

SSUSH19 – Examine the origins, major developments, and the domestic impact of World War II, including the growth of the federal government.

c. Examine the European Theater including difficulties the U.S. faced in delivering weapons, food, and medical supplies to troops, D-Day, and the Fall of Berlin.

In addition to fighting in the Pacific Theater, the United States was also engaged in the European Theater of World War II. The United States was the prime supplier of war material to the Allies. To supply the European allies, it was necessary to cross the Atlantic Ocean. It took between ten and fifteen days for a convoy to cross the Atlantic. Along the way, Allied shipping had to fight German submarines and aircraft. The American ships and their cargo was needed to feed and supply the Allied soldiers and the British civilian population. Initially, the British Isles served as a supply depot while the Allies built up their forces to invade the continent. After landing troops on the coast of France and Italy, supplies followed the forces inland using the existing road networks. However, the farther the Allied forces moved from the coast, the longer it took to get supplies to the front lines. Gasoline was a particular problem for Allied forces that relied heavily on mobile warfare. In fact, the Allied advance stalled in November 1944 because the armor units ran short of fuel. Lend-leased goods were shipped to the Soviet Union through the German submarine defenses around the Scandinavian Peninsula and around Africa to the Persian Gulf and through Iran.

One of the most significant events in the European Theater of World War II was the Allied invasion of Normandy, France, which is often referred to as D-Day. This victory began the Allied advance to reclaim Europe. D-Day was the code name for the first day of Operation Overlord, the Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied France. It remains the largest seaborne invasion in history, with over 156,000 men crossing the English Channel in 6,939 vessels. When the Allies landed at Normandy, the German troops occupying the heavily fortified French coast were unprepared. They had been tricked by the Allies into thinking that the Allies would attack France in a different location. Although the Allies met heavy resistance, the invasion went almost exactly according to plan. As a result of the operation's success, American and British forces were able to maintain a permanent beachhead in mainland Europe to resupply their forces and push east to Germany. The geographic advantage gained by the invasion marked the beginning of victory for the Allies in Europe. The Battle of Berlin was one of the final battles of the European Theater during World War II. Two Soviet army groups attacked Berlin from the east and south, while a third attacked German forces north of Berlin. The Soviets lost 81,116 men taking the city, while the Germans lost 458,080 trying to defend it. The battle was one of the bloodiest in history. Adolf Hitler was in Berlin during the battle and before it ended with Soviet occupation, he and many of his followers committed suicide. The city's defenders surrendered on May 2, 1945, but fighting continued outside the city until the formal German surrender, known as V-E Day, ended the war on May 8, 1945.

Define

European Theatre

D-Day

Fall of Berlin

- 1. What were the difficulties the U.S. faced in delivering weapons, food, and medical supplies to troops?**
- 2. Where was D-Day?**
- 3. How did D-Day impact WWII?**
- 4. How did the Fall of Berlin impact WWII?**
- 5. What is V-E Day?**