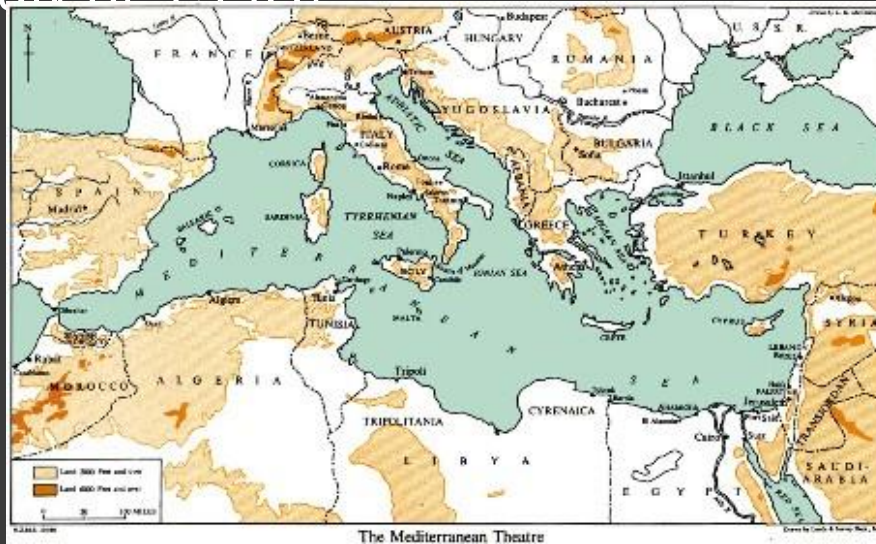
RAF bombing of Hamburg Germany

- July 24th to August 3rd, 1943.
- Multiple RAF bombing runs on the city of Hamburg.
- Total destruction was the goal.
- Multiple 700+ plane runs.
- In four nights 45,000 civilians died, 1 million homeless.
- On the night of July 27th blockbuster bombs hit the city.
- Generated a massive firestorm with hurricane force winds, temperatures in excess of 1500F. Firestorm incinerated 8 square miles.
- Asphalt streets caught on fire.
- 75% of the city totally destroyed.



Allied invasion of Sicily and Italy

(July of 1943)



[www.nzetc.org/etexts/WH2Poli/WH2Pol10a_\(h280\).jpg](http://www.nzetc.org/etexts/WH2Poli/WH2Pol10a_(h280).jpg)

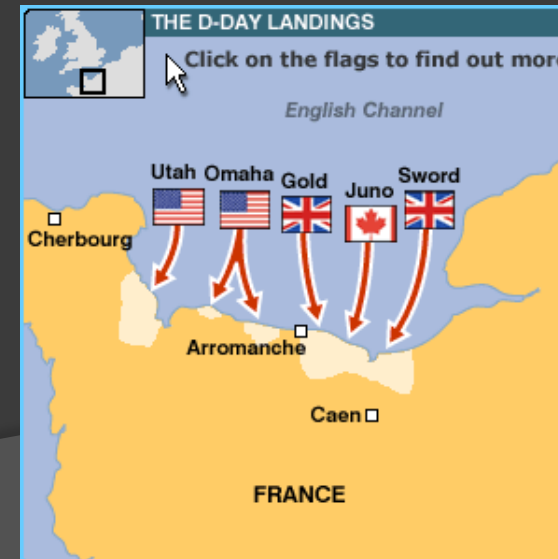


- Goal to take back Nazi occupied Europe was to catch the German and remaining Italian troops in the pinchers. Up through Italy and down from Northern Europe.
- Allied troops led by Patton and Montgomery forced Axis powers out of Italy. Not many troops captured, most retreated.

D-Day Invasion of Normandy

June 6th 1944

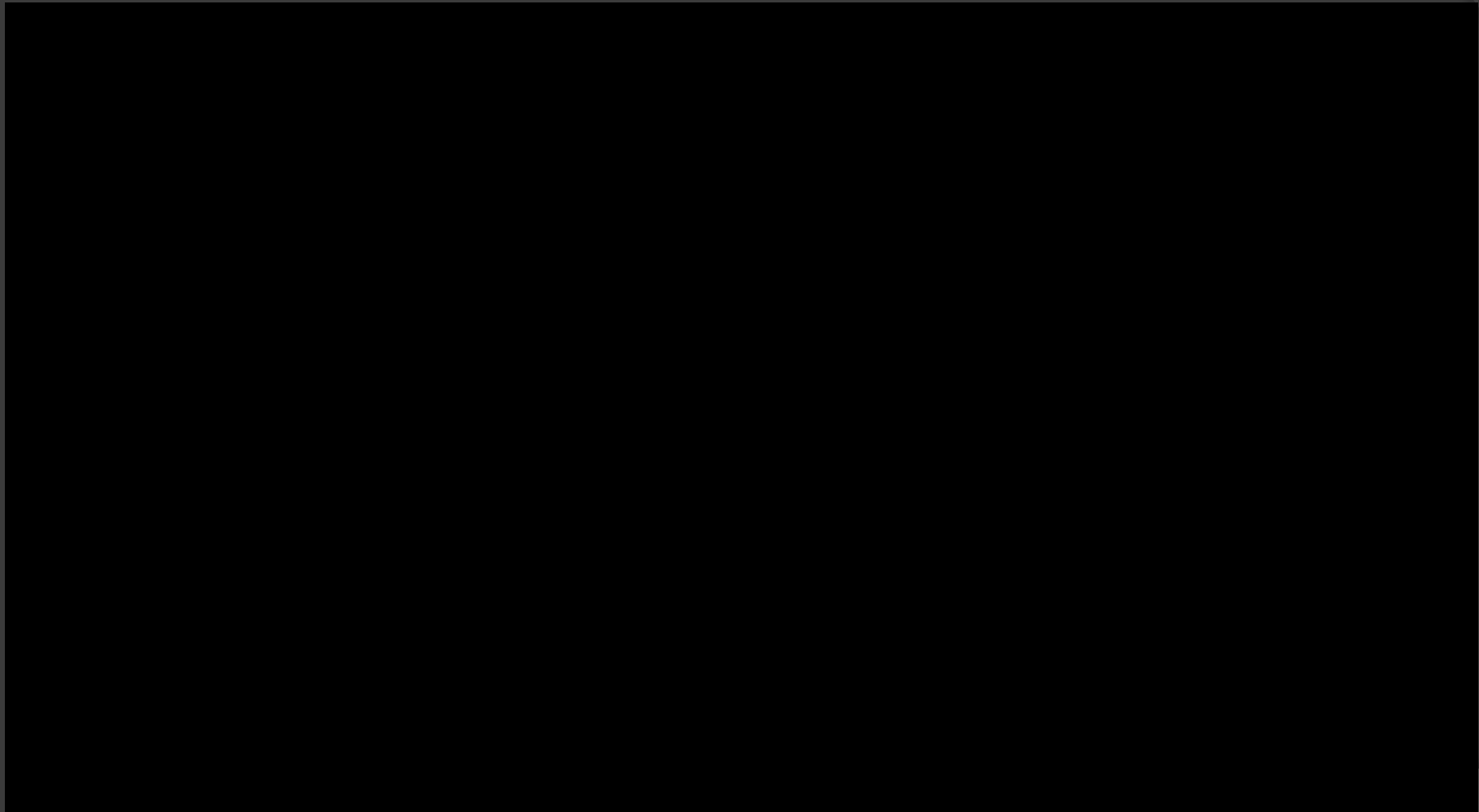
- Originally scheduled for June 5th, yet weather conditions too bad on 5th. Conditions on 6th were marginal, many were sick.
- Largest amphibious assault ever attempted, 60 miles of beachhead, 4000 ships would land, man made harbors paved the way for millions of allied troops to come ashore, 1,000,000 in first 2 weeks.
- 5 beaches: Omaha, Utah, Juno, Gold, Sword.
- 4000 Allied casualties.







General Eisenhower Supreme Commander of Allied Forces. He planned and executed D-day assault.



Landing at Omaha Beach



The Defenses at Omaha Beach



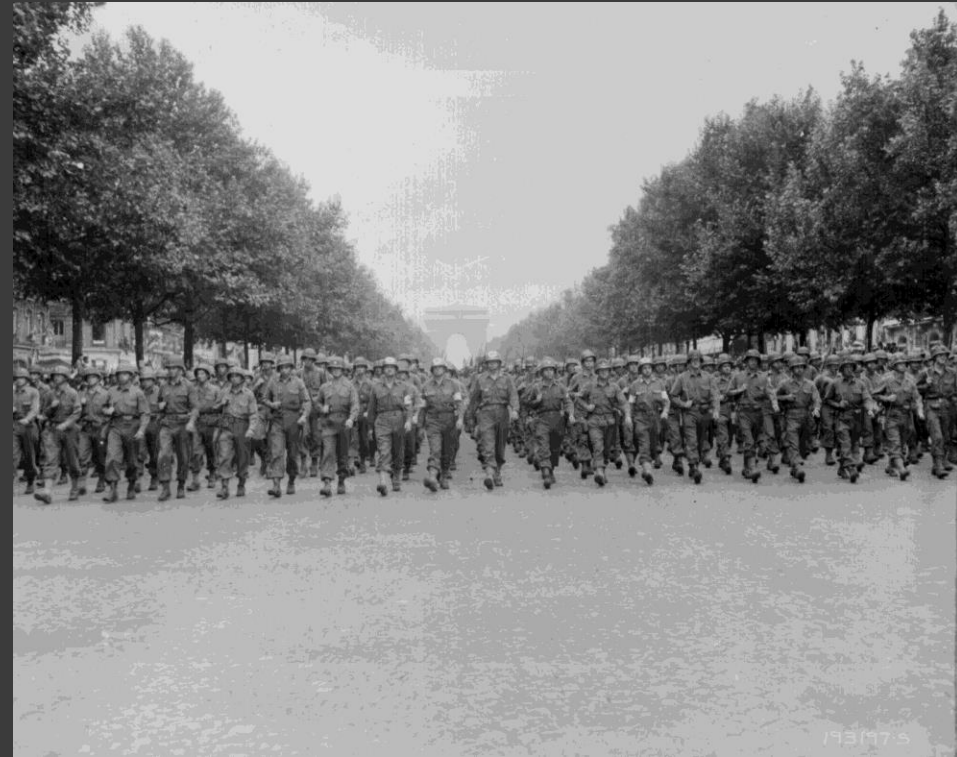
Liberation of France/Paris

August 25th, 1944



- After D-day , allied troops moved quickly to push back Nazi occupied Europe.
- By August 1944, much of France had been taken back.
- By the end of August U.S. and Free French troops led by Charles de Gaulle liberated Paris.

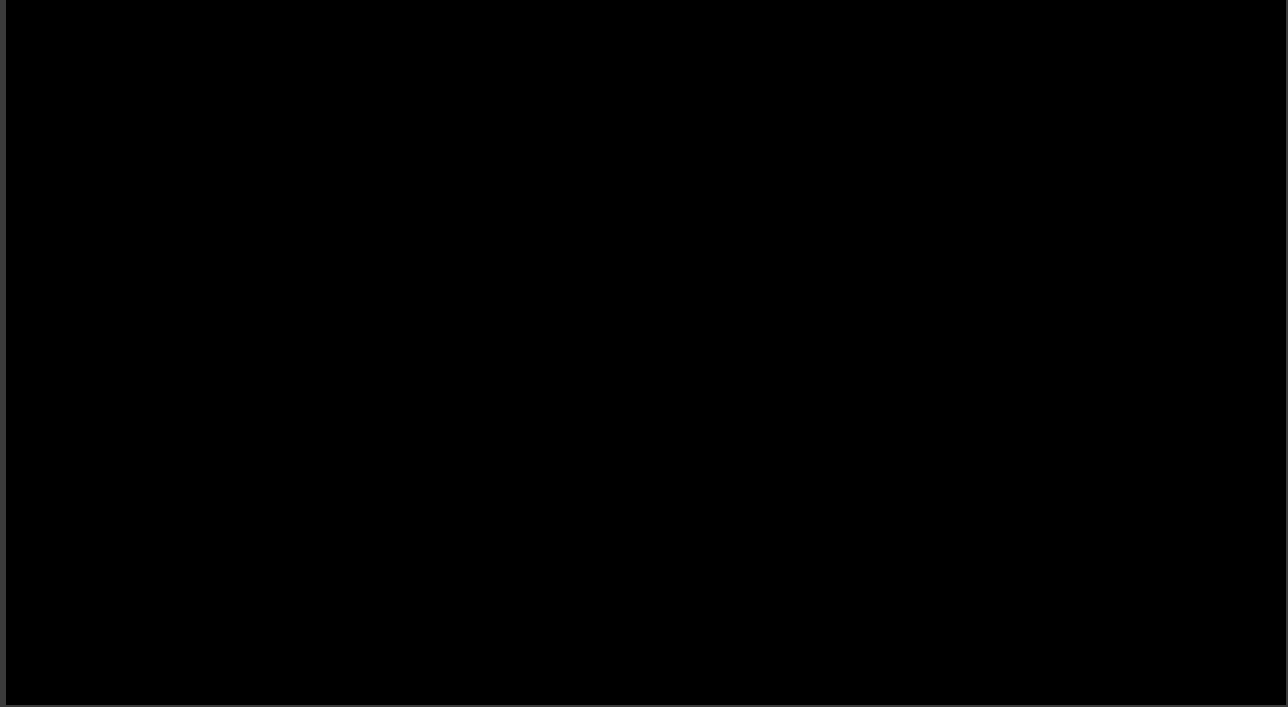
The Allies take Paris!



Battle of the Bulge (Fall 1944-Dec 1944)

- ⦿ Beginning of the end for Hitler and Germany.
- ⦿ Hitler's last major offensive, trying to get to port of Antwerp through Ardennes Forest, this created a bulge in the Allied lines.
- ⦿ General Patton's Army pushed back Germany in the dead of winter of 1944.





Allies take

Berlin: VE Day (May 8th 1945)



- Soviet and U.S. surround Germany.
- Question was which country would take Berlin. Soviets took Berlin in April 1945.
- April 30th 1945 Hitler commits suicide
- May 7th 1945 Germany surrendered.
- May 8th VE day.

Germany Surrenders!

5/8/1945



Alfred Jodl (between Major Wilhelm Oxenius to the left and General Admiral Hans-Georg von Friedeburg to the right) signing the German Instrument of Surrender at Reims, France 7 May, 1945.

Yalta Conference: The Cold War

- FDR, Churchill, & Stalin met starting in 1943 and again in 1945 to decide the fate of Europe --> Which countries would be communist and which would be free.
- Cold War arguably started the last 6 months maybe even earlier during WW II.
- 5 Items on Yalta Agenda:
 1. Create UN
 2. Re-establish peace
 3. Divide Germany
 4. Extend Soviet territory
 5. Germany give equipment and resources to Soviets.





World War II European Theater

Ms. Krall



Welcome Back!

- Bell Ringer- Complete Pacific Battles Review sheet with your neighbor.
- Battles Quiz- Thursday!



Start of the War...

- September 1, 1939
Hitler invades Poland.
- On hand 98 divisions,
1.5 million available for
action. Had also 9
Panzer divisions. Each
one had 328 tanks, 8
support battalions and
6 artillery batteries.
- Uses the tactic
“blitzkrieg” or lightning
War.
- End of September,
German Army had
control over the country.
- By November, Stalin
invades Finland.

WORLD WAR II, EUROPEAN THEATER, 1940-1945



European Front

Invasion of France

- From fall of 1939 to Spring of 1940, war in Europe was known as the “Sitzkrieg” or sitting war.
- Attack begins in May. By June, Allied forces are evacuated from French town of Dunkirk to England (Operation Dynamo.)
- Paris is occupied June 14, 1940
- During this period, Hitler plans invasion of France through Belgium. Goal was to reach the English channel and force France to surrender.
- Southern part of France was controlled by a puppet government (“Vichy France”) and led by Marshal Henri Petain. Was pro-German.





The Battle of Britain

- “Operation Sea Lion”
- The German Luftwaffe had 2,800 aircraft, which outnumbered the Royal Air Force (RAF) four to one.
- August 1940, Germans begin to bomb Southern England.
- Objective was to land 160,000 German soldiers along a forty-mile coastal stretch of south-east England.
- Hitler hoped England would accept German domination of Europe.
- Postpones invasion until British air force could be destroyed.

The “Blitz”

- In Sept. Germans begin the “Blitz” and shift their bombing to London and abandon invasion.
- On the first day of the Blitz, 430 citizens were killed. The German bombers returned the next day and a further 412 died.
- Between Sept. 1940-May 1941 two million houses (most in London) were destroyed and 60,000 civilians were killed.
- Seen as a moral victory for the Allies.













Eastern Front

Invasion of the Soviet Union

- “Operation Barbarossa”
- Stalin did not believe an invasion would occur until 1942, when both England and France would be defeated.
- Total of 3400 tanks and 3 million men used in the invasion.
- Stalin uses “scorched-earth” policy.
- Outcome of Hitler’s Lebensraum policy to create a greater Germany.
- Attack begins June 22, 1941
- By August, Germans advanced to Leningrad (siege will last over 2 years.) By October head towards Moscow.

Mediterranean Front

Invasion of North Africa

- Italy declares war on the Allies in June 1940.
- Mussolini moves troops stationed in Libya to launch an attack on British forces in Egypt.
- Battles between **Afrika Corps** and British forces continue until the US landing of forces in North Africa in Nov. 1942 (**Operation Torch.**) creating a three front war.
- The British were able to launch a counteroffensive and take Libyan territory in January 1941.
- As a result, Hitler sends General Erwin Rommel (Desert Fox) to lead the Afrika corps.
- By May 1943, Allies are able to take Tunisia and capture 150,000 prisoners.
- Leads to **Operation Husky** ([invasion of Sicily in 1943.](#))



Battles

Siege of Leningrad

- September 8, 1941 - January 27, 1944
- Part of **Operation Barbarossa**
- people turned out shortly after the invasion and dug antitank ditches around the city. Two hundred thousand Red Army defenders protected 3,000,000 inhabitants.
- With the help of the Finnish, German Army invades 2nd largest city in USSR.
- City would be surrounded (siege). Shelling and air raids continued **for almost 900 days**.
- In 1942, 650,000 died during the siege
- Soviet offensive in 1944 was able to lift the siege.

The Battle of Stalingrad

- Considered turning point in WWII
- Goal to take oil fields and control communication lines. Final target was to take the city of Baku.
- Hitler ordered to “fight to the last bullet.”
- Gen. Von Paulus surrenders, 91,000 Germans taken prisoner.
- Fought during the winter of 1942 to 1943
- Battle was hand-hand combat, street by street. Over 2 million soldiers involved.
- Germans were unable to secure the city by winter.



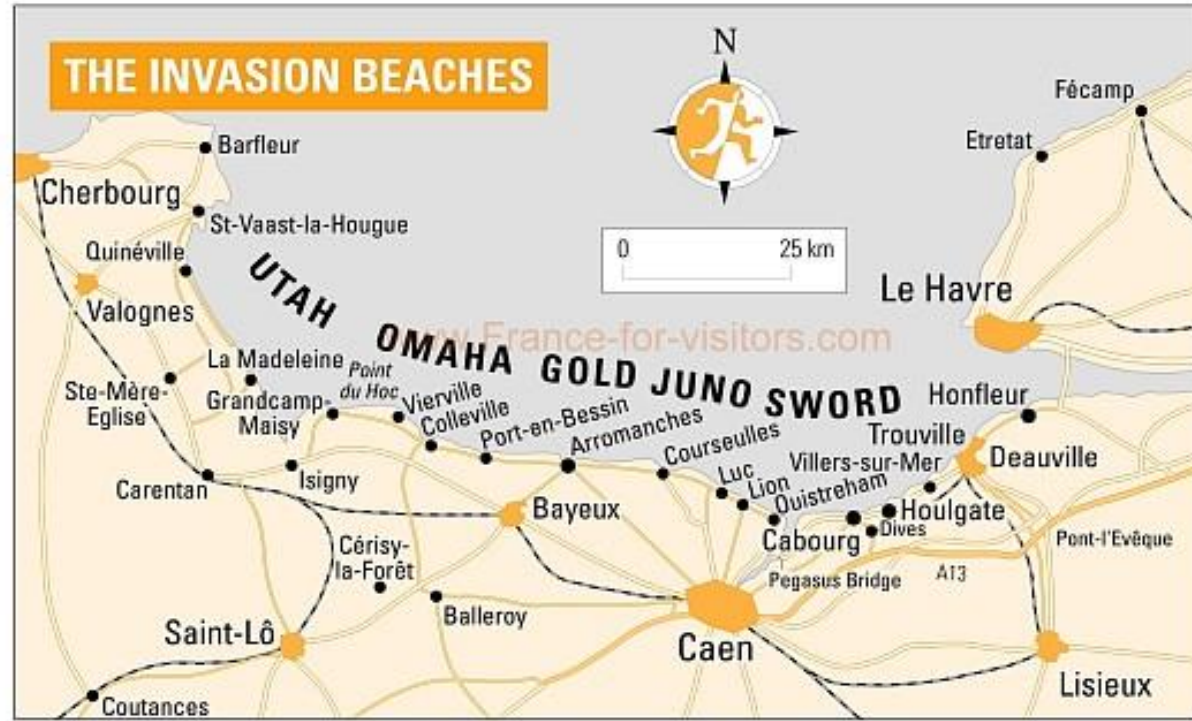
Operation Citadel Battle of Kursk

- July 1943
- German counter-offensive to Stalingrad.
- 300,000 civilians helped the Red army build defenses, laying of 400,000 mines (2,400 anti-tank and 2,700 anti-personnel mines every mile.)
- Largest tank battle of the war (1800)
- Goal was to break through a “bulge” in the Russian line at Kursk.
- By August, city was liberated.
- Last counter-offensive in USSR. 500,000 German casualties.



Operation Overlord June 6, 1944 D-Day

- In November, 1943, Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt met in Teheran to discuss a second front in Europe.
- Objective was to liberate France.
- Largest air, land, and sea operation in history.
- The plan involved assaults on five beaches west of the Orne River near Caen (Sword, Juno, Gold, Omaha and Utah) by the British, American and Canadian forces.



from www.france-for-visitors.com

Operation Fortitude

- Germans believed that attack would happen at Pas-de-Calais.
- On June 5th, 4 airborne divisions (23,000) were used with the purpose to destroy enemy bridges and secure those for an offensive.
- Unable to secure its targets, however the Germans became confused. (with the help from French Resistance.)
Real invasion?
- British would transmit messages during spring of 1944.
- Radio traffic was faked, plywood and canvas installations were constructed, inflatable tanks and vehicles were used extensively in order to deceive the Germans.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES




D Day

- On 6th June, 1944, 2,727 ships sailed to the Normandy coast and on the first day 156,000 men landed along a 30 mile front to face 50 German divisions.
- At Omaha, US Army suffered 2,500 casualties.
- By end of the month Allies have secured the beaches and begin offensive to Paris.
- Paris is liberated on August 25, 1944.







Battle of the Bulge

Dec. 1944-Jan. 1945

- German counter-offensive to regain initiative on western front. Opposed by Hitler's Generals.
- Hitler's intention was to drive through Antwerp and cut off the British 21st Army Group and the U.S. First and Ninth Armies north of the Ardennes.
- Hitler sends a quarter million troops across an 85-mile stretch of the Allied front, from southern Belgium into Luxembourg.
- At first, able to surprise Allies due to poor weather. However, allied reinforcements were able to secure the bulge that occurred 50 miles into the Allied front.
- Americans suffered 75,000 casualties, Germans 100,000.
- Allies were driving the Germans from the west, the Red Army launches their offensive in the east. Race to Berlin is on!

Justifications for Appeasement



The Reasonable Nature of Germany's Demands



- ◎ The most important assumption was that Germany had a limited number of reasonable demands which, when satisfied, would change her into a peaceful nation

The Reasonable Nature of Germany's Demand's

- These demands came from the Treaty of Versailles about which the British had begun to feel guilty. For example, Lord Lothian, a supporter of appeasement, stated that on 7 March 1936, he was walking into his own back yard

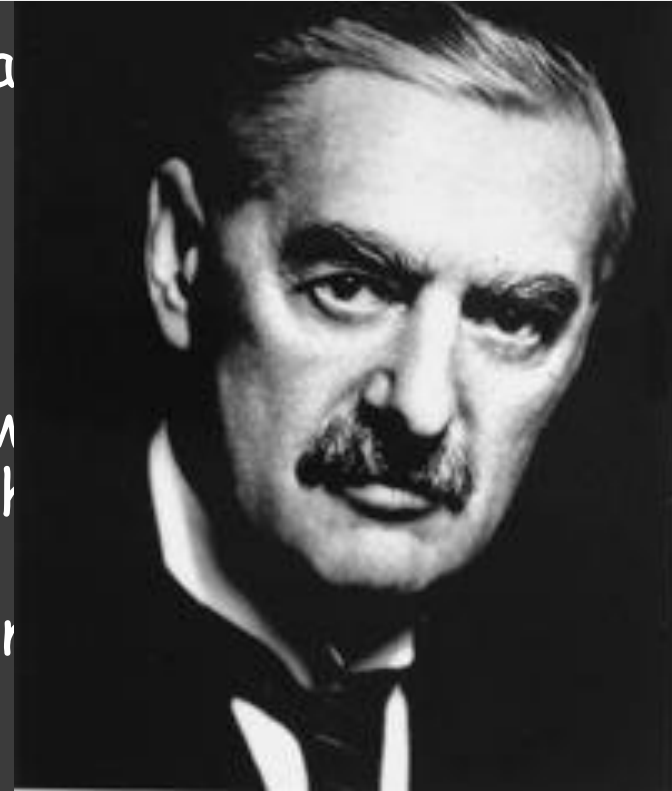
Hitler could be trusted to keep his word



- Initially Hitler was seen as a reasonable man
- This view was reinforced by politicians who visited Germany in the thirties- see quotes in handout

The empire was not ready to fight

- ◉ Neville Chamberlain was an ardent supporter of appeasement.
- ◉ He was appalled by the prospect of the British Empire having to fight a war against the Japanese in the Far East, the Italians in Africa and the Germans in Europe



The empire was not ready to fight

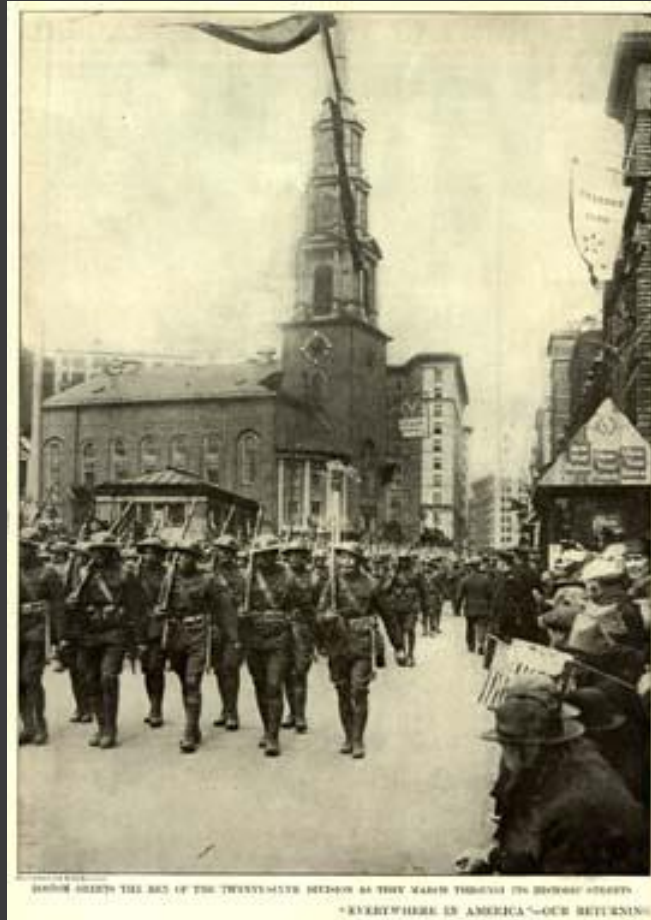
- He saw little chance of help from America or from Dominion Prime Ministers e.g. South Africa, Australia and Canada

Britain had no reliable allies



- No alternative to appeasement as collective security had failed
- France was divided by internal politics and was not viewed as a reliable ally
- 'she can never keep a secret for more than half an hour or a government for more than 9 months'

Britain had no reliable allies



- America had retreated into isolation
- Russia had become Communist
- Italy and Japan under Fascist governments, had embarked on dangerous careers of aggression

The league did not offer a solution



- ◉ Chamberlain like other leaders had little faith in the league
- ◉ His instincts told him face to face discussions were the best solution but he lacked experience in foreign affairs

The league did not offer a solution

- Chamberlain was determined that a repeat of WW1 would not happen which many believed was due to lack of dialogue between the powers
- But Hitler was not the man Chamberlain wished him to be

Other reasons



- The economy was too weak
- the Great war and depression had damaged Britain's economy- not able to cope with another war whilst:
- Propaganda stressed economic achievements of European dictators

Other reasons



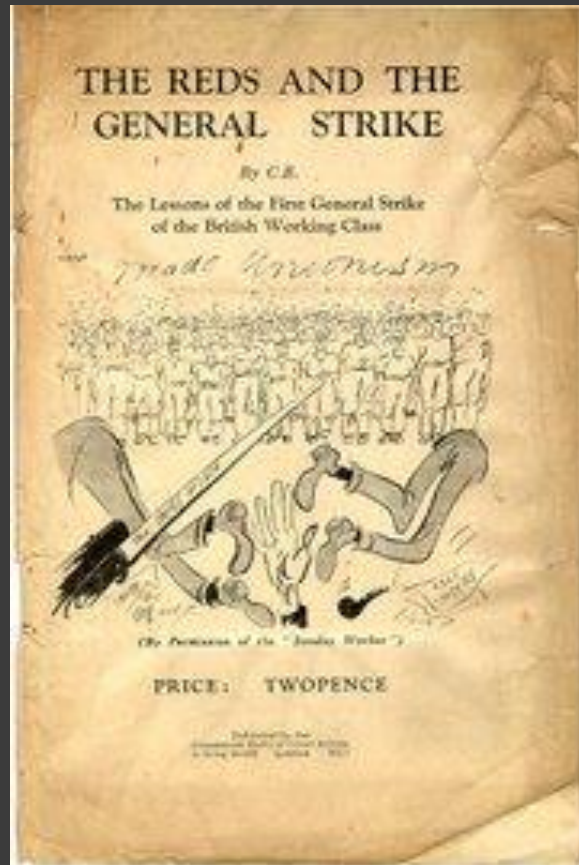
- ⦿ Armed force were unprepared, time needed for rearmament
- ⦿ 'we are terribly weak. We must gain time for becoming stronger. Only military strength will stop Hitler, and at present we do not possess it'

The British People were unwilling to fight



- Horrors of WW1 still fresh in their minds
- A Conservative favouring rearmament in the Fulham by-election was defeated by a pacifist Labour opponent

Communism was the main threat to Europe and Britain



- ◉ Communism in the 20s and 30s was seen as a bigger threat than Germany
- ◉ Chamberlain wanted to come to terms with Germany to provide 'a
- ◉ strong bulwark against the spread of Bolshevism'

The results of Appeasement

- Europe saved from war? Possibly though some historians that if the Czechs, French, British and Russians had stood up to Hitler he would have been defeated, and would have faced war on two fronts
- Czechoslovakia was abandoned, and weakened by the loss of important military defences and resources
- Germany gained the Sudetenland- another step towards the Greater Germany.
- Britain and France gained time to build up their armed forces, but so did Germany
- Hitler decided Britain and France were unlikely ever to oppose him by force
- Stalin was offended at being excluded from the talks and decided he could not rely on Britain to help the USSR stand up against Germany

EXAM POSSIBILITY - *very likely*

- Make sure you know the three main aims of Hitler's Foreign policy
- Can you define appeasement
- Make sure you know all the landmarks of appeasement
- What were the arguments for and against appeasement