IMPORTANT WARS

Napoleonic Wars, series of wars fought between France and a number of European nations from 1799 to 1815. In 1799 France came under the domination of Napoleon Bonaparte, who later became Napoleon I, emperor of France, in 1804. The Napoleonic Wars were a continuation of the wars of the French Revolution (1789-1799), in which the Habsburgs and other dynastic rulers of Europe combined in an effort to overthrow the revolutionary government of France and restore the rule of the French monarchy.

First Coalition

In the War of the First Coalition (1793-1797), France fought against an alliance consisting of Austria, Prussia, Great Britain, Spain, the Netherlands, and the Kingdom of Sardinia. In 1796 Napoleon was entrusted by the government of France, the Directory, with conducting military operations against Austrian forces in northern Italy. In less than a year, Napoleon had led his troops to victory over the larger Austrian army. In 1798, he was made the leader of an expedition to conquer Egypt as a base for future attack against the British possession of India. The invasion was ultimately unsuccessful, and Napoleon returned to France. Although the two campaigns took place before Napoleon's government, the Consulate, was established, they are generally regarded as the opening phases of the Napoleonic Wars. The campaigns were the first in which Napoleon displayed on a large scale his genius as a commander; early battles of the War of the Second Coalition are also included in this category.

Second Coalition

Napoleon's success against Austria in his northern Italian campaign had put an end to the First Coalition. During his absence in Egypt, however, a new alliance known as the Second Coalition was formed on December 24, 1798. The alliance was composed of Russia, Great Britain, Austria, the kingdom of Naples (*see* Sicily: *History*), Portugal, and the Ottoman Empire. The principal fighting of the War of the Second Coalition, which broke out at the end of 1798, took place during the following year in northern Italy and in Switzerland. The Austrians and Russians, under the leadership chiefly of the noted Russian general Count Aleksandr Suvorov, were uniformly successful against the French in northern Italy. They defeated the French in the battles of Magnano (April 5, 1799), Cassano (April 27), the Trebbia (June 17-19), and Novi (August 15). The coalition also captured Milan; put an end to the Cisalpine Republic, which had been formed under French auspices in 1797; occupied Turin; and in general deprived the French of their previous victories in Italy. In Switzerland, matters went better for the French. After a defeat at Zьrich (June 4-7) by Charles Louis John, archduke of Austria, French forces under General Andrй Massйna defeated a Russian army under General Alexander Korsakov on September 26. The victorious Suvorov led his forces from northern Italy across the Alps to join those of Korsakov in Switzerland. He found Korsakov's forces already defeated and scattered; Suvorov was forced by the French to take refuge in the mountains of the canton of Grisons, where, during the early fall, his

army was practically destroyed by cold and starvation. On October 22, alleging lack of cooperation by the Austrians, the Russians withdrew from the Second Coalition.

After Napoleon returned to France from Egypt in October 1799, he became leader of the Consulate and offered to make peace with the allies. The Coalition refused, and Napoleon planned a series of moves against Austria, and various German states in alliance with Austria, for the spring of 1800. Napoleon crossed the Alps into northern Italy with a newly raised army of 40,000 men and on June 14 defeated the Austrians in the Battle of Marengo. In the meantime French forces under General Jean Victor Moreau had crossed the Rhine into southern Germany and taken Munich. Moreau had also defeated the Austrians under Archduke John of Austria in the Battle of Hohenlinden in Bavaria on December 3, and had advanced to the city of Linz, Austria. These and other French successes caused Austria to capitulate. On February 9, 1801, by the Treaty of Lunйville, Austria and its German allies ceded the left bank of the Rhine River to France, recognized the Batavian, Helvetian, Cisalpine, and Ligurian republics, and made other concessions. The Treaty of Lunйville also marked the breakup of the Second Coalition. The only allied nation that continued fighting was Great Britain. British troops had unsuccessfully engaged the French on Dutch soil in 1799, but had made some territorial gains at the expense of France in Asia and elsewhere. On March 27, 1802, Great Britain made peace with France through the Treaty of Amiens.

This peace, however, turned out to be a mere truce. In 1803 a dispute arose between the two nations because of the treaty provision that Great Britain return the island of Malta to its original possessors, the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem. The people of Malta preferred the British crown, and the British did not surrender the island, so war again broke out between Great Britain and France. An important consequence of this war was Napoleon's abandonment, because of the need to concentrate his resources in Europe, of his plan to establish a great French colonial empire in the region known as Louisiana in North America. Instead, he sold Louisiana to the United States. In 1805 Great Britain was joined in its new war by Austria, Russia, and Sweden, and Spain allied itself to France. The ensuing war is known as the War of the Third Coalition.

Third Coalition

Napoleon quickly moved against the new alliance. Since 1798 he had exerted pressure on Great Britain by keeping an army concentrated at Boulogne on the English Channel, ostensibly preparing to invade England. During the dissensions leading to the outbreak of war in 1803, Napoleon had greatly increased the French forces at Boulogne. After the formation of the Third Coalition against France, he moved his troops from Boulogne to meet the Austrians, who, under Ferdinand III, grand duke of Tuscany, and General Karl Mack von Leiberich, had invaded Bavaria. A number of German states, including Bavaria, Wьrttemberg, and Baden, allied themselves with France. Napoleon defeated the Austrians at Ulm, taking 23,000 prisoners, and then marched his troops along the Danube River and captured Vienna. Russian armies under General Mikhail Illarionovich Kutuzov and Alexander I, emperor of Russia, reinforced the Austrians, but Napoleon crushed the combined Austro-Russian forces in the Battle of Austerlitz, sometimes known as the Battle of the Three Emperors. Austria again capitulated, signing the Treaty of Pressburg on December 26, 1805. Among the terms of this treaty

was the concession by Austria to France of territory in northern Italy and to Bavaria of territory in Austria itself; in addition, Austria recognized the duchies of Wьrttemberg and Baden as kingdoms.

Confederation of the Rhine

In Italy, where French forces under Massйna had defeated the Austrians under Charles Louis John, Napoleon made his elder brother, Joseph Bonaparte, king of Naples in 1806. Elsewhere in Europe, he made his third brother, Louis Bonaparte, king of Holland (the former Batavian Republic); and on July 12 he established the Confederation of the Rhine, which eventually consisted of all the states of Germany except Austria, Prussia, Brunswick, and Hessen. The formation of the Confederation put an end to the Holy Roman Empire and brought most of Germany under Napoleon's control. His continental successes, however, were largely offset by the victory on October 21, 1805, off Cape Trafalgar, of the British under Admiral Horatio Nelson over the combined fleets of France and Spain. This victory gave Great Britain mastery of the sea throughout the remainder of the Napoleonic era. In 1806 economic warfare between Great Britain and France was initiated. Napoleon formulated his so-called Continental System, issuing decrees, in 1806 and later, forbidding British trade with all European nations. Great Britain retaliated with the Orders of Council, which in effect prohibited neutrals from trading between the ports of any nations obeying Napoleon's decrees. British mastery of the sea made it difficult for Napoleon to enforce the Continental System and resulted eventually in the failure of his economic policy for Europe.

Fourth Coalition

Before the effect of British sea power could be manifest, however, Napoleon increased his power over the Continent. In 1806 Prussia, aroused by Napoleon's growing strength in Germany, joined in a Fourth Coalition with Great Britain, Russia, and Sweden. Napoleon badly defeated the Prussians in the Battle of Jena on October 14, 1806, and captured Berlin. He then defeated the Russians in the Battle of Friedland and forced Alexander I to make peace. By the principal terms of the Treaty of Tilsit, Russia gave up its Polish possessions and became an ally of France, and Prussia was reduced to the status of a third-rate power, deprived of almost half its territory and crippled by heavy indemnity payments and severe restrictions on the size of its standing army. Through military action against Sweden on the part of Russia and Denmark, Gustav IV Adolph of Sweden was forced to abdicate in favor of his uncle, Charles XIII, on the condition that the latter name as his heir General Jean Baptiste Jules Bernadotte, one of Napoleon's marshals. Bernadotte became king in 1818, as Charles XIV John, founding the present royal line.

Anti-Napoleonic Nationalism

In 1808 Napoleon was master of all Europe except Russia and Great Britain, but from this time on his power began to decline. The chief reasons for this decline were the rise of a nationalistic spirit in the various defeated nations of Europe and the persistent opposition of Great Britain, which, safe from invasion because of its superior navy, never ceased to organize and subsidize new coalitions against Napoleon.

In Spain, Napoleon first encountered the nationalistic spirit that led to his downfall. In 1808, after dethroning King Charles IV of Spain, Napoleon made his brother Joseph Bonaparte king of the country. The Spanish revolted and drove Joseph out of Madrid. A violent struggle known as the Peninsular War (1808-1814) then took place between the French, intent on restoring Joseph as king, and the Spaniards, aided by British forces under Arthur Wellesley, 1st duke of Wellington. The French were eventually defeated, suffering losses in manpower that severely handicapped Napoleon when he was later forced to meet new enemies in the east and north of Europe. The first of these new enemies was Austria, which, inflamed by patriotic feeling, entered the Fifth Coalition, with Great Britain, in 1809. Napoleon defeated the Austrians at Wagram (July 1809), and inflicted on them the Treaty of Vienna, by which Austria lost Salzburg, part of Galicia, and a large part of its southern European territory. He also divorced his first wife and married the daughter of Francis II of Austria in the vain hope of keeping Austria out of further coalitions against him.

Defeat of Napoleon

The turning point of Napoleon's career came in 1812, when war again broke out between France and Russia because of Alexander's refusal to enforce the Continental System. With one large army already tied down by the “Spanish ulcer,” Napoleon invaded Russia with an army of 500,000. He defeated the Russians at Borodino and took Moscow on September 14, 1812. The Russians burned the city, making it impossible for Napoleon's troops to establish winter quarters there. The French retreated across Russia into Germany, suffering the loss of most of their men through cold, starvation, and Russian guerrilla attacks. Russia then joined the Fifth Coalition, which also included Prussia, Great Britain, and Sweden. In 1813, in a burst of patriotic fervor caused by the political and economic reforms that had taken place since its defeat at Jena, Prussia opened the War of Liberation against Napoleon. He defeated the Prussians at Lьtzen and Bautzen and achieved his last important victory at the Battle of Dresden, where on August 27, 1813, a French force of about 100,000 defeated a combined Austrian, Prussian, and Russian force of about 150,000. The following October, however, Napoleon was forced by the Battle of Leipzig to retreat across the Rhine, thus freeing Germany. The following year the Russians, Austrians, and Prussians invaded France from the north. In March 1814 they took Paris, whereupon Napoleon abdicated and was sent into exile on the island of Elba in the Mediterranean Sea.

The members of the Fifth Coalition assembled at the Congress of Vienna to restore in Europe the monarchies Napoleon had overthrown. During their deliberations Napoleon escaped from Elba to France, quickly raised an army, and marched into Belgium to meet the forces of Great Britain, Prussia, Russia, and Austria. He defeated his enemies at Ligny, but was defeated by them at Quatre-Bras. Napoleon met final defeat on June 18, 1815, at the Battle of Waterloo, which marked the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

Conclusion

Initially the Napoleonic Wars perpetuated the ideological conflict between revolutionary France and monarchical Europe. At some point, however, the elusive

ambitions of Napoleon himself became their principal and consistent cause. The wars, moreover, bore Napoleon's personal stamp because he personally determined strategy and commanded the French armies. His ever-broadening diplomatic ambitions were matched by his military strategy, a bold style of taking calculated risks. This style in turn reflected the strength of the French army; its tactics, organization, equipment, and morale had all improved during the French Revolution, and it was led by talented field generals who had risen from the ranks. Napoleon's genius as a commander was his ability to move rapidly, thus gaining an important element of surprise over his opponents. His major failings were matters of attitude rather than technique. In general he underestimated his enemies, perhaps because of his early one-sided victories. In Spain and Russia he was further hampered by his insensitivity to national spirit and by his belief that seizure of a capital city such as Madrid or Moscow would lead his opponent to capitulate. Most important in its impact on the nature and frequency of these wars was Napoleon's utter disregard for the cost of his campaigns in bloodshed and lives.

Russo-Turkish Wars, series of conflicts between the Russian and Ottoman Turkish empires during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, in the course of which Russia gained control of the northern shore of the Black Sea and extended its influence into the Balkans.

The first direct confrontation came in the war between 1677 and 1681, in which Russia acquired control over the Ukraine east of the Dnieper River. Czar Peter the Great, who assumed power in 1689, soon resumed the struggle against the Ottomans, and in two campaigns in 1695 and 1696 he captured the fortress of Azov. In 1710, Peter again went to war with Turkey as a result of the latter's support of Sweden during the Great Northern War (1700-1721), but a Russian campaign in Moldavia ended in disaster, and the Turks recovered Azov in the Treaty of the Pruth (1711). Russia fought another war against Turkey between 1736 and 1739 in alliance with Austria. In the Treaty of Belgrade (1739), Azov was ceded to Russia along with a section of the Black Sea steppe between the Donets and Bug rivers, but the Russians had to raze the fortifications at Azov and were not permitted to have any ships on the Black Sea.

Russian Gains, 1768-1812

Russia made dramatic gains during the reign of Catherine the Great. In the first war (1768-1774), Russian armies won major victories in Moldavia, Walachia, and Crimea, and a Russian fleet sailed from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, where it destroyed the Ottoman fleet at Chesme in June 1770. The Treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji (1774) gave Russia additional portions of the Black Sea steppe and the right to free navigation on the Black Sea, and Turkey guaranteed the rights of its Christian subjects. In 1783 Catherine annexed Crimea. Turkey declared war in 1787 but was again defeated and forced, in the Treaty of Jassy (1792), to cede Ochakov and the Black Sea coast between the Bug and the Dniester. Another war between 1806 and 1812 resulted in Russian

annexation of Bessarabiya. With that, Russia controlled the entire northern coast of the Black Sea between the Prut and Kuban' rivers.

The Intervention of the European Powers

In the ensuing period, the Russians sought political influence in the Balkans and control of the straits (between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean). Their gains were limited, however, by increasing opposition on the part of other European powers, notably the countries of Great Britain and Austria.

The crisis engendered by the Greek struggle for independence ultimately drew Russia into war with Turkey (1828-1829). After a slow start, Russian forces crossed the Balkan Mountains in 1829, captured Adrianople (now Edirne), and were advancing on Constantinople (present-day Istanbul), when the Turks sued for peace. The Treaty of Adrianople (1829) granted Russia territory at the mouth of the Danube and in the Caucasus and a virtual protectorate over an autonomous Moldavia and Walachia; autonomy for Greece and to a lesser extent Serbia was also guaranteed. Three years later, a Russian force occupied the Dardanelles Strait to protect the Ottoman sultan against the forces of Muhammad Ali of Egypt. The resulting Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi (1833) was an important step toward establishing a Russian protectorate over the Ottoman Empire as a whole. The European powers managed to substitute a general European guarantee in the Straits Convention of 1841, but by 1852 Czar Nicholas I felt strong enough to attempt a further extension of Russian influence. His miscalculation led to the Crimean War (1853-1856), pitting Russia against a coalition of Britain, France, Sardinia, and Turkey and resulting in a major setback for Russia's expansion to the West. By the Treaty of Paris, it lost the mouth of the Danube and its protectorate over Moldavia and Walachia and was forbidden to maintain a navy on the Black Sea (Crimean War). In 1870, however, Russia unilaterally revoked the demilitarization clause.

The War of 1877-1878

In 1875 and 1876 a general uprising of Balkan peoples against the Ottoman Turkish empire aroused widespread sympathy in Russia. Czar Alexander II at first resisted involvement, fearing unfavorable European reaction, but he declared war on Turkey in January 1877 after diplomatic efforts to end the crisis failed. The campaign in the Caucasus advanced smoothly and that in the Balkans proved unexpectedly bloody and difficult, but by January 1878 Russian forces were advancing on Constantinople. The Treaty of San Stefano (1878) granted Russia considerable territory in the Caucasus, Dobruja (or Dobrogea), and the Danube delta; decreed the independence of Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro; and established a large autonomous Bulgarian principality. Britain and Austria-Hungary were opposed to this expansion of Russian influence, and a congress of the European powers meeting in Berlin in June 1878 revised the San Stefano agreement, primarily by reducing the Bulgarian principality and by limiting the Russian role there.

Russia fought no more wars with Turkey until 1914, presumably sensing that it was too weak to gain control of the straits in the face of European opposition. In World War I it won the approval of Britain and France for the ultimate annexation of Constantinople

and the straits after the war, but military defeat and revolution rendered these hopes vain.

Warsaw Pact (formally the Warsaw Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance), military alliance of seven European Communist nations, enacted to counter the rearmament of West Germany, officially called the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), and its admission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The treaty was signed in Warsaw, Poland, on May 14, 1955, by Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic and Slovakia), East Germany (now part of the united Federal Republic of Germany), Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The alliance was dominated by the USSR, which kept strict control over the other countries in the pact. In 1961 Albania broke off diplomatic relations with the USSR because of ideological differences and in 1968 withdrew from the pact.

From the mid-1950s through the 1980s, two major bodies carried out the functions of the Warsaw Pact: the Political Consultative Committee and the Unified Command of Pact Armed Forces, both headquartered in Moscow. Under the terms of the treaty, the Political Consultative Committee coordinated all activities, except those purely military, and the Unified Command of Pact Armed Forces had authority over the troops assigned to it by member states. It was agreed that the supreme commander would be from the USSR. The Warsaw Pact's only military action was directed against Czechoslovakia, a member state. (In the autumn of 1956, the USSR took unilateral military action against Hungary, another Warsaw Pact member state, killing thousands of Hungarians and causing 200,000 to flee the country.) In August 1968, after the Czech government enacted reforms offensive to the USSR, forces of the USSR, Poland, Hungary, East Germany, and Bulgaria invaded Czechoslovakia and forced a return to a Soviet-style system. Romania opposed the invasion and did not participate, but remained a member.

Although the Warsaw Pact was officially renewed in 1985 for another 20 years, the political transformation of Eastern Europe at the end of the 1980s profoundly weakened the organization. The USSR began withdrawing its troops from other Warsaw Pact countries, and East Germany pulled out to join West Germany as the reunified nation of Germany in October 1990. All joint military functions ceased at the end of March 1991, and in July leaders of the remaining six member nations agreed to dissolve the alliance.

World War I, military conflict, from 1914 to 1918, that began as a local European war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia on July 28, 1914; was transformed into a general European struggle by declaration of war against Russia on August 1, 1914; and eventually became a global war involving 32 nations. Twenty-eight of these nations, known as the Allies and the Associated Powers, and including Great Britain, France, Russia, Italy, and the United States, opposed the coalition known as the Central Powers, consisting of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria. The immediate cause of the war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia was the assassination on June 28, 1914, at Sarajevo in Bosnia (then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire; now in Bosnia and Herzegovina), of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir-presumptive to the Austrian and Hungarian thrones, by Gavrilo Princip, a Serb nationalist. The fundamental causes of the conflict, however, were rooted deeply in the European history of the previous century, particularly in the political and economic policies that prevailed on the Continent after 1871, the year that marked the emergence of Germany as a great world power.

Causes of the War

The underlying causes of World War I were the spirit of intense nationalism that permeated Europe throughout the 19th and into the 20th century, the political and economic rivalry among the nations, and the establishment and maintenance in Europe after 1871 of large armaments and of two hostile military alliances.

Nationalism

The French Revolution and the Napoleonic era had spread throughout most of Europe the idea of political democracy, with the resulting idea that people of the same ethnic origin, language, and political ideals had the right to independent states. The principle of national self-determination, however, was largely ignored by the dynastic and reactionary forces that dominated in the settlement of European affairs at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Several peoples who desired national autonomy were made subject to local dynasts or to other nations. Notable examples were the German people, whom the Congress of Vienna left divided into numerous duchies, principalities, and kingdoms; Italy, also left divided into many parts, some of which were under foreign control; and the Flemish- and French-speaking Belgians of the Austrian Netherlands, whom the congress placed under Dutch rule. Revolutions and strong nationalistic movements during the 19th century succeeded in nullifying much of the reactionary and antinationalist work of the congress. Belgium won its independence from the Netherlands in 1830, the unification of Italy was accomplished in 1861, and that of Germany in 1871. At the close of the century, however, the problem of nationalism was still unresolved in other areas of Europe, resulting in tensions both within the regions involved and between various European nations. One particularly prominent nationalistic movement, Panslavism, figured heavily in the events preceding the war.

Imperialism

The spirit of nationalism was also manifest in economic conflict. The Industrial Revolution, which took place in Great Britain at the end of the 18th century, followed in France in the early 19th century, and then in Germany after 1870, caused an immense increase in the manufactures of each country and a consequent need for foreign markets. The principal field for the European policies of economic expansion was Africa, and on that continent colonial interests frequently clashed. Several times between 1898 and 1914 the economic rivalry in Africa between France and Great Britain, and between Germany on one side and France and Great Britain on the other, almost precipitated a European war.

Military Expansion

As a result of such tensions, between 1871 and 1914 the nations of Europe adopted domestic measures and foreign policies that in turn steadily increased the danger of war. Convinced that their interests were threatened, they maintained large standing armies, which they constantly replenished and augmented by peacetime conscription. At the same time, they increased the size of their navies. The naval expansion was intensely competitive. Great Britain, influenced by the expansion of the German navy begun in 1900 and by the events of the Russo-Japanese War, developed its fleet under the direction of Admiral Sir John Fisher. The war between Russia and Japan had proved the efficacy of long-range naval guns, and the British accordingly developed the widely copied dreadnought battleship, notable for its heavy armament. Developments in other areas of military technology and organization led to the dominance of general staffs with precisely formulated plans for mobilization and attack, often in situations that could not be reversed once begun.

Statesmen everywhere realized that the tremendous and ever-growing expenditures for armament would in time lead either to national bankruptcy or to war, and they made several efforts for worldwide disarmament, notably at the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907. International rivalry was, however, too far advanced to permit any progress toward disarmament at these conferences.

The European nations not only armed themselves for purposes of “self-defense,” but also, in order not to find themselves standing alone if war did break out, sought alliances with other powers. The result was a phenomenon that in itself greatly increased the chances for generalized war: the grouping of the great European powers into two hostile military alliances, the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy and the Triple Entente of Great Britain, France, and Russia. Shifts within these alliances added to the building sense of crisis.

Crises Foreshadowing the War

(1905-14). With Europe divided into two hostile camps, any disturbance of the existing political or military situation in Europe, Africa, or elsewhere provoked an international incident. Between 1905 and 1914 several international crises and two local wars occurred, all of which threatened to bring about a general European War. The first crisis occurred over Morocco, where Germany intervened in 1905-06 to support Moroccan independence against French encroachment. France threatened war against Germany, but the crisis was finally settled by an international conference at Algeciras,

Spain, in 1906. Another crisis took place in the Balkans in 1908 over the annexation by Austria-Hungary of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Because one form of Panslavism was a Pan-Serbian or Greater Serbia movement in Serbia, which had as one of its objects the acquisition by Serbia of the southern part of Bosnia, the Serbs threatened war against Austria. War was avoided only because Serbia could not fight without Russian support, and Russia at the time was unprepared for war. A third crisis, again in Morocco, occurred in 1911 when the German government sent a warship to Agadir in protest against French efforts to secure supremacy in Morocco. After threats of war on both sides, the matter was adjusted by a conference at Agadir. Taking advantage of the preoccupation of the Great Powers with the Moroccan question, Italy declared war on Turkey in 1911, hoping to annex the Tripoli region of northern Africa. Because Germany's policy of *Drang nach Osten* (“drive toward the East”) obliged it to cultivate friendship with Turkey, the Italian attack had the effect of weakening the triple alliance and encouraging its enemies. The Balkan Wars of 1912-13 resulted in an increased desire on the part of Serbia to obtain the parts of Austria-Hungary inhabited by Slavic peoples, strengthened Austro-Hungarian suspicion of Serbia, and left Bulgaria and Turkey, both defeated in the wars, with a desire for revenge. Germany, disappointed because Turkey had been deprived of its European territory by the Balkan Wars, increased the size of its army. France responded by increasing peacetime military service from two to three years. Following the example of these nations, all the others of Europe in 1913 and 1914 spent huge sums for military preparedness.

Military Operations

On a Europe thus heavily armed and torn by national rivalries, the assassination of the Austrian archduke had a catastrophic effect.

Diplomatic Moves

The Austro-Hungarian government, considering the assassination the work of the Greater Serbian movement, concluded that the movement must be suppressed by a military expedition into Serbia. Otherwise it might become powerful enough, particularly if aided by similar movements elsewhere, to cause the disruption of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. On July 23 Austria-Hungary sent an ultimatum to Serbia submitting ten specific demands, most of which had to do with the suppression, with Austrian help, of anti-Austrian propaganda in Serbia. Urged by both Great Britain and Russia, Serbia on July 25 accepted all but two of the demands, but Austria declared the Serbian reply to be unsatisfactory. The Russians then attempted to persuade Austria to modify the terms of the ultimatum, declaring that if Austria marched on Serbia, Russia would mobilize against Austria. A proposal, on July 26, by the British foreign minister, Sir Edward Grey, Viscount Grey of Fallodon, that a conference of Great Britain, France, Germany, and Italy settle the Austro-Serbian dispute, was rejected by Germany.

Declarations of War

On July 28 Austria declared war against Serbia, either because it felt Russia would not actually fight for Serbia, or because it was prepared to risk a general European conflict in order to put an end to the Greater Serbia movement. Russia responded by partially mobilizing against Austria. Germany warned Russia that continued mobilization would

entail war with Germany, and it made Austria agree to discuss with Russia possible modification of the ultimatum to Serbia. Germany insisted, however, that Russia immediately demobilize. Russia declined to do so, and on August 1 Germany declared war on Russia.

The French began to mobilize on the same day; on August 2 German troops traversed Luxembourg and on August 3 Germany declared war on France. On August 2 the German government informed the government of Belgium of its intention to march on France through Belgium in order, as it claimed, to forestall an attack on Germany by French troops marching through Belgium. The Belgian government refused to permit the passage of German troops and called on the signatories of the Treaty of 1839, which guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium in case of a conflict in which Great Britain, France, and Germany were involved, to observe their guarantee. Great Britain, one of the signatories, on August 4 sent an ultimatum to Germany demanding that Belgian neutrality be respected; when Germany refused, Britain declared war on it the same day. Italy remained neutral until May 23, 1915, when, to satisfy its claims against Austria, it broke with the Triple Alliance and declared war on Austria-Hungary. In September 1914 Allied unity was made stronger by the Pact of London, signed by France, Great Britain, and Russia. As the war progressed, other countries, including Turkey, Japan, the U.S., and other nations of the western hemisphere, were drawn into the conflict. Japan, which had made an alliance with Great Britain in 1902, declared war on Germany on August 23, 1914. The United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917.

For dates on which all the nations involved in the war either issued a declaration of war or broke diplomatic relations, see the table The Nations Involved in World War I. For details of the causes and events that brought the U.S. into the war, *see* United States of America: *World War I*.

1914-15: Entrenchment

Military operations began on three major European fronts: the western, or Franco-Belgian; the eastern, or Russian; and the southern, or Serbian. In November 1914 Turkey entered the war on the side of the Central Powers, and fighting also took place between Turkey and Great Britain at the Dardanelles and in Turkish-held Mesopotamia. In late 1915 two more fronts had been established: the Austro-Italian, after Italy joined the Allies in May 1915; and one on the Greek border north of Salonika (Thessalonнki), after Bulgaria joined the Central Powers in October 1915.

The Western Front

The initial German plan of the campaign was to defeat France quickly in the west, while a small part of the German army and the entire Austro-Hungarian army held in check an expected Russian invasion in the east. The speedy defeat of France was to be accomplished by a strategic plan known as the Schlieffen plan, which had been drawn up by Count Alfred von Schlieffen, German chief of staff from 1891 to 1907. The Schlieffen plan called for powerful German forces to sweep through Belgium, outflank

the French by their rapid movement, then wheel about, surround, and destroy them. As executed with certain modifications in the fall of 1914, the plan at first seemed likely to succeed. The swift German incursion into Belgium at the beginning of August routed the Belgian army, which abandoned the strongholds of Liиge and Namur and took safety in the fortress of Antwerp. The Germans, rushing onward, then defeated the French at Charleroi and the British Expeditionary Force of 90,000 men at Mons, causing the entire Allied line in Belgium to retreat. At the same time the Germans drove the French out of Lorraine, which they had briefly invaded, and back from the borders of Luxembourg. The British and French hastily fell back to the Marne River, but three German armies advanced steadily to the Marne, which they then crossed. The fall of the French capital seemed so imminent that the French government moved to Bordeaux. After the Germans had crossed the Marne, however, the French under General Joseph Jacques Cйsaire Joffre wheeled around Paris and attacked the First German army, commanded by General Alexander von Kluck, on the right of the three German armies moving on Paris.

In the First Battle of the Marne, which took place on September 6-9, the French halted the advance of Kluck's army, which had outdistanced the other two German armies and could not obtain their support. In addition, the German forces had been weakened on August 25 when, believing the victory had already been won in the west, the German chief of staff, General Helmuth von Moltke, dispatched six corps to the eastern front. The French pressure on the German right flank caused the retreat of Kluck's army and then a general retreat of all the German forces to the Aisne River. The French advanced and, in an endeavor to force the Germans from the Aisne, engaged them in three battles: the Battle of the Aisne; a battle on the Somme River; and the First Battle of Arras. The Germans, however, could not be dislodged, and even extended their line eastward to the Meuse north of Verdun. A race to the North Sea ensued between the two belligerents, the objective being the channel ports. The Germans were prevented from advancing to the French channel ports chiefly by the flooding of the region of the Yser River by the Belgians. The western part of the Allied line was held by the British who, in the race for the channel, had advanced to Ieper, the southwest corner of Belgium. After taking Antwerp on October 10, the Germans endeavored to break through the British positions in Belgium, but were checked in a series of engagements known collectively as the Battle of Flanders. In December the Allies attacked along the entire front, from Nieuport in the west to Verdun in the east, but failed to make any appreciable gains.

By the end of 1914 both sides had established lines extending about 800 km (about 500 mi) from Switzerland to the North Sea and had entrenched; these lines were destined to remain almost stationary for the next three years.

The Battle of Flanders marked the conclusion of the war of movement or fighting in the open on the western front. From the end of 1914 until nearly the end of the war in 1918, the fighting consisted largely of trench warfare, in which each side laid siege to the other's system of trenches, consisting of numerous parallel lines of intercommunicating trenches protected by lines of barbed wire, and endeavored from time to time to break through the lines. In this type of fighting during 1915 in the west, the Allies were on the offensive; the Germans, who were engaged in a heavy offensive on the eastern front

(see below), made only a single attack in the west during the year. The principal attempts in 1915 to force a breakthrough included a British attack at Neuve Chapelle in March, which took only the German advance line. The Germans unsuccessfully attacked Ieper in April, using clouds of chlorine gas, the first time in history that gas was used in this manner on a large scale. A combined attack by the British and French along the front between Neuve Chapelle and Arras, in May and June, advanced troops 4 km (2.5 mi) into the German trench system, but did not secure a breakthrough. Unsuccessful simultaneous attacks were made in September by the British in the town of Lens and French at Vimy Ridge overlooking the town. A large-scale French attack in September on a front of about 25 km (about 15 mi) between Reims and the Argonne Forest, took the Germans' first line of trenches, but was stopped at the second. On the whole the lines that had been established in the west at the close of 1914 remained practically unchanged during 1915.

The Eastern Front

On the eastern front, in accordance with the plans of the Allies, the Russians assumed the offensive at the very beginning of the war. In August 1914 two Russian armies advanced into East Prussia, and four Russian armies invaded the Austrian province of Galicia. In East Prussia a series of Russian victories against numerically inferior German forces had made the evacuation of that region by the Germans imminent, when a reinforced German army commanded by General Paul von Hindenburg decisively defeated the Russians in the Battle of Tannenberg, fought on August 26-30, 1914. The four Russian armies invading Austria advanced steadily through Galicia; they took PrzemyЯl and Bukovina, and by the end of March 1915 were in a position to move into Hungary. In April, however, a combined German and Austrian army drove the Russians back from the Carpathians. In May the Austro-German armies began a great offensive in central Poland, and by September 1915 had driven the Russians out of Poland, Lithuania, and Courland, and had also taken possession of all the frontier fortresses of Russia. To meet this offensive the Russians withdrew their forces from Galicia. The Russian lines, when the German drive had ceased, lay behind the Dvina River between Rмga and Dvinsk (Daugavpils), and then ran south to the Dniester River. Although the Central Powers did not force a decision on the eastern front in 1914-15, the Russians lost so many men and such large quantities of supplies that they were subsequently unable to play any decisive role in the war. In addition to the Battle of Tannenberg, notable battles on this front during 1914-15 were the First Battle of the Masurian Lakes (September 7-14, 1914), and the Second Battle of the Masurian Lakes (February 7-21, 1915), both German victories.

The War in Serbia

On the Serbian front considerable activity took place in 1914-15. In 1914 the Austrians undertook three invasions of Serbia, all of which were repulsed; the Serbs, however, made no attempt to invade Austria-Hungary. The front remained inactive until October 1915. Early that month, in anticipation of Bulgarian entrance into the war on the side of the Central Powers, and in order to aid Serbia, which would be the target of a Bulgarian attack, British and French troops were landed at Salonika, the gateway into the Balkans,

by arrangement with the neutral Greek government. After Bulgaria declared war on Serbia on October 14, 1915, the Allied troops advanced into Serbia. The Bulgarian troops defeated Serbian forces in Serbia and also the British and French troops that had come up from Salonika. Also in anticipation of the Bulgarian declaration of war, on October 6 a strong Austro-German drive, commanded by General August von Mackensen, was launched from Austria-Hungary into Serbia. By the end of 1915 the Central Powers had conquered all of Serbia and eliminated the Serbian army as a fighting force. The surviving Serbian troops took refuge in Montenegro, Albania, and the Greek island of Corfu (Kĭrkira), which the French occupied in January 1916 in order to provide a place of safety for the routed Serbians. The British and French troops in Serbia retreated to Salonika, which they fortified and where they were held in readiness for later action.

The Turkish Front

Turkey entered the war on October 29, 1914, when Turkish warships cooperated with German warships in a naval bombardment of Russian Black Sea ports; Russia formally declared war on Turkey on November 2, and Great Britain and France followed suit on November 5. In December the Turks began an invasion of the Russian Caucasus region. The invasion was successful at its inception, but by August 1915 the hold that Turkish forces had gained had been considerably reduced. Turkish pressure in the area, however, impelled the Russian government early in 1915 to demand a diversionary attack by Great Britain on Turkey. In response, British naval forces under the command of General Sir Ian Hamilton bombarded the Turkish forts at the Dardanelles in February 1915, and between April and August, two landings of Allied troops took place on the Gallipoli Peninsula, one of British, Australian, and French troops in April, and one of several additional British divisions in August. The Allied purpose was to take the Dardanelles; however, strong resistance by Turkish troops and bad generalship on the part of the Allied command resulted in complete failure. The Allied troops were withdrawn in December 1915 and January 1916 (*see* Gallipoli Campaign).

In the Mesopotamian Valley, meanwhile, British forces from India defeated the Turks in several battles during 1914-15, particularly that of Al Kuut; but in the Battle of Ctesiphon, November 1915, the Turks checked the advance of the British toward Baghdad and forced them to retreat to Al Kuut. On December 7 the Turks laid siege to this town.

The Italian Front

Italy declared war on Austria-Hungary on May 23, 1915. The chief military events on the Austro-Italian Front in 1915 were four indecisive battles between Austro-Hungarian and Italian armies on the Isonzo River (June 29-July 7, July 18-August 10, October 18-November 3, and November 10-December 10). The purpose of the Italian attack was to break through the Austrian lines and capture Trieste.

1916: Continued Stalemate

German success in 1915 in thrusting the Russians back from East Prussia, Galicia, and Poland enabled Germany to transfer some 500,000 men from the eastern to the western front for an attempt to force a decision in the west during 1916.

Verdun and Somme

The German plan, as worked out by Erich von Falkenhayn, chief of the general staff of the German army, was to attack the French fortress at Verdun in great strength in an effort to weaken the French irretrievably by causing the maximum possible number of casualties. The Allied plan for 1916, as laid out by commanders in chief, Marshal Joffre of the French army and General Sir Douglas Haig of the British, was to attempt to break through the German lines in the west by a massive offensive during the summer in the region of the Somme River. The Germans began the attack on Verdun, on February 21 (*see* Verdun, Battle of). After bitter fighting the Germans took Fort Douaumont (February 25), Fort Vaux (June 2), and the fortifications of Thiaumont (June 23), but did not succeed in capturing Verdun. (It was here that General Henri Philippe Pйtain gained prominence as the “hero of Verdun.”) Because of the severe losses in the battle, the French were able to contribute to the Allied offensive on the Somme only 16 divisions of the 40 originally planned; the offensive, which began on July 1 and continued until the middle of November, consequently was largely in the hands of the British. They succeeded in winning about 325 sq km (about 125 sq mi) of territory, but the drive did not bring about a breakthrough. The First Battle of the Somme marked the earliest use of the modern tank, deployed by the British on September 15 in an attack near Courcelette. From October to December the French staged a counterattack at Verdun and succeeded in recapturing Forts Douaumont and Vaux (November 2), restoring the situation that had prevailed before February. In August Hindenburg replaced Falkenhayn as German chief of staff with General Erich Ludendorff. In December General Robert Georges Nivelle succeeded Joffre as commander in chief of the French armies in the north and northeast.

Russian Losses—Romanian Defeat

On the eastern front in 1916 the Russians staged an offensive in the Lake Narocz region about 95 km (about 60 mi) northeast of Vilna. Their attack, designed to force the Germans to move troops from Verdun to the Lake Narocz region, was a complete failure. Not only did it fail to divert the Germans in any degree from their attack on Verdun, but also the Russians lost more than 100,000 men. In June the Russians carried out a more successful offensive. In response to an Italian request for action to relieve the pressure of an Austrian offensive in the Trentino (see below), the Russians moved against the Austrians on a front extending from Pinsk south to Czernowitz. By September, when strong German reinforcements from the western front stopped the Russian advance, the Russians had driven some 65 km (40 mi) into the Austro-German position along the entire front and had taken about 500,000 prisoners. They did not succeed, however, in capturing either of their objectives, the cities of Kovel’ and Lemberg; and their losses of approximately 1 million men left the army in a demoralized and discouraged state. The Russian drive had nonetheless given sufficient evidence of strength to play a large part in inducing Romania to enter the war on the

side of the Allies (August 27, 1916). After its entrance into the war, Romania at once began an invasion of the Austro-Hungarian province of Transylvania (August-September), but Austro-German forces speedily drove the Romanians out of that region. In conjunction with Bulgarian and Turkish troops, the Austro-German forces invaded Romania (November-December). By the middle of January 1917 Romania had been completely conquered, and the Central Powers had gained a valuable source of wheat and oil.

Italy and the Balkans

On the Italian front 1916 was marked by another inconclusive battle on the Isonzo River, the fifth of a series in that region, and by an Austrian offensive in the Trentino designed to break through the Italian lines and reach the rear of the Italian position on the Isonzo. The Austrians gained considerable territory in the Trentino, but lacked the strength to accomplish a breakthrough, and an Italian counteroffensive (June-July) succeeded in regaining most of the captured terrain. From August to November four additional inconclusive battles took place on the Isonzo; the principal gain on either side was the capture of Gorizia by the Italians on August 9.

In the Balkans during 1916 the Allied powers interfered in Greek affairs on the grounds that the Greek government under King Constantine I was, in spite of its declared neutrality, unduly favoring the Central Powers. Allied intervention brought about the establishment (September 29) of a provisional Greek government under the statesman Eleutherios Venizelos, who had consistently favored the Allied cause. At Salonika the provisional government declared war on Germany and Bulgaria on November 3. The government of King Constantine was still in power in Athens and large parts of Greece, and friction took place between that government and the Allies, who resorted to a naval blockade of Greece and other action in order to enforce their demands that the Greeks cease aiding the Central Powers. On December 19 Great Britain officially recognized the provisional Greek government.

Two periods of fighting took place in the Balkans during 1916. In August a Serbian army, brought to Salonika after having been reconstituted at Corfu, advanced together with Russian and Italian troops against the Bulgarians and Germans on the Salonika front. After they had gained some initial successes, a strong counterattack thrust them back. Beginning in early October Allied forces began a large-scale offensive in Macedonia. On November 19 the Allied troops captured Monastir, and by the middle of December had reached Lake Ohrid, on the border of Albania and Macedonia.

The Turkish Dominions

Considerable military activity took place in 1916 in three parts of the Turkish Ottoman Empire: Mesopotamia, Arabia, and Palestine. In Mesopotamia, the besieged town of Kut-al-Imara fell to the Turks on April 29, 1916. In December of that year the British began a drive toward the town, which they recaptured two months later. In Arabia in June 1916 Husein ibn Ali, grand sharif of Mecca, continued the traditional conflict between Arabs and Turks by leading, with his son Abdullah ibn Husein, a revolt of Al Ḱijaz (the Hejaz, now in Saudi Arabia) against Turkish rule. Husein had the help of the British, who recognized him as king of Al Ḱijaz in December 1916. As a diversionary

move to aid the Arabian revolt, the British in November began an advance from Egypt, which they had garrisoned since early in the war, into the Sinai Peninsula and Palestine, and by the early days of January 1917 had taken several fortifications.

Negotiation Attempts

In 1916 President Woodrow Wilson of the U.S., at that time a neutral nation, attempted to bring about negotiations between the belligerent groups of powers that would in his own words bring “peace without victory.” As a result of his efforts, and particularly of the conferences held in Europe during the year by Wilson's confidential adviser, Colonel Edward M. House, with leading European statesmen, some progress was at first apparently made toward bringing an end to the war. In December the German government informed the U.S. that the Central Powers were prepared to undertake peace negotiations. When the U.S. informed the Allies, Great Britain rejected the German advances for two reasons: Germany had not laid down any specific terms for peace; and the military situation at the time (Romania had just been conquered by the Central Powers) was so favorable to the Central Powers that no acceptable terms could reasonably be expected from them. Wilson continued his mediatory efforts, calling on the belligerents to specify the terms on which they would make peace. He finally succeeded in eliciting concrete terms from each group, but they proved irreconcilable.

1917: U.S. Entrance—Russian Withdrawal

Wilson still attempted to find some basis of agreement between the two belligerent groups until a change in German war policy in January 1917 completely altered his point of view toward the war. In that month Germany announced that, beginning on February 1, it would resort to unrestricted submarine warfare against the shipping of Great Britain and all shipping to Great Britain. German military and civil experts had calculated that such warfare would bring about the defeat of Great Britain in six months. Because the U.S. had already expressed its strong opposition to unrestricted submarine warfare, which, it claimed, violated its rights as a neutral, and had even threatened to break relations with Germany over the issue, Wilson dropped his peacemaking efforts. On February 3, the U.S. broke diplomatic relations with Germany and at Wilson's request a number of Latin American nations, including Peru, Bolivia, and Brazil, also did so. On April 6 the United States declared war on Germany.

Arras and Ieper

In 1917 the Allies made two large-scale attempts to break the German lines on the western front. The first Allied attempt took place near Arras between April 9 and May 21. While it was being planned by the British and the French high commands, the Germans withdrew from their original line along the Aisne to a new position, previously prepared somewhat to the north, and known as the Hindenburg line, against which the Allies directed their attack. Their offensive included the Third Battle of Arras, in which Canadian troops captured the heavily fortified and stubbornly defended Vimy Ridge, and the British forces made an advance of 6 km (4 mi); and a battle on the Aisne, and one in the Champagne district, both of which resulted in a slight French gain at a cost in casualties so great as to cause a mutiny among the troops. Because of the

failure of his reckless attack, General Nivelle on May 15 was replaced by General Henri Philippe Pйtain; the new commander's policy was to remain on the defensive until U.S. troops arrived.

The second great Allied offensive took place in June, when the British under Haig made an attempt in Flanders to break through the right wing of the German position. A preliminary battle at Messines set the stage for the main attacks (July 31-November 10) at Ieper. Desperate fighting, in which each side suffered approximately 250,000 casualties, did not result in a breakthrough.

Use of Tanks

Other attacks of Allied forces on the western front in 1917 included a battle at Verdun, in which the French succeeded in regaining an additional section of the area they had lost the previous year; and (November 20-December 3) the Battle of Cambrai, during which the British opened the attack with a raid by nearly 400 tanks. This was the first tank raid on such a scale in military history, and, but for lack of reserves, the British might have achieved a breakthrough. As it was, the British drove an 8-km (5-mi) salient into the German lines. German counterattacks, however, compelled the British to yield most of the newly won ground.

After the U.S. entered the war in April 1917, it moved rapidly to raise and transport overseas a strong military force, known as the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), under the command of General John J. Pershing. By June 1917 more than 175,000 American troops were training in France, and one division was actually in the lines of the Allied sector near Belfort; by November 1918 the strength of the AEF was nearly 2 million. From the spring of 1918 U.S. troops played an important part in the fighting.

Submarine Warfare

In 1917 not only did the U.S. enter the war, but also the Germans failed in their attempt to drive Great Britain to surrender through the destruction by submarine of the British and Allied shipping on which it depended for food and other supplies. At the outset the German submarine campaign seemed likely to succeed. Toward the end of 1916 German submarines were destroying monthly about 300,000 tons of British and Allied shipping in the North Atlantic; in April 1917 the figure was 875,000 tons. Because the Germans had calculated that the destruction of 600,000 tons monthly for six consecutive months would be sufficient to force Great Britain to capitulate, they were doubly certain of victory after April. Great Britain, however, roused itself to unprecedented efforts to fight the submarine menace. By the adoption of a system of convoying fleets of merchant vessels with warships, especially destroyers and submarine chasers, and by the use of hydroplanes for spotting submarines and depth bombs or charges for destroying them, Great Britain, as the summer advanced, rendered the German submarine campaign less and less effective. By the fall, although large numbers of Allied ships were still being sunk, the Germans were sustaining heavy losses in submarines. At the same time the Allied nations, especially the U.S., were rapidly building new shipping. By the outset of 1918 the Allies were turning out more

new ships than the Germans were destroying, and the German effort to end the war by submarine warfare had clearly failed.

Russia Withdraws

On the eastern front the dominating influence on the fighting during 1917 was the outbreak in March of the Russian popular uprising against the imperial government, which resulted in turn in the establishment of a provisional government and the abdication, in March, of Czar Nicholas II. The provisional government continued the prosecution of the war, in July, under General Aleksey Alekeseyevich Brusilov, the Russians staged a moderately successful 2-week drive on the Galician front, but then lost much of the territory they had gained. In September the Germans took Rмga, defended by Russian forces under General Lavr Georgiyevich Kornilov, and in October occupied the greater part of Latvia and a number of Russian-held islands in the Baltic Sea. The Bolshevik party seized power by force on November 7. A cardinal point of Bolshevik policy was the withdrawal of Russia from the war, and on November 20 the government that had just come into power offered the German government an armistice. On December 15 an armistice was signed between the Russian and Austro-German negotiators, and fighting ceased on the eastern front.

Italian Setbacks

The Allies suffered disaster on the Italian front in 1917. During the first eight months of the year, despite deficiencies in troop strength, artillery, and ammunition, the Italian forces under General Luigi Cadorna continued efforts to break through the Austrian lines on the Isonzo River and to attain Trieste. The Italian drives of 1917, which resulted in the 10th and 11th battles of the Isonzo, did not attain their objective. The latter part of the year (October-December) was marked by a determined Austro-German offensive carried on by nine Austrian and six newly arrived German divisions. Attacking on the upper Isonzo near the town of Caporetto, they succeeded in breaking the line of the Italians, who fell back in confusion from the Isonzo to positions on the Piave River. In the disastrous Caporetto campaign the Italian forces lost 300,000 men as prisoners alone and, the morale of the army broken, approximately the same number as deserters. In November British and French troops arrived to reinforce the Italians on the Piave, and a new Italian commander in chief, General Armando Dнaz, was appointed in place of General Cadorna.

Greece Enters the War

On the Balkan front in 1917, after the Allied troops had fought several inconclusive engagements at Monastir, at Lake Presba, and on the Vardar (Axiys) River, the Allies initiated an effort to oust the Greek king, Constantine, claiming that his pro-German sympathies and his aid to the Central Powers made it impossible for the Allies to conduct successful operations in the Balkan region. In June the Allies began an invasion of Greece, and at the same time exerted diplomatic pressure on Constantine to abdicate. He did so on June 12; Venizelos became premier of the government formed under Alexander, the son of Constantine; and on June 27 the Greek government declared war on all four Central Powers.

The Middle East

In Palestine during 1917 the British made two unsuccessful attempts (March and April) to take the city of Gaza. Under a new commander, General (later Field Marshal) Sir Edmund Allenby, the British broke through the Turkish lines at Beersheba (November), compelling the evacuation of Gaza; and on December 9, Allenby's troops took Jerusalem. The year also witnessed the beginning of the brilliant leadership of British Colonel T. E. Lawrence, known as Lawrence of Arabia, in the Arab revolt against Turkey. Arab troops led by Lawrence took the Turkish-held port of Al ‘Aqabah in July, and during the remainder of the year executed many forays against the Turkish-held Al Ḱijaz (the Hejaz) Railway. The year 1917 was also marked by British successes in Mesopotamia; they took Baghdad in March and by September had advanced to Ramadi on the Euphrates River and Tikrмt on the Tigris.

1918: The Final Year

The early part of 1918 did not look propitious for the Allied nations. On March 3 Russia signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (*see* Brest-Litovsk, Treaty of), which put a formal end to the war between that nation and the Central Powers on terms more favorable to the latter; and on May 7 Romania made peace with the Central Powers, signing the Treaty of Bucharest, by the terms of which it ceded the Dobruja region to Bulgaria and the passes in the Carpathian Mountains to Austria-Hungary, and gave Germany a long-term lease on the Romanian oil wells.

Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary Withdraw

On the Balkan front, however, the result of the fighting of 1918 was disastrous to the Central Powers. In September a force of about 700,000 Allied troops, consisting of French, British, Greeks, Serbs, and Italians, began a large-scale offensive against the German, Austrian, and Bulgarian troops in Serbia. The Allied offensive was so successful that by the end of the month the Bulgarians were thoroughly beaten and concluded an armistice with the Allies. The German success in Romania was nullified in November when, with the support of Allied troops who had advanced into Romania after the Bulgarian capitulation, Romania reentered the war on the Allied side. After the conclusion of the Bulgarian armistice, the Serbian part of the Allied army continued to advance, occupying Belgrade on November 1, while the Italian army invaded and occupied Albania.

On the Italian-Austro-Hungarian front, the Austrians, in June, attacked on the Piave and succeeded in crossing the river, only to be driven back with the loss of about 100,000 men. In October-November the Allies definitely gained the victory in Italy, routing the Austrians in an offensive that culminated in the Battle of Vittorio Veneto (October 24-November 4). The Allies completely shattered the Austrian army in this campaign; they took several hundred thousand prisoners and the remainder of the Austrian army fled into Austria. On November 3 the Italians at last took Trieste, and on November 5 they occupied Fiume. The shock of the defeat precipitated revolutionary events in Austria-Hungary. The Czechs and the Slovaks had already set up a separate state; in October the South Slavs proclaimed their independence, and in December set up an independent

kingdom, later part of Yugoslavia. In November the Hungarians established an independent government. The Austro-Hungarian government at Vienna concluded an armistice with the Allies on November 3 and nine days later the last Habsburg emperor, Charles I, abdicated; on the following day the Austrian Republic was proclaimed.

Turkey Withdraws

During 1918 the Allies also brought the campaigning in Palestine to a successful conclusion. In September the British forces broke through the Turkish lines at Megiddo and routed the Turkish army and the German corps that was assisting it; after being joined by Arab forces under Lawrence, the British took Lebanon and Syria. In October they captured Damascus, Ḥalab (Aleppo), and other key points, while French naval forces occupied Beirut, and the Turkish government asked for an armistice. An armistice was concluded on October 30, and by its terms the Turks were obliged to demobilize, break relations with the Central Powers, and permit Allied warships to pass through the Dardanelles.

Last German Efforts

Despite the German victories over Russia and Romania in 1917, at the outset of 1918 the Allies, principally through their spokesperson Woodrow Wilson, formulated war aims drastically opposed to those already stated by the Central Powers; Wilson's peace policy was enunciated in an address to the U.S. Congress and comprised 14 points designed to bring about a just peace, which were of considerable influence in inducing the Central Powers to cease hostilities later in the year. At the beginning of 1918 the Germans, realizing that victory by means of submarine warfare was impossible, and that they must force a decision on the western front before American troops might take up positions there in force, planned for the spring of the year an all-out effort to break through the Allied lines and reach Paris. The opening drive of their powerful offensive, which began on March 21, was directed at the British front south of Arras. The drive hurled the British lines back 65 km (40 mi) before it was halted, on April 5, principally by hastily summoned French reserves. The fear of a German breakthrough aroused among the Allies by the German success in the first week of the offensive caused the Allies to appoint General (later Marshal) Ferdinand Foch in charge of assuring coordination of Allied operations; in the following month he was made commander in chief of the Allied armies—French, Belgian, British, and American—in France. During April a second German thrust took Messines Ridge and Armentiиres from the British, and in June a powerful German surprise attack against the French on the Aisne drove a salient 65 km (40 mi) deep into the French position and enabled the Germans to reach a point of the Marne only 60 km (37 mi) from Paris. During this battle American troops first went into action in force; together with French troops, the U.S. Second Division halted (June 4) the German advance at Chвteau-Thierry. The Germans made additional gains of terrain in June, but by the middle of July the force of their offensive had largely been spent. In the Second Battle of the Marne, they succeeded in crossing the river, but once they were across their progress was halted by French and American troops. Sensing that the German drive had lost its power, General Foch on July 18 ordered a counterattack. The attack drove the Germans back over the Marne, and the Allies took the initiative on the western front that they retained to the end of the war.

End of the War in Europe

Beginning with a British drive (August 8-11) into the German lines around Amiens, the Allies began the offensive that three months later resulted in German capitulation. During the last week of August and the first three days of September, British and French forces won the Second Battle of the Somme and the Fifth Battle of Arras, and drove the Germans back to the Hindenburg line. A particularly strong German salient at Saint-Mihiel was then reduced by American troops (September 12-13), who took more than 14,000 prisoners. In October and early November the British moved toward Cambrai and the Americans advanced partly through the Argonne Forest. The latter thrust broke the German lines between Metz and Sedan. As a result of these offensives, Ludendorff requested his government to seek an armistice with the Allies. The German government initiated armistice talks (October) with the Allies, but they failed when President Wilson insisted on negotiating only with democratic governments. The British advance meanwhile made rapid progress in northern France and along the Belgian coast, and on November 10, U.S. and French troops reached Sedan. By the beginning of November the Hindenburg line had been completely broken, and Germans were in rapid retreat on the entire western front. The defeat of the German army had domestic political repercussions that were catastrophic to the established German government. The German fleet mutinied; an uprising dethroned the king of Bavaria; and in November Emperor William II abdicated and fled to the Netherlands. The German republic was proclaimed on November 9. An armistice commission had already been dispatched to negotiate with the Allies. At 5 AM on November 11, an armistice was signed at Compiиgne between Germany and the Allies on terms laid down by the Allies; at 11 the same morning hostilities ended on the western front.

Colonial Warfare

The forces in the German colonies of Africa and the Pacific, with the chief exception of those in German East Africa in late 1917 and 1918, generally fought on the defensive. They were in some cases swiftly overcome, and in others gradually, but by the end of the war in 1918 practically all had capitulated to the Allies.

Africa

In 1914 the German colonies in Africa consisted of Togoland, the Cameroons (German. Kamerun), German Southwest Africa, and German East Africa. An Anglo-French force took possession of Togoland in August 1914. In September of that year a British force invaded the Cameroons from Nigeria, and a French force invaded from French Equatorial Africa to the east and south of the Cameroons. After many campaigns in which the Germans several times defeated the Allied Forces, German resistance was finally overcome in February 1916. German Southwest Africa was conquered, between September 1914 and July 1915, by troops from the Union of South Africa. The most important of the German possessions, German East Africa, displayed the strongest resistance to the attacks of the Allies. Early assaults by British and Indian troops (November 1914) were repulsed by the Germans under General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck. In November 1915, British naval units gained control of Lake Tanganyika, and the following year the Allied forces (British, South Africans, and Portuguese)

intended for the invasion of German East Africa were placed under the command of General Jan Christiaan Smuts. In 1916 the Allies captured the principal towns of German East Africa, including Tanga, Bagamoyo, Dar es Salaam, and Tabora, and Lettow-Vorbeck's troops then retreated into the southeast section of the colony. Late in 1917, however, the German forces took the offensive, invading Portuguese East Africa; and in November 1918 they began an invasion of Rhodesia. When the armistice was signed in Europe in 1918, the troops in German East Africa were still fighting, even though most of the colony was in the hands of the Allies. Lettow-Vorbeck surrendered three days after the European armistice was declared.

The Pacific

In the Pacific a force from New Zealand captured the German-held portions of Samoa in August 1914 and in September, Australian forces occupied German possessions in the Bismarck Archipelago and New Guinea. Japanese forces took the fortress of Qingdao (Tsingtao), a German-held port in Shandong (Shan-tung) Province, China, in November 1914, and between August and November of that year took possession of the German-held Marshall Islands, the Mariana Islands, the Palau group of islands, and the Carolines. After the war ended, Japan retained Qingdao until 1922, and received a mandate over the Marshall Islands, many of the Marianas (including Saipan), and over the Palau group and the Carolines.

The War at Sea

At the outset of war the main British fleet, the Grand Fleet, consisted of 20 dreadnoughts and numerous other ships, including battle cruisers, cruisers, and destroyers; and Grand Fleet was based principally on Scapa Flow, in the Orkney Islands north of Scotland. A second British fleet, consisting of older ships, was used to guard the English Channel. The German fleet, the High Seas Fleet, consisting of 13 dreadnoughts, was based on the North Sea ports of Germany.

Early Operations

During 1914 no major naval engagements between the belligerents took place in the Atlantic. The British raided the German naval base at Helgoland Bight, an island off Germany in the North Sea, sinking three German ships. German submarines sunk several British naval units, including the superdreadnought *Audacious* (October 27); and a daring attempt by German submarines to raid Scapa Flow caused the British naval units stationed there to withdraw to bases on the west coast of Scotland.

In the South Pacific a squadron of German cruisers under the command of Admiral Maximilian von Spee did considerable damage to installations at the French island of Tahiti and the British-held Fanning Island (September and October 1914); defeated a British squadron off the headland of Coronel, Chile (November 1); and on December 8 was defeated with the loss of four out of its five ships in the Battle of Falkland Islands by a British squadron under Admiral Sir Frederick Sturdee. During 1914 and the early part of 1915 German cruisers did considerable damage to British shipping in the Indian Ocean and elsewhere until captured or otherwise put out of commission.

The year 1915 was notable for the submarine blockade Germany instituted around Great Britain. The sinking by German submarine action of the British passenger liner *Lusitania* on May 7 caused the loss of many American lives, leading to a controversy between the United States and Germany that almost precipitated war between the two nations. The firm stand taken by the U.S. forced Germany to modify its method of submarine warfare to the satisfaction of the American government. In March 1916, however, the German sinking in the English Channel by submarine of the French steamer *Sussex*, with the loss of American lives, led to another controversy between Germany and the U.S., a virtual U.S. ultimatum compelling Germany temporarily to cease its unrestricted submarine warfare.

1916 and After

The most important naval engagement of the war was the Battle of Jutland, waged on May 31 and June 1, 1916, between the British Grand Fleet and the German High Seas Fleet. Although the British losses, both in ships and human lives, were greater than Germany's, the German fleet, having returned to home ports, did not venture to give battle again during the war, and the British retained their supremacy at sea. Nevertheless, during the remainder of the war, German cruisers managed to run the blockade of Germany, which the British had established from the outset of the war. The Germans sank considerable tonnage of Allied shipping in the North Atlantic and then returned to their bases. In 1917 the Germans again resorted to unrestricted submarine warfare, convinced that this method was the only one that would defeat Great Britain. The plan not only failed to force the capitulation of Great Britain, but also caused the U.S. to declare war against Germany. The attacks of German submarines on British convoys in the Atlantic and in the North Sea caused much loss of shipping. As a result, in April 1918 the British attempted to block the German submarine bases at Ostend (Oostende) and Zeebrugge in Belgium; they succeeded in partially blocking Zeebrugge by sinking three overage British cruisers in the harbor, but failed at Ostend. In October, however, British land forces, advancing through Belgium, took the two submarine bases and other Belgian ports.

German Fleet Scuttled

By the terms of the armistice the Germans surrendered to the Allies most of their fleet, consisting of 10 battleships, 17 cruisers, 50 torpedo boats, and more than 100 submarines. All of the fleet with the exception of the submarines was interned at Scapa Flow in November 1918, with German captains and crews aboard. The Treaty of Versailles (1919), which ended the war, provided that all the interned ships become the permanent property of the Allies; that other warships still in German possession also be surrendered; and that the size of any future German navy be drastically limited. In reprisal against these terms, the Germans on June 21, 1919, scuttled their ships interned at Scapa Flow. *See* Versailles, Treaty of.

The total tonnage of Allied ships sunk by German submarines, surface craft, and mines was nearly 13 million; the largest tonnage sunk in any one year was about 6 million, in 1917.

The War in the Air

World War I provided a great stimulus to the production and military use of aircraft, including the airplane and airship, or dirigible balloon, and the tethered balloon. Aircraft were used for two principal purposes: observation and bombing. For observation of stationary battlefronts extensive use was made by both belligerents of small tethered balloons; for scouting at sea, dirigible balloons were extensively used, and airplanes were used for scouting coastal waters. In connection with military operations on land, airplanes were used to observe the disposition of the troops and defenses of the enemy and for bombing the enemy's lines or troops in action. A special feature of the war was the raids conducted by means of dirigibles or airplanes on important enemy centers far removed from the battlefront.

The first German airplane raid on Paris took place on August 30, 1914; and the first German air raid on England was on Dover on December 21, 1914. During 1915 and 1916 the German type of dirigible known as the zeppelin raided eastern England and London 60 times. The first German airplane raid on London took place on November 28, 1916, and such raids were frequent during the remainder of the war. The object of the German raids on England was to bring about withdrawal of British planes from the western front for the defense of the homeland; to handicap British industry; and to destroy the morale of the civilian population. The raids caused much loss of life and damage to property but accomplished little of military value.

From the middle of 1915 aerial combats between planes or groups of planes of the belligerents were common. The Germans had superiority in the air on the western front from about October 1915 to July 1916, when the supremacy passed to the British. Allied supremacy gradually increased thereafter and with the entrance of the U.S. into the war became overwhelming. In April 1918 the U.S. had three air squadrons at the front; by November 1918 it had 45 squadrons comprising nearly 800 planes and more than 1200 officers. The total personnel of the American air service increased from about 1200 at the outbreak of the war to nearly 200,000 at the end. Among the noted airplane fighters, or aces, were the American Eddie Rickenbacker, the Canadian William Avery Bishop, and the German Baron Manfred von Richthofen.

Summary of the War

World War I began on July 28, 1914, with the declaration of war by Austria-Hungary on Serbia, and hostilities between the Allied and Central Powers continued until the signing of the armistice on November 11, 1918, a period of 4 years, 3 months, and 14 days. The aggregate direct war costs of all the belligerents amounted to about $186 billion. Casualties in the land forces amounted to more than 37 million (see the accompanying table, World War I Casualties); in addition, close to 10 million deaths among the civilian populations were caused indirectly by the war. Despite worldwide hopes that the settlements arrived at after the war would restore world peace on a permanent basis, World War I actually provided the basis for an even more devastating conflict. The defeated Central Powers declared their acceptance of President Wilson's 14 points as the basis for the armistice and expected the Allies to utilize the principles

of the 14 points as the foundation for the peace treaties. On the whole, however, the Allies came to the conference at Versailles and to the subsequent peace conferences with the determination to exact from the Central Powers the entire cost of the war, and to distribute among themselves territories and possessions of the defeated nations according to formulas arrived at secretly during the years 1915 to 1917, before the entry of the U.S. into the war. President Wilson, in the peace negotiations, at first insisted that the Paris Peace Conference accept the full program laid out in the 14 points, but finally, in order to secure the support of the Allies for the all-important 14th point, which called for the creation of an association of nations, he abandoned his insistence on some of the other points. *See* League of Nations.

The peace treaties that emerged from the conferences at Versailles, Saint-Germain, Trianon, Neuilly, and Sиvres were on the whole inadequately enforced by the victorious powers, leading to the resurgence of militarism and aggressive nationalism in Germany and to social disorder throughout much of Europe.

For additional information on historical figures, see biographies of those whose names are not followed by dates. The military conflict is also described in separate articles on major battles. For results of the war, see separate articles on individual treaties and history sections of individual countries;

World War II, global military conflict that, in terms of lives lost and material destruction, was the most devastating war in human history. It began in 1939 as a European conflict between Germany and an Anglo-French coalition but eventually widened to include most of the nations of the world. It ended in 1945, leaving a new world order dominated by the United States and the USSR.

More than any previous war, World War II involved the commitment of nations' entire human and economic resources, the blurring of the distinction between combatant and noncombatant, and the expansion of the battlefield to include all of the enemy's territory. The most important determinants of its outcome were industrial capacity and personnel. In the last stages of the war, two radically new weapons were introduced: the long-range rocket and the atomic bomb. In the main, however, the war was fought with the same or improved weapons of the types used in World War I. The greatest advances were in aircraft and tanks.

The World After World War I

Three major powers had been dissatisfied with the outcome of World War I. Germany, the principal defeated nation, bitterly resented the territorial losses and reparations payments imposed on it by the Treaty of Versailles. Italy, one of the victors, found its territorial gains far from enough either to offset the cost of the war or to satisfy its ambitions. Japan, also a victor, was unhappy about its failure to gain control of China.

Causes of the War

France, Great Britain, and the U.S. had attained their wartime objectives. They had reduced Germany to a military cipher and had reorganized Europe and the world as they saw fit. The French and the British frequently disagreed on policy in the postwar period, however, and were unsure of their ability to defend the peace settlement. The U.S., disillusioned by the Europeans' failure to repay their war debts, retreated into isolationism.

The Failure of Peace Efforts

During the 1920s, attempts were made to achieve a stable peace. The first was the establishment (1920) of the League of Nations as a forum in which nations could settle their disputes. The league's powers were limited to persuasion and various levels of moral and economic sanctions that the members were free to carry out as they saw fit. At the Washington Conference of 1921-22, the principal naval powers agreed to limit their navies according to a fixed ratio. The Locarno Conference (1925) produced a treaty guarantee of the German-French boundary and an arbitration agreement between Germany and Poland. In the Paris Peace Pact (1928), 63 countries, including all the great powers except the USSR, renounced war as an instrument of national policy and pledged to resolve all disputes among them “by pacific means.” The signatories had agreed beforehand to exempt wars of “self-defense.”

The Rise of Fascism

One of the victors' stated aims in World War I had been “to make the world safe for democracy,” and postwar Germany adopted a democratic constitution, as did most of the other states restored or created after the war. In the 1920s, however, the wave of the future appeared to be a form of nationalistic, militaristic totalitarianism known by its Italian name, fascism. It promised to minister to peoples' wants more effectively than democracy and presented itself as the one sure defense against communism. Benito Mussolini established the first Fascist dictatorship in Italy in 1922.

Formation of the Axis Coalition

Adolf Hitler, the *Fьhrer* (“leader”) of the German National Socialist (Nazi) Party, preached a racist brand of fascism. Hitler promised to overturn the Versailles Treaty and secure additional *Lebensraum* (“living space”) for the German people, who he contended deserved more as members of a superior race. In the early 1930s, the depression hit Germany. The moderate parties could not agree on what to do about it, and large numbers of voters turned to the Nazis and Communists. In 1933 Hitler became the German chancellor, and in a series of subsequent moves established himself as dictator.

Japan did not formally adopt fascism, but the armed forces' powerful position in the government enabled them to impose a similar type of totalitarianism. As dismantlers of the world status quo, the Japanese military were well ahead of Hitler. They used a minor clash with Chinese troops near Mukden in 1931 as a pretext for taking over all of Manchuria, where they proclaimed the puppet state of Manchukuo in 1932. In 1937-38 they occupied the main Chinese ports.

Having denounced the disarmament clauses of the Versailles Treaty, created a new air force, and reintroduced conscription, Hitler tried out his new weapons on the side of right-wing military rebels in the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). The venture brought him into collaboration with Mussolini, who was also supporting the Spanish revolt after having seized (1935-36) Ethiopia in a small war. Treaties between Germany, Italy, and Japan in 1936-37 brought into being the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis. The Axis thereafter became the collective term for those countries and their allies.

German Aggression in Europe

Hitler launched his own expansionist drive with the annexation of Austria in March 1938. The way was clear: Mussolini supported him; and the British and French, overawed by German rearmament, accepted Hitler's claim that the status of Austria was an internal German affair. The U.S. had severely impaired its ability to act against aggression by passing a neutrality law that prohibited material assistance to all parties in foreign conflicts.

In September 1938 Hitler threatened war to annex the western border area of Czechoslovakia, the Sudetenland and its 3.5 million ethnic Germans. The British prime minister Neville Chamberlain initiated talks that culminated at the end of the month in the Munich Pact, by which the Czechs, on British and French urging, relinquished the Sudetenland in return for Hitler's promise not to take any more Czech territory. Chamberlain believed he had achieved “peace for our time,” but the word Munich soon implied abject and futile appeasement.

Less than six months later, in March 1939, Hitler seized the remainder of Czechoslovakia. Alarmed by this new aggression and by Hitler's threats against Poland, the British government pledged to aid that country if Germany threatened its independence. France already had a mutual defense treaty with Poland.

The turn away from appeasement brought the Soviet Union to the fore. Joseph Stalin, the Soviet dictator, had offered military help to Czechoslovakia during the 1938 crisis, but had been ignored by all the parties to the Munich Pact. Now that war threatened, he was courted by both sides, but Hitler made the more attractive offer. Allied with Britain and France, the Soviet Union might well have had to fight, but all Germany asked for was its neutrality. In Moscow, on the night of August 23, 1939, the Nazi-Soviet Pact was signed. In the part published the next day, Germany and the Soviet Union agreed not to go to war against each other. A secret protocol gave Stalin a free hand in Finland, Estonia, Latvia, eastern Poland, and eastern Romania.

Military Operations

In the early morning hours of September 1, 1939, the German armies marched into Poland. On September 3 the British and French surprised Hitler by declaring war on Germany, but they had no plans for rendering active assistance to the Poles.

The First Phase: Dominance of the Axis

Man for man, the German and Polish forces were an even match. Hitler committed about 1.5 million troops, and the Polish commander, Marshal Edward Smigly-Rydz, expected to muster 1.8 million. That was not the whole picture, however. The Germans had six panzer (armored) and four motorized divisions; the Poles had one armored and one motorized brigade and a few tank battalions. The Germans' 1600 aircraft were mostly of the latest types. Half of the Poles' 935 planes were obsolete.

The Blitzkrieg in Poland

Polish strategic doctrine called for a rigid defense of the whole frontier and anticipated several weeks of preliminary skirmishing. It was wrong on both counts. On the morning of September 1, waves of German bombers hit the railroads and hopelessly snarled the Polish mobilization. In four more days, two army groups—one on the north out of East Prussia, the other on the south out of Silesia—had broken through on relatively narrow fronts and were sending armored spearheads on fast drives toward Warsaw and Brкst. This was blitzkrieg (lightning war): the use of armor, air power, and mobile infantry in a pincers movement to encircle the enemy.

Between September 8 and 10, the Germans closed in on Warsaw from the north and south, trapping the Polish forces west of the capital. On September 17, a second, deeper encirclement closed 160 km (100 mi) east, near Brкst. On that day, too, the Soviet Red Army lunged across the border. By September 20, practically the whole country was in German or Soviet hands, and only isolated pockets continued to resist. The last to surrender was the fortress at Kock, on October 6.

The Phony War

A French and British offensive in the west might have enabled Poland to fight longer, but until enough British arrived, it would have had to be mounted mainly by the French; French strategy, however, was defensive, based on holding the heavily fortified Maginot line. The quick finish in Poland left both sides at loose ends. Dismayed, the British and French became preoccupied with schemes to stave off a bloody replay of World War I. Hitler made a halfhearted peace offer and at the same time ordered his generals to ready an attack on the Low Countries and France. The generals, who did not think they could do against France what they had done in Poland, asked for time and insisted they could only take Holland, Belgium, and the French channel coast. Except at sea, where German submarines operated against merchant shipping and the British navy imposed a blockade, so little was going on after the first week in October that the U.S. newspapers called it the Phony War.

The Soviet-Finnish War

On November 30, after two months of diplomatic wrangling, the Soviet Union declared war on Finland. Stalin was bent on having a blitzkrieg of his own, but his plan faltered. The Finns, under Marshal Carl G. Mannerheim, were expert at winter warfare. The Soviet troops, on the other hand, were often badly led, in part because political purges had claimed many of the Red Army's senior officers. Outnumbered by at least five to one, the Finns held their own and kept fighting into the new year.

The attack on Finland aroused world opinion against the Soviet Union and gave an opening to the British and French. They had long had their eyes on a mine at Kiruna in northern Sweden that was Germany's main source of iron ore. In summer the ore went through the Baltic Sea, in winter to the ice-free Norwegian port of Narvik and then through neutral Norwegian waters to Germany. The Narvik-Kiruna railroad also connected on the east with the Finnish railroads; consequently, an Anglo-French force ostensibly sent to help the Finns would automatically be in position to occupy Narvik and Kiruna. The problem was to get Norway and Sweden to cooperate, which both refused to do.

In Germany, the naval chief, Admiral Erich Raeder, urged Hitler to occupy Norway for the sake of its open-water ports on the Atlantic, but Hitler showed little interest until late January 1940, when the weather and the discovery of some invasion plans by Belgium forced him to delay the attack on the Low Countries and France indefinitely. The first studies he had made showed that Norway could best be taken by simultaneous landings at eight port cities from Narvik to Oslo. Because the troops would have to be transported on warships and because those would be easy prey for the British navy, the operation would have to be executed while the nights were long. Denmark, which

posed no military problems, could be usefully included because it had airfields close to Norway.

Denmark and Norway

Stalin, fearing outside intervention, ended his war on March 8 on terms that cost Finland territory but left it independent. The British and French then had to find another pretext for their projected action in Narvik and Kiruna; they decided to lay mines just outside the Narvik harbor. This they thought would provoke some kind of violent German reaction, which would let them spring to Norway's side—and into Narvik.

Hitler approved the incursions into Norway and Denmark on April 2, and the warships sailed on April 7. A British task force laid the mines the next morning and headed home, passing the German ships without seeing them and leaving them to make the landings unopposed on the morning of April 9. Denmark surrendered at once, and the landings succeeded everywhere but at Oslo. There a fort blocked the approach from the sea, and fog prevented an airborne landing. The Germans occupied Oslo by noon, but in the meantime, the Norwegian government, deciding to fight, had moved to Elverum.

Although the Norwegians, aided by 12,000 British and French, held out in the area between Oslo and Trondheim until May 3, the conclusion was never in doubt. Narvik was different. There 4600 Germans faced 24,600 British, French, and Norwegians backed by the guns of the British navy. The Germans had an advantage in the ruggedness of the terrain and a greater one in their opponents' slow, methodical moves. Thus, they held Narvik until May 28. In the first week of June they were backed against the Swedish border and close to having to choose surrender or internment, but by then, military disasters in France were forcing the British and French to recall their troops from Narvik.

The Low Countries

By spring, Hitler had found a new and better way of handling the campaign against France and the Low Countries. The first plan had been to have the main force go through Belgium, as it had in World War I. General Erich von Manstein and some other advisers, however, had persuaded Hitler to shift the main force south to the area of Luxembourg and the Ardennes Forest. The Ardennes was hilly, wooded, and not the best country for tanks, but Manstein argued that the enemy would not expect a big attack there. The tanks could make a fast northwestward sweep from the Ardennes, behind the Belgians and British and part of the French. After reaching the coast and defeating the enemy in Belgium, they could make an about-face and strike to the southeast behind the French armies along the Maginot line.

When the attack began, on May 10, 1940, the two sides were approximately equal in numbers of troops and tanks; the Germans were superior in aircraft. The decisive advantage of the Germans, however, was that they knew exactly what they were going to do. Their opponents had to improvise, in part because the Belgians and Dutch tried to stay neutral to the last. The British and French, moreover, had failed to learn from the example of Poland, having attributed that country's defeat to its inherent weakness. Consequently, they were not prepared to deal with the German armor. Their tanks were

scattered among the infantry; those of the Germans were drawn together in a panzer group, an armored army.

On May 10 German airborne troops landed inside Belgium and Holland to seize airfields and bridges and, most notably, the great Belgian fortress Eben-Emael. The Dutch army surrendered on May 14, several hours after bombers had destroyed the business section of Rotterdam. Also on May 14 the German main force, the panzer group in the lead, came out of the Ardennes to begin the drive to the sea behind the British and French armies supporting the Belgians.

The Defeat of France

On May 20 the panzer group took Abbeville at the mouth of the Somme River and began to push north along the coast; it covered 400 km (250 mi) in 11 days. By May 26, the British and French were pushed into a narrow beachhead around Dunkerque. The Belgian king, Leopold III, surrendered his army the next day. Destroyers and smaller craft of all kinds rescued 338,226 men from Dunkerque in a heroic sealift that probably would not have succeeded if the German commander, General Gerd von Rundstedt, had not stopped the tanks to save them for the next phase.

On June 5 the Germans launched a new assault against France. Italy declared war on France and Britain on June 10. The Maginot line, which only extended to the Belgian border, was intact, but the French commander, General Maxime Weygand, had nothing with which to screen it or Paris on the north and west. On June 17, Marshal Henri Philippe Pйtain, a World War I hero who had become premier the day before, asked for an armistice. The armistice was signed on June 25 on terms that gave Germany control of northern France and the Atlantic coast. Pйtain then set up a capital at Vichy in the unoccupied southeast.

The Battle of Britain

In the summer of 1940, Hitler dominated Europe from the North Cape to the Pyrenees. His one remaining active enemy—Britain, under a new prime minister, Winston Churchill—vowed to continue fighting. Whether it could was questionable. The British army had left most of its weapons on the beaches at Dunkerque. Stalin was in no mood to challenge Hitler. The U.S., shocked by the fall of France, began the first peacetime conscription in its history and greatly increased its military budget, but public opinion, although sympathetic to Britain, was against getting into the war.

The Germans hoped to subdue the British by starving them out. In June 1940 they undertook the Battle of the Atlantic, using submarine warfare to cut the British overseas lifelines. The Germans now had submarine bases in Norway and France. At the outset the Germans had only 28 submarines, but more were being built—enough to keep Britain in danger until the spring of 1943 and to carry on the battle for months thereafter.

Invasion was the expeditious way to finish off Britain, but that meant crossing the English Channel; Hitler would not risk it unless the British air force could be neutralized first. As a result, the Battle of Britain was fought in the air, not on the beaches. In August 1940 the Germans launched daylight raids against ports and airfields and in September against inland cities. The objective was to draw out the British fighters and destroy them. The Germans failed to reckon with a new device, radar, which greatly increased the British fighters' effectiveness. Because their own losses were too high, the Germans had to switch to night bombing at the end of September. Between then and May 1941 they made 71 major raids on London and 56 on other cities, but the damage they wrought was too indiscriminate to be militarily decisive. On September 17, 1940, Hitler postponed the invasion indefinitely, thereby conceding defeat in the Battle of Britain.

The Balkans and North Africa (1940-1941)

In Fact, Hitler had told his generals in late July 1940 that the next attack would be on the USSR. There, he said, Germany would get its “living space” and defeat Britain as well. He claimed the British were only being kept in the war by the hope of a falling-out between Germany and the USSR. When the Soviets had been defeated and British positions in India and the Middle East were threatened, he believed that Britain would make peace. Hitler wanted to start in the fall of 1940, but his advisers persuaded him to avoid the risks of a winter campaign in the Soviet Union and wait until the spring.

Meanwhile, Germany's ally, Mussolini, had staged an unsuccessful attack (September 1940) on British-occupied Egypt from the Italian colony of Libya and an equally abortive invasion (October 1940) of Greece. In response to the latter move, the British occupied airfields on Crete and in Greece. Hitler did not want British planes within striking distance of his one major oil source, the Ploiesti fields in Romania, and in November he began to prepare an operation against Greece.

Early in 1941 British forces pushed the Italians back into Libya, and in February Hitler sent General Erwin Rommel with a two-division tank corps, the Afrika Korps, to help his allies.

Because he would need to cross their territory to get at Greece (and the Soviet Union), Hitler brought Romania and Hungary into the Axis alliance in November 1940; Bulgaria joined in March 1941. When Yugoslavia refused to follow suit, Hitler ordered an invasion of that country.

Yugoslavia

The operations against Greece and Yugoslavia began on April 6, 1941. The Germans' primary difficulty with the attack on Yugoslavia was in pulling together an army of nine divisions from Germany and France in less than ten days. They had to limit themselves for several days to air raids and border skirmishing. On April 10 they opened drives on Belgrade from the northwest, north, and southeast. The city fell on April 13, and the Yugoslav army surrendered the next day. Yugoslavia, however, was

easier to take than it would be to hold. Guerrillas—Cetniks under Dra"a Mihajlovi3 and partisans under Josip Broz (Tito)—fought throughout the war.

Greece

The Greek army of 430,000, unlike the Yugoslav, was fully mobilized, and to some extent battle tested, but national pride compelled it to try to defend the Metaxas line northeast of Salonika. By one short thrust to Salonika, the Germans forced the surrender on April 9 of the line and about half of the Greek army. After the Greek First Army, pulling out of Albania, was trapped at the Metsyvon Pass and surrendered on April 22, the British force of some 62,000 troops retreated southward. Thereafter, fast German drives—to the Isthmus of Corinth by April 27 and through the Pelopynnisos by April 30—forced the British into an evacuation that cost them 12,000 men. An airborne assault on May 20-27 also brought Crete into German hands.

Meanwhile, Rommel had launched a successful counteroffensive against the British in Libya, expelling them from the country (except for an isolated garrison at Tobruk) by April 1941.

The Second Phase: Expansion of the War

In the year after the fall of France, the war moved toward a new stage—world war. While conducting subsidiary campaigns in the Balkans, in North Africa, and in the air against Britain, Hitler deployed his main forces to the east and brought the countries of southeastern Europe (as well as Finland) into a partnership against the USSR.

U.S. Aid to Britain

The U.S. abandoned strict neutrality in the European war and approached a confrontation with Japan in Asia and the Pacific Ocean. U.S. and British conferences, begun in January 1941, determined a basic strategy for the event of a U.S. entry into the war, namely, that both would center their effort on Germany, leaving Japan, if need be, to be dealt with later.

In March 1941 the U.S. Congress passed the Lend-Lease Act and appropriated an initial $7 billion to lend or lease weapons and other aid to any countries the president might designate. By this means the U.S. hoped to ensure victory over the Axis without involving its own troops. By late summer of 1941, however, the U.S. was in a state of undeclared war with Germany. In July, U.S. Marines were stationed in Iceland, which had been occupied by the British in May 1940, and thereafter the U.S. Navy took over the task of escorting convoys in the waters west of Iceland. In September President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized ships on convoy duty to attack Axis war vessels.

Friction Between the U.S. and Japan

Meanwhile, American relations with Japan continued to deteriorate. In September 1940 Japan coerced Vichy France into giving up northern Indochina. The U.S. retaliated by prohibiting the exportation of steel, scrap iron, and aviation gasoline to Japan. In April 1941, the Japanese signed a neutrality treaty with the USSR as insurance against an attack from that direction if they were to come into conflict with Britain or the U.S. while taking a bigger bite out of Southeast Asia. When Germany invaded the USSR in June, Japanese leaders considered breaking the treaty and joining in from the east, but,

making one of the most fateful decisions of the war, they chose instead to intensify their push to the southeast. On July 23 Japan occupied southern Indochina. Two days later, the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands froze Japanese assets. The effect was to prevent Japan from purchasing oil, which would, in time, cripple its army and make its navy and air force completely useless.

The German Invasion of the USSR

The war's most massive encounter began on the morning of June 22, 1941, when slightly more than 3 million German troops invaded the USSR. Although German preparations had been visible for months and had been talked about openly among the diplomats in Moscow, the Soviet forces were taken by surprise. Stalin, his confidence in the country's military capability shaken by the Finnish war, had refused to allow any counteractivity for fear of provoking the Germans. Moreover, the Soviet military leadership had concluded that blitzkrieg, as it had been practiced in Poland and France, would not be possible on the scale of a Soviet-German war; both sides would therefore confine themselves for the first several weeks at least to sparring along the frontier. The Soviet army had 2.9 million troops on the western border and outnumbered the Germans by two to one in tanks and by two or three to one in aircraft. Many of its tanks and aircraft were older types, but some of the tanks, particularly the later famous T-34s, were far superior to any the Germans had. Large numbers of the aircraft were destroyed on the ground in the first day, however, and their tanks, like those of the French, were scattered among the infantry, where they could not be effective against the German panzer groups. The infantry was first ordered to counterattack, which was impossible, and then forbidden to retreat, which ensured their wholesale destruction or capture.

Initial German Successes

For the invasion, the Germans had set up three army groups, designated as North, Center, and South, and aimed toward Leningrad, Moscow, and Kyiv. Hitler and his generals had agreed that their main strategic problem was to lock the Soviet army in battle and defeat it before it could escape into the depths of the country. They disagreed on how that could best be accomplished. Most of the generals believed that the Soviet regime would sacrifice everything to defend Moscow, the capital, the hub of the road and railroad networks, and the country's main industrial center. To Hitler, the land and resources of the Ukraine and the oil of the Caucasus were more important, and he wanted to seize Leningrad as well. The result had been a compromise—the three thrusts, with the one by Army Group Center toward Moscow the strongest—that temporarily satisfied Hitler as well as the generals. War games had indicated a victory in about ten weeks, which was significant because the Russian summer, the ideal time for fighting in the USSR, was short, and the Balkans operations had caused a 3-week delay at the outset.

Ten weeks seemed ample time. Churchill offered the USSR an alliance, and Roosevelt promised lend-lease aid, but after the first few days, their staffs believed everything would be over in a month or so. By the end of the first week in July, Army Group Center had taken 290,000 prisoners in encirclements at Bialystok and Minsk. On August 5, having crossed the Dnieper River, the last natural barrier west of Moscow, the army group wiped out a pocket near Smolensk and counted another 300,000

prisoners. On reaching Smolensk, it had covered more than two-thirds of the distance to Moscow.

Hitler's Change of Plan

The Russians were doing exactly what the German generals had wanted, sacrificing enormous numbers of troops and weapons to defend Moscow. Hitler, however, was not satisfied, and over the generals' protests, he ordered Army Group Center to divert the bulk of its armor to the north and south to help the other two army groups, thereby stopping the advance toward Moscow. On September 8 Army Group North cut Leningrad's land connections and, together with the Finnish army on the north, brought the city under siege. On September 16 Army Group South closed a gigantic encirclement east of Kyiv that brought in 665,000 prisoners. Hitler then decided to resume the advance toward Moscow and ordered the armor be returned to Army Group Center.

The Attempt to Take Moscow

After a standstill of six weeks, Army Group Center resumed action on October 2. Within two weeks, it completed three large encirclements and took 663,000 prisoners. Then the fall rains set in, turning the unpaved Russian roads to mud and stopping the advance for the better part of a month.

In mid-November, the weather turned cold and the ground froze. Hitler and the commander of Army Group Center, Field Marshal Fedor von Bock, faced the choice of having the armies dig in where they were or sending them ahead, possibly to be overtaken by the winter. Wanting to finish the 1941 campaign with some sort of a victory at Moscow, they chose to move ahead.

In the second half of November Bock aimed two armored spearheads at Moscow. Just after the turn of the month, one of those, bearing in on the city from the northwest, was less than 32 km (less than 20 mi) away. The other, coming from the south, had about 65 km (about 40 mi) still to go. The panzer divisions had often covered such distances in less than a day, but the temperature was falling, snow was drifting on the roads, and neither the men nor the machines were outfitted for extreme cold. On December 5 the generals commanding the spearhead armies reported that they were stopped: The tanks and trucks were freezing up, and the troops were losing their will to fight.

Soviet Counteroffensive

Stalin, who had stayed in Moscow, and his commander at the front, General Georgy Zhukov, had held back their reserves. Many of them were recent recruits, but some were hardened veterans from Siberia. All were dressed for winter. On December 6 they counterattacked, and within a few days, the German spearheads were rolling back and abandoning large numbers of vehicles and weapons, rendered useless by the cold.

On Stalin's orders, the Moscow counterattack was quickly converted into a counteroffensive on the entire front. The Germans had not built any defense lines to the rear and could not dig in because the ground was frozen hard as concrete. Some of the

generals recommended retreating to Poland, but on December 18 Hitler ordered the troops to stand fast wherever they were. Thereafter, the Russians chopped great chunks out of the German front, but enough of it survived the winter to maintain the siege of Leningrad, continue the threat to Moscow, and keep the western Ukraine in German hands.

The Beginning of the War in the Pacific

The seeming imminence of a Soviet defeat in the summer and fall of 1941 had created dilemmas for Japan and the U.S. The Japanese thought they then had the best opportunity to seize the petroleum and other resources of Southeast Asia and the adjacent islands; on the other hand, they knew they could not win the war with the U.S. that would probably ensue. The U.S. government wanted to stop Japanese expansion but doubted whether the American people would be willing to go to war to do so. Moreover, the U.S. did not want to get embroiled in a war with Japan while it faced the ghastly possibility of being alone in the world with a triumphant Germany. After the oil embargo, the Japanese, also under the pressure of time, resolved to move in Southeast Asia and the nearby islands.

Pearl Harbor

Until December 1941 the Japanese leadership pursued two courses: They tried to get the oil embargo lifted on terms that would still let them take the territory they wanted, and they prepared for war. The U.S. demanded that Japan withdraw from China and Indochina, but would very likely have settled for a token withdrawal and a promise not to take more territory. After he became Japan's premier in mid-October, General Tojo Hideki set November 29 as the last day on which Japan would accept a settlement without war. Tojo's deadline, which was kept secret, meant that war was practically certain.

The Japanese army and navy had, in fact, devised a war plan in which they had great confidence. They proposed to make fast sweeps into Burma, Malaya, the East Indies, and the Philippines and, at the same time, set up a defensive perimeter in the central and southwest Pacific. They expected the United States to declare war but not to be willing to fight long or hard enough to win. Their greatest concern was the U.S. Pacific Fleet, based at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. If it reacted quickly, it could scramble their very tight timetable. As insurance, the Japanese navy undertook to cripple the Pacific Fleet by a surprise air attack.

A few minutes before 8 AM on Sunday, December 7, 1941, Japanese carrier-based airplanes struck Pearl Harbor. In a raid lasting less than two hours, they sank or seriously damaged eight battleships and 13 other naval vessels. The U.S. authorities had broken the Japanese diplomatic code and knew an attack was imminent. A warning had been sent from Washington, but, owing to delays in transmission, it arrived after the raid had begun. In one stroke, the Japanese navy scored a brilliant success—and

assured the Axis defeat in World War II. The Japanese attack brought the U.S. into the war on December 8—and brought it in determined to fight to the finish. Germany and Italy declared war on the United States on December 11.

Japanese Conquests in Asia and the Pacific

In the vast area of land and ocean they had marked for conquest, the Japanese seemed to be everywhere at once. Before the end of December, they took British Hong Kong and the Gilbert Islands (now Kiribati) and Guam and Wake Island (U.S. possessions), and they had invaded British Burma, Malaya, Borneo, and the American-held Philippines. British Singapore, long regarded as one of the world's strongest fortresses, fell to them in February 1942, and in March they occupied the Netherlands East Indies and landed on New Guinea. The American and Philippine forces surrendered at Bataan on April 9, and resistance in the Philippines ended with the surrender of Corregidor on May 6.

According to the Japanese plan, it would be time for them to take a defensive stance when they had captured northern New Guinea (an Australian possession), the Bismarck Archipelago, the Gilberts, and Wake Island, which they did by mid-March. But they had done so well that they decided to expand their defensive perimeter north into the Aleutian Islands, east to Midway Island, and south through the Solomon Islands and southern New Guinea. Their first move was by sea, to take Port Moresby on the southeastern tip of New Guinea. The Americans, using their ability to read the Japanese code, had a naval task force on the scene. In the ensuing Battle of the Coral Sea (May 7-8), fought entirely by aircraft carriers, the Japanese were forced to abandon their designs on Port Moresby. *See* Coral Sea, Battle of the.

The Battle of Midway

A powerful Japanese force, nine battleships and four carriers under Admiral Yamamoto Isoroku, the commander in chief of the navy, steamed toward Midway in the first week of June. Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, who had taken command of the Pacific Fleet after Pearl Harbor, could only muster three carriers and seven heavy cruisers, but he was reading the Japanese radio messages. Yamamoto, the architect of the Pearl Harbor raid, had planned another surprise. This time, however, it was he who was surprised. Off Midway, on the morning of June 4, U.S. dive-bombers destroyed three of the Japanese carriers in one 5-minute strike. The fourth went down later in the day, after its planes had battered the U.S. carrier *Yorktown,* which sank two days later. *See* Midway, Battle of.

Yamamoto ordered a general retreat on June 5. On June 6-7 a secondary Japanese force took Kiska and Attu in the Aleutians, but those were no recompense for the defeat at Midway, from which the Japanese navy would never recover. Their battleships were intact, but the Coral Sea and Midway had shown carriers to be the true capital ships of the war, and four of those were gone.

The Third Phase: Turn of the Tide

In late December 1941 Roosevelt and Churchill and their chief advisers met in Washington. They reaffirmed the strategy of defeating Germany first, and because it appeared that the British would have all they could do fighting in Europe, the war against Japan became almost solely a U.S. responsibility. They also created the Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS), a top-level British-American military committee seated in Washington, to develop and execute a common strategy. On January 1, 1942, the United States, Great Britain, the USSR, and 23 other countries signed the United Nations Declaration in which they pledged not to make a separate peace. The United Nations became the official name for the anti-Axis coalition, but the term used more often was the Allies, taken over from World War I.

Development of Allied Strategy

As a practical matter, the U.S. could not take much action in Europe in early 1942. It had no troops there, and it was in the midst of building forces and converting industry at home. In North Africa, the British appeared to be more than holding their own. They had relieved Tobruk on December 10, 1941, and taken Banghazи in Libya two weeks later. Rommel counterattacked in late January 1942 and drove them back 300 km (185 mi) to al-Gazala and Bir Hacheim, but there, well forward of Tobruk and the Egyptian border, a lull set in.

Europe

The big question in the war was whether the USSR could survive a second German summer offensive, and the Russians were urging the U.S. and Britain to relieve the pressure on them by starting an offensive in the west. General George C. Marshall, the U.S. Army chief of staff, believed the best way to help the Russians and bring an early end to the war was to stage a buildup in England and attack across the English Channel into northwestern Europe. He wanted to act in the spring of 1943, or even in 1942 if the USSR appeared about to collapse. The British did not want involvement elsewhere until North Africa was settled and did not believe a force strong enough for a cross-channel attack could be assembled in England by 1943. Rommel settled the issue. In June he captured Tobruk and drove 380 km (235 mi) into Egypt, to Al ‘Alamayn (El ‘Alamein). After that, the Americans agreed to shelve the cross-channel attack and ready the troops en route to England for an invasion of French North Africa.

The Pacific

Meanwhile, despite the Germany-first strategy, the Americans were moving toward an active pursuit of the war against Japan. The U.S. Navy saw the Pacific as an arena in which it could perform more effectively than in the Atlantic or the Mediterranean. General Douglas MacArthur, who had commanded in the Philippines and been evacuated to Australia by submarine before the surrender, was the country's best-known military figure and as such too valuable to be left with an inconsequential mission. The Battle of Midway had stopped the Japanese in the central Pacific, but they continued to advance in the southwest Pacific along the Solomons chain and overland on New Guinea. On July 2, 1942, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) directed the naval and ground forces in the south and southwest Pacific to halt the Japanese, drive them out of the Solomons and northeastern New Guinea, and eliminate the great base the Japanese

had established at Rabaul, on New Britain in the Bismarck Archipelago (now in Papua New Guinea).

The Russian Front: Summer 1942

In the most immediately critical area of the war, the USSR, the initiative had passed to the Germans again by summer 1942. The Soviet successes in the winter had been followed by disasters in the spring. Setbacks south of Leningrad, near Kharkiv, and in Crimea had cost well more than a half-million men in prisoners alone. The Germans had not sustained such massive losses, but the fighting had been expensive for them too, especially since the Soviets had three times the human resources at their disposal. Moreover, Hitler's overconfidence had led him into a colossal error. He had been so sure of victory in 1941 that he had stopped most kinds of weapons and ammunition production for the army and shifted the industries to work for the air force and navy, with which he proposed to finish off the British. He had resumed production for the army in January 1942, but the flow would not reach the front until late summer. Soviet weapons output, on the other hand, after having dropped low in November and December 1941, had increased steadily since the turn of the year, and the Soviet industrial base also was larger than the German.

Looking ahead to the summer, Hitler knew he could not again mount an all-out, three-pronged offensive. Some of the generals talked about waiting a year until the army could be rebuilt, but Hitler was determined to have the victory in 1942. He had sufficient troops and weapons to bring the southern flank of the eastern front nearly to full strength, and he believed he could compel the Soviet command to sacrifice its main forces trying to defend the coal mines of the Donets Basin and the oil fields of the Caucasus.

The German Drive Toward the Caucasus

The offensive began east of Kharkiv on June 28, and in less than four weeks the armies had taken the Donets Basin and advanced east to the Don River. The distances covered were spectacular, but the numbers of enemy killed or captured were relatively small. Stalin and his generals had made the luckiest mistake of the war. Believing the Germans were going to aim a second, more powerful, attack on Moscow, they had held their reserves back and allowed the armies in the south to retreat.

Hitler, emboldened by the ease and speed of the advance, altered his plan in the last week of July. He had originally proposed to drive due east to Stalingrad, seize a firm hold on the Volga River there, and only then send a force south into the Caucasus. On July 23 he ordered two armies to continue the advance toward Stalingrad and two to strike south across the lower Don and take the oil fields at Maikop, Groznyy, and Baku.

The Russians appeared to be heading toward disaster, as the German thrust into the Caucasus covered 300 km (185 mi) to Maikop by August 9. Hitler's strategy, however, presented a problem: Two forces moving away from each other could not be sustained equally over the badly damaged railroads of the occupied territory. In the second half of August, he diverted more supplies to the attack toward Stalingrad, and the march into the Caucasus slowed. Nevertheless, success seemed to be in sight when the Sixth Army

and Fourth Panzer Army (formerly group) closed near the Stalingrad suburbs on September 3.

The Russian Stand at Stalingrad

The USSR reached its low point in the war at the end of July 1942. The retreat was almost out of hand, and the Germans were getting into position to strike north along the Volga behind Moscow as well as into the Caucasus. On July 28 Stalin issued his most famous order of the war, “Not a step back!” While threatening Draconian punishments for slackers and defeatists, he relegated communism to the background and called on the troops to fight a “patriotic” war for Russia. Like Hitler, he had thus far conducted the war as he saw fit. In late August he called on his two best military professionals, Zhukov, who had organized the Moscow counteroffensive in December 1941, and the army chief of the General Staff, General Aleksandr M. Vasilyevsky, to deal with the situation at Stalingrad. They proposed to wear the enemy down by locking its troops in a bloody fight for the city while they assembled the means for a counterattack.

Guadalcanal

The Axis was riding a high tide in midsummer 1942. Stalingrad and the Caucasus oil were seemingly within Hitler's grasp, and Rommel was within striking distance of the Suez Canal. The Japanese had occupied Guadalcanal at the southern end of the Solomons chain and were marching on Port Moresby. Within the next six months, however, the Axis had been stopped and turned back in the Soviet Union, North Africa, and the southwest Pacific.

U.S. Marines landed on Guadalcanal on August 7, 1942. Against a small Japanese garrison, the landing was easy. Afterward nothing was easy. The Japanese responded swiftly and violently by sea and by air. The outcome hinged on the Japanese navy's ability to bring in reinforcements, which was substantial, and the U.S. Navy's ability to keep the marines supplied, which was at times in some doubt. While the marines battled a determined foe in a debilitating tropical climate, between August 24 and November 30 the navy fought six major engagements in the waters surrounding the island. The losses in ships and aircraft were heavy on both sides, but the Japanese were more seriously hurt because they could not afford to accept a war of attrition with the Americans. Their warships did not come out again after the end of November, and the Americans declared the island secure on February 9, 1943.

The Anglo-American Offensive in North Africa

The turnabout in North Africa began on August 31, 1942, when Rommel attacked through the southern flank of the British line west of Al ‘Alamayn, was stopped at the ‘Alam al Ḱalfa' Ridge, and was thrown back by September 7. The newly appointed British commander, General Bernard Law Montgomery, hit the north flank on October 23 with a methodically prepared offensive and, by November 5, forced Rommel into a retreat. American and British Troops fighting together under General Dwight D.

Eisenhower began landing in Morocco and Algeria on November 8, the Americans at Casablanca and Oran, the British at Algiers. The Germans sent reinforcements into Tunis and occupied all of France. They managed to get the Fifth Panzer Army under General Jьrgen von Arnim on the scene in time to stop Eisenhower in western Tunisia by mid-December. Rommel went into the Mareth Line in southeastern Tunisia in early February 1943 and launched an attack against the Americans on February 14 that drove them back 80 km (50 mi) and out of the vital Kasserine Pass. It was his last success and one he could not exploit. Hitler recalled him in March, as the Americans and British closed in from the west and south. After being cut off from their bases at Bizerte and Tunis and driven back into pockets on the Cape Bon Peninsula, 275,000 Germans and Italians surrendered by May 13.

The Soviet Victory at Stalingrad

On the eastern front the Germans' advances to Stalingrad and into the Caucasus had added about 1100 km (about 680 mi) to their line. No German troops were available to hold that extra distance, so Hitler had to use troops contributed by his allies. Consequently, while Sixth and Fourth Panzer armies were tied down at Stalingrad in September and October 1942, they were flanked on the left and right by Romanian armies. An Italian and a Hungarian army were deployed farther upstream on the Don River. Trial maneuvers had exposed serious weaknesses in some of the Axis's armies.

On the morning of November 19, in snow and fog, Soviet armored spearheads hit the Romanians west and south of Stalingrad. Their points met three days later at Kalach on the Don River, encircling the Sixth Army, about half of the Fourth Panzer Army, and a number of Romanian units. Hitler ordered the Sixth Army commander, General Friedrich Paulus, to hold the pocket, promised him air supply, and sent Manstein, by then a field marshal, to organize a relief. The airlift failed to provide the 300 tons of supplies that Paulus needed each day, and Manstein's relief operation was halted 55 km (34 mi) short of the pocket in late December. The Sixth Army was doomed if it did not attempt a breakout, which Hitler refused to permit.

The Russians pushed in on the pocket from three sides in January 1943, and Paulus surrendered on January 31. The battle cost Germany about 200,000 troops. In the aftermath of Stalingrad, in part owing to the collapse of the Italian and Hungarian armies, the Germans were forced to retreat from the Caucasus and back approximately to the line from which they had started the 1942 summer offensive.

The Casablanca Conference

From January 14 to 24, 1943, Roosevelt and Churchill and their staffs met in Casablanca to lay out a strategy for the period after the North African campaign. The American military chiefs wanted to proceed to the direct, cross-channel assault on Germany. The British, eloquently spoken for by Churchill, argued the advantages of gathering in the “great prizes” to be had in the Mediterranean, in Sicily and Italy for a start. Roosevelt supported the British, and the American military succeeded only (several months later) in getting an agreement that no more troops would be put into the Mediterranean area than were already there, all others being assembled in England for a cross-channel attack in 1944. Roosevelt gave his military another shock when he

announced that nothing short of unconditional surrender would be accepted from any of the Axis powers. The policy was meant to reassure the Russians, who would have to wait at least another year for a full-fledged second front, but was likely also to stiffen Axis resistance.

Air Raids on Germany

As a prelude to the postponed cross-channel attack, the British and Americans decided at Casablanca to open a strategic air (bombing) offensive against Germany. In this instance they agreed on timing but not on method. The British, as a result of discouraging experience with daylight bombing early in the war, had built their heavy bombers, the Lancasters and Halifaxes, for night bombing, which meant area bombing. The Americans believed their B-17 Flying Fortresses and B-24 Liberators were armed and armored heavily enough and were fitted with sufficiently accurate bombsights to fly by daylight and strike pinpoint targets. The difference was resolved by letting each nation conduct its own offensive in its own way and calling the result round-the-clock bombing. The British method was exemplified by four firebomb raids on Hamburg in late July 1943, in which much of the city was burned out and 50,000 people died. American losses of planes and crews increased sharply as the bombers penetrated deeper into Germany. After early October 1943, when strikes at ball-bearing plants in Schweinfurt incurred nearly 25 percent losses, the daylight offensive had to be curtailed until long-range fighters became available.

The Battle of Kursk

Before the winter fighting on the eastern front ended in March 1943, Hitler knew he could not manage another summer offensive, and he talked about setting up an east wall comparable to the fortified Atlantic wall he was building along the western European coast. The long winter's retreat, however, had shortened the front enough to give him a surplus of almost two armies. It also left a large westward bulge in the front around the city of Kursk. To Hitler, the opportunity for one more grand encirclement was too good to let pass.

After waiting three months for more new tanks to come off the assembly lines, Hitler opened the battle at Kursk on July 5 with attacks north and south across the open eastern end of the bulge. Zhukov and Vasilyevsky had also had their eyes on Kursk, and they had heavily reinforced the front around it. In the war's greatest tank battle, the Russians fought the Germans nearly to a standstill by July 12. Hitler then called off the operation because the Americans and British had landed on Sicily, and he needed to transfer divisions to Italy. With that, the strategic initiative in the east passed to the Soviet forces permanently.

The Invasion of Italy

Three American, one Canadian, and three British divisions landed on Sicily on July 10. They pushed across the island from beachheads on the south coast in five weeks, against four Italian and two German divisions, and overcame the last Axis resistance on August 17. In the meantime, Mussolini had been stripped of power on July 25, and the

Italian government had entered into negotiations that resulted in an armistice signed in secret on September 3 and made public on September 8.

On September 3 elements of Montgomery's British Eighth Army crossed the Strait of Messina from Sicily to the toe of the Italian boot. The U.S. Fifth Army, under General Mark W. Clark, staged a landing near Salerno on September 9; and by October 12, the British and Americans had a fairly solid line across the peninsula from the Volturno River, north of Naples, to Termoli on the Adriatic coast. The Italian surrender brought little military benefit to the Allies, and by the end of the year, the Germans stopped them on the Gustav line about 100 km (about 60 mi) south of Rome. A landing at Anzio on January 22, 1944, failed to shake the Gustav line, which was solidly anchored on the Liri River and Monte Cassino.

Allied Strategy Against Japan

Strategy in the war with Japan evolved by stages during 1943. In the first, the goal was to secure bases on the coast of China (from which Japan could be bombed and later invaded) by British and Chinese drives through Burma and eastern China and by American thrusts through the islands of the central and southwestern Pacific to Taiwan and China. By midyear, it was apparent that neither the British nor the Chinese drive was likely to materialize. Thereafter, only the two American thrusts remained. Their objectives were still Formosa and the Chinese coast.

U.S. Advances in the Pacific

In the Pacific, U.S. troops retook Attu, in the Aleutians, in a hard-fought, 3-week battle beginning on May 23. (The Japanese evacuated Kiska before Americans and Canadians landed there in August.) The main action was in the southwest Pacific. There U.S. and New Zealand troops, under Admiral William Halsey, advanced through the Solomons, taking New Georgia in August and a large beachhead on Bougainville in November. Australians and Americans under MacArthur drove the Japanese back along the East Coast of New Guinea and took Lae and Salamaua in September. MacArthur's and Halsey's mission, as set by the JCS in 1942, had been to take Rabaul, but they discovered in the Solomons that having command of the air and sea around them was enough to neutralize the Japanese Island garrisons and render them useless. Landings on Cape Gloucester, New Britain, in December, in the Admiralty Islands in February 1944, and At Emirau Island in March 1944 effectively sealed off Rabaul. Its 100,000-man garrison could not thereafter be either adequately supplied or evacuated.

The central Pacific thrust was slower in getting started. The southwest Pacific islands were relatively close together; airfields on one could furnish support for the move to the next; and the Japanese navy was wary of risking its ships within range of land-based aircraft. In the central Pacific, however, the islands were scattered over vast stretches of ocean, and powerful naval forces were needed to support the landings, particularly aircraft carriers, which were not available in sufficient numbers until late 1943.

The first central Pacific landings were in the Gilbert Islands, at Makin and Tarawa in November 1943. Betio Island in the Tarawa Atoll, 117.8 hectares (291 acres) of coral sand and concrete and coconut log bunkers, cost the 2nd Marine Division 3000 casualties in three days. More intensive preliminary bombardments and larger numbers

of amphibian tractors capable of crossing the surrounding reefs made the taking of Kwajalein and Enewetak in the Marshall Islands in February 1944 somewhat less expensive.

The Fourth Phase: Allied Victory

After the Battle of Kursk, the last lingering doubt about the Soviet forces was whether they could conduct a successful summer offensive. It was dispelled in the first week of August 1943, when slashing attacks hit the German line north and west of Kharkiv. On August 12 Hitler ordered work started on an east wall to be built along the Narva River and Lakes Pskov and Peipus, behind Army Group North, and the Desna and Dnieper rivers, behind Army Groups Center and South. In the second half of the month, the Soviet offensive expanded south along the Donets River and north into the Army Group Center sector.

On September 15 Hitler permitted Army Group South to retreat to the Dnieper River; otherwise it was likely to be destroyed. He also ordered everything in the area east of the Dnieper that could be of any use to the enemy to be hauled away, burned, or blown up. This scorched-earth policy, as it was called, could only be partially carried out before the army group crossed the river at the end of the month. Henceforth, that policy would be applied in all territory surrendered to the Russians.

Behind the river, the German troops found no trace of an east wall, and they had to contend from the first with five Soviet bridgeheads. The high west bank of the river was the best defensive line left in the Soviet Union, and the Soviet armies, under Zhukov and Vasilyevsky, fought furiously to prevent the Germans from gaining a foothold there. They expanded the bridgeheads, isolated a German army in Crimea in October, took Kyiv on November 6, and stayed on the offensive into the winter with hardly a pause.

The Tehran Conference

At the end of November, Roosevelt and Churchill journeyed to Tehran for their first meeting with Stalin. The president and the prime minister had already approved, under the code name Overlord, a plan for a cross-channel attack. Roosevelt wholeheartedly favored executing Overlord as early in 1944 as the weather permitted. At Tehran, Churchill argued for giving priority to Italy and possible new offensives in the Balkans or southern France, but he was outvoted by Roosevelt and Stalin. Overlord was set for May 1944. After the meeting, the CCS recalled Eisenhower from the Mediterranean and gave him command of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF), which was to organize and carry out Overlord.

The Tehran conference marked the high point of the East-West wartime alliance. Stalin came to the meeting as a victorious war leader; large quantities of U.S. lend-lease aid were flowing into the Soviet Union through Murmansk and the Persian Gulf; and the decision on Overlord satisfied the long-standing Soviet demand for a second front. At the same time, strains were developing as the Soviet armies approached the borders of the smaller eastern European states. In May 1943 the Germans had produced evidence linking the USSR to the deaths of some 11,000 Polish officers found buried in mass

graves in the Katyn Forest near Smolensk. Stalin had severed relations with the Polish exile government in London, and he insisted at Tehran, as he had before, that the postwar Soviet-Polish boundary would have to be the one established after the Polish defeat in 1939. He also reacted with barely concealed hostility to Churchill's proposal of a British-American thrust into the Balkans.

German Preparations for Overlord

Hitler expected an invasion of northwestern Europe in the spring of 1944, and he welcomed it as a chance to win the war. If he could throw the Americans and British off the beaches, he reasoned, they would not soon try again. He could then throw all of his forces, nearly half of which were in the west, against the USSR. In November 1943 he told the commanders on the eastern front that they would get no more reinforcements until after the invasion had been defeated.

In January 1944 a Soviet offensive raised the siege of Leningrad and drove Army Group North back to the Narva River-Lake Peipus line. There the Germans found a tenuous refuge in the one segment of the east wall that had been to some extent fortified. On the south flank, successive offensives, the last in March and April, pushed the Germans in the broad stretch between the Poles’ye Marshes (Pripyat’ Marshes) and the Black Sea off of all but a few shreds of Soviet territory. The greater part of 150,000 Germans and Romanians in Crimea died or passed into Soviet captivity in May after a belated sealift failed to get them out of Sevastopol'. On the other hand, enough tanks and weapons had been turned out to equip new divisions for the west and replace some of those lost in the east; the air force had 40 percent more planes than at the same time a year earlier; and synthetic oil production reached its wartime peak in April 1944.

The Normandy Invasion

On June 6, 1944, D-Day, the day of invasion for Overlord, the U.S. First Army, under General Omar N. Bradley, and the British Second Army, under General Miles C. Dempsey, established beachheads in Normandy, on the French channel coast. The German resistance was strong, and the footholds for Allied armies were not nearly as good as they had expected. Nevertheless, the powerful counterattack with which Hitler had proposed to throw the Allies off the beaches did not materialize, neither on D-Day nor later. Enormous Allied air superiority over northern France made it difficult for Rommel, who was in command on the scene, to move his limited reserves. Moreover, Hitler became convinced that the Normandy landings were a feint and the main assault would come north of the Seine River. Consequently, he refused to release the divisions he had there and insisted on drawing in reinforcements from more distant areas. By the end of June, Eisenhower had 850,000 men and 150,000 vehicles ashore in Normandy.

The Soviet Reconquest of Belorussia

The German eastern front was quiet during the first three weeks of June 1944. Hitler fully expected a Soviet summer offensive, which he and his military advisers believed

would come on the south flank. Since Stalingrad the Soviets had concentrated their main effort there, and the Germans thought Stalin would be eager to push into the Balkans, the historic object of Russian ambition. Although Army Group Center was holding Belorussia—the only large piece of Soviet territory still in German hands—and although signs of a Soviet buildup against the army group multiplied in June, they did not believe it was in real danger. On June 22-23, four Soviet army groups, two controlled by Zhukov and two by Vasilyevsky, hit Army Group Center. Outnumbered by about ten to one at the points of attack, and under orders from Hitler not to retreat, the army group began to disintegrate almost at once. By July 3, when Soviet spearheads coming from the northeast and southeast met at Minsk, the Belorussian capital, Army Group Center had lost two-thirds of its divisions. By the third week of the month, Zhukov's and Vasilyevsky's fronts had advanced about 300 km (about 200 mi). The Soviet command celebrated on July 17 with a day-long march by 57,000 German prisoners, including 19 generals, through the streets of Moscow.

The Plot Against Hitler

A group of German officers and civilians concluded in July that getting rid of Hitler offered the last remaining chance to end the war before it swept onto German soil from two directions. On July 20 they tried to kill him by placing a bomb in his headquarters in East Prussia. The bomb exploded, wounding a number of officers—several fatally—but inflicting only minor injuries on Hitler. Afterward, the Gestapo hunted down everyone suspected of complicity in the plot. One of the suspects was Rommel, who committed suicide. Hitler emerged from the assassination attempt more secure in his power than ever before.

The Liberation of France

As of July 24 the Americans and British were still confined in the Normandy beachhead, which they had expanded somewhat to take in Saint-Lφ and Caen. Bradley began the breakout the next day with an attack south from Saint-Lφ. Thereafter, the front expanded rapidly, and Eisenhower regrouped his forces. Montgomery took over the British Second Army and the Canadian First Army. Bradley assumed command of a newly activated Twelfth Army Group consisting of U.S. First and Third armies under General Courtney H. Hodges and General George S. Patton.

After the Americans had turned east from Avranches in the first week of August, a pocket developed around the German Fifth Panzer and Seventh armies west of Falaise. The Germans held out until August 20 but then retreated across the Seine. On August 25 the Americans, in conjunction with General Charles de Gaulle's Free French and Resistance forces, liberated Paris.

Meanwhile, on August 15, American and French forces had landed on the southern coast of France east of Marseille and were pushing north along the valley of the Rhφne River. They made contact with Bradley's forces near Dijon in the second week of September.

Pause in the Western Offensive

Bradley and Montgomery sent their army groups north and east across the Seine on August 25, the British going along the coast toward Belgium, the Americans toward the Franco-German border. Montgomery's troops seized Antwerp on September 3, and the first American patrols crossed the German border on September 11. But the pursuit was ending. The German armies shattered in the breakout were being rebuilt, and Hitler sent as commander Field Marshal Walter Model, who had earned a reputation as the so-called lion of the defense on the eastern front. Montgomery had reached formidable water barriers—the Meuse and lower Rhine rivers—and the Americans were coming up against the west wall, which had been built in the 1930s as the German counterpart to the Maginot line. Although most of its big guns had been removed, the west wall's concrete bunkers and antitank barriers would make it tough to crack. The Allies' most serious problem was that they had outrun their supplies. Gasoline and ammunition in particular were scarce and were being brought from French ports on the channel coast over as much as 800 km (500 mi) of war-damaged roads and railroads. Until the port of Antwerp could be cleared and put into operation, major advances like those in August and early September were out of the question.

The Warsaw Uprising

The Soviet offensive had spread to the flanks of Army Group Center in July. On July 29 a spearhead reached the Baltic coast near Rмga and severed Army Group North's land contact with the German main front. Powerful thrusts past Army Group Center's south flank reached the line of the Wisla (Vistula) River upstream from Warsaw by the end of the month. In Warsaw on July 31 the Polish underground Home Army commanded by General Tadeusz Komorowski (known as General Bor) staged an uprising. The insurgents, who were loyal to the anti-Communist exile government in London, disrupted the Germans for several days. The Soviet forces held fast on the east side of the Wisla, however, and Stalin refused to let U.S. planes use Soviet airfields for making supply flights for the insurgents. He did, finally, allow one flight by 110 B-17s, which was made on September 18. By then it was too late; the Germans had the upper hand; and Komorowski surrendered on October 2. Stalin insisted that his forces could not have crossed into Warsaw because they were too weak, which was probably not true. On the other hand, the line of the Wisla was as far as the Soviet armies could go on a broad front without pausing to replenish their supplies.

The Defeat of Germany's Allies in the East

While the Soviet Union was letting the Warsaw uprising run its tragic course, it was gathering in a plentiful harvest of successes elsewhere. An offensive between the Carpathian Mountains and the Black Sea, opened on August 20, resulted in Romania's asking for an armistice three days later. Bulgaria, which had never declared war on the Soviet Union, surrendered on September 9, Finland on September 19. Soviet troops took Belgrade on October 20 and installed a Communist government under Tito in Yugoslavia. In Hungary, the Russians were at the gates of Budapest by late November.

Allied Advances in Italy

(1944). The Italian campaign passed into the shadow of Overlord in the summer of 1944. Clark's Fifth Army, comprising French and Poles as well as Americans, took

Monte Cassino on May 18. A breakout from the Anzio beachhead five days later forced the Germans to abandon the whole Gustav line, and the Fifth Army entered Rome, an open city since June 4. The advance went well for some distance north of Rome, but it was bound to lose momentum because U.S. and French divisions would soon be withdrawn for the invasion of southern France. After taking Ancona on the east and Florence on the west coast in the second week of August, the Allies were at the German Gothic line. An offensive late in the month demolished the Gothic line but failed in three months to carry through to the Po River valley and was stopped for the winter in the mountains.

The Battle of the Philippine Sea

Operations against Japan in the Pacific picked up speed in 1944. In the spring, the JCS projected advances by MacArthur through northwestern New Guinea and into the Philippines and by Nimitz across the central Pacific to the Marianas and Caroline Islands. The Japanese, on their part, were getting ready for a decisive naval battle east of the Philippines.

After making leaps along the New Guinea coast to Aitape, Hollandia, and Wakde Island in April and May, MacArthur's troops landed on Biak Island on May 27. Airfields on Biak would enable U.S. planes to harass the Japanese fleet in the Philippines. A striking force built around the world's two largest battleships, *Yamato* and *Musashi*, was steaming toward Biak on June 13 when the U.S. Navy began bombing and shelling Saipan in the Marianas. The Japanese ships were then ordered to turn north and join the First Mobile Fleet of Admiral Ozawa Jisaburo, which was heading out of the Philippines toward the Marianas.

On June 19 and 20, Ozawa met U.S. Task Force 58, under Admiral Marc A. Mitscher, in the Battle of the Philippine Sea. The outcome was decided in the air and under the sea. Ozawa had five heavy and four light carriers; Mitscher had nine heavy and six light carriers. On the first day, in what was called the Marianas Turkey Shoot, U.S. fighters downed 219 of 326 Japanese planes sent against them. While the air battle was going on, U.S. submarines sank Ozawa's two largest carriers, one of them his flagship; and on the second day, dive-bombers sank a third big carrier. After that, Ozawa steered north toward Okinawa with just 35 planes left. It was the end for Japanese carrier aviation. Mitscher lost 26 planes, and 3 of his ships suffered minor damage.

Strategic Shift in the Pacific

U.S. forces landed on Saipan on June 15. The Americans had possession of Saipan, Tinian, and Guam by August 10, giving them the key to a strategy for ending the war. The islands could accommodate bases for the new American long-range bombers, the B-29 Superfortresses, which could reach Tokyo and the other main Japanese cities at least as well from the islands as they would have been able to from bases in China. Moreover, U.S. naval superiority in the Pacific was rapidly becoming sufficient to sustain an invasion of Japan itself across the open ocean. That invasion, however, would have to wait for the defeat of Germany and the subsequent release of ground troops from Europe for use in the Pacific. The regular bombing of Japan began in November 1944.

Although the shift in strategy raised some doubts about the need for the operations in the Carolines and Philippines, they went ahead as planned, with landings in the western Carolines at Peleliu (September 15), Ulithi (September 23), and Ngulu (October 16) and in the central Philippines on Leyte (October 20). The invasion of the Philippines brought the Japanese navy out in force for the last time in the war. In the 3-day Battle for Leyte Gulf (October 23-25), the outcome of which was at times more in doubt than the final result would seem to indicate, the Japanese lost 26 ships, including the giant battleship *Musashi*, and the Americans lost 7 ships.

The Air War in Europe

The main action against Germany during the fall of 1944 was in the air. Escorted by long-range fighters, particularly P-51 Mustangs, U.S. bombers hit industrial targets by day, while the German cities crumbled under British bombing by night. Hitler had responded by bombarding England, beginning in June, with V-1 flying bombs and in September with V-2 rockets; but the best launching sites, those in northwestern France and in Belgium, were lost in October. The effects of the Allied strategic bombing were less clear-cut than had been expected. The bombing did not destroy civilian morale, and German fighter plane and armored vehicle production reached their wartime peaks in the second half of 1944. On the other hand, iron and steel output dropped by half between September and December, and continued bombing of the synthetic oil plants, coupled with loss of the Ploiesti oil fields in Romania, severely limited the fuel that would be available for the tanks and planes coming off the assembly lines.

The shortening of the fronts on the east and the west and the late year lull in the ground fighting gave Hitler one more chance to create a reserve of about 25 divisions. He resolved to use them offensively against the British and Americans by cutting across Belgium to Antwerp in an action similar to the sweep through the Ardennes that had brought the British and French to disaster at Dunkerque in May 1940.

The Battle of the Bulge

The German Ardennes offensive, soon to be known to the Allies as the Battle of the Bulge (*see* Bulge, Battle of the), began on December 16. The Americans were taken completely by surprise. They put up a strong resistance, however, and were able to hold the critical road centers of Saint-Vith and Bastogne. The German effort was doomed after December 23, when good flying weather allowed the overwhelming Allied air superiority to make itself felt. Nevertheless, it was not until the end of January that the last of the 80-km (50-mi) deep “bulge” in the Allied lines was eliminated. The Allied advance into Germany was not resumed until February.

The Yalta Conference

By then the Soviet armies were on the Odra (Oder) River, 60 km (35 mi) east of Berlin. They had smashed the German line on the Wisla River and reached the Baltic coast east of Danzig (Gdansk) in January 1945 and had a tight hold on the Odra by February 3. Stalin would meet Roosevelt and Churchill at Yalta (*see* Yalta Conference) in Crimea

(February 4-11) with all of Poland in his pocket and with Berlin and, for all anybody then knew, most of Germany as well within his grasp. At Yalta, Stalin agreed to enter the war against Japan within three months after the German surrender in return for territorial concessions in the Far East.

The Americans and British, as was their custom, disagreed on how to proceed against Germany. In a meeting at Malta shortly before the Yalta conference, Montgomery and the British members of the CCS argued for a fast single thrust by Montgomery's army group across the north German plain to Berlin. To sustain such a thrust, they wanted the bulk of Allied supplies to go to Montgomery, which meant the American armies would have to stay on the defensive. Eisenhower's plan, which prevailed, was to give Montgomery first priority but also keep the American armies on the move.

Crossing the Rhine

The first stage for all of the Allied armies was to reach the Rhine River. To accomplish that, they had to break through the west wall in the south and cross the Ruhr (Dutch Roer) River on the north. The Germans had flooded the Ruhr Valley by opening dams. After waiting nearly two weeks for the water to subside, the U.S. Ninth and First armies crossed the Ruhr on February 23.

In early March, the armies closed up to the Rhine. The bridges were down everywhere—everywhere, that is, except at the small city of Remagen, where units of the U.S. First Army captured the Ludendorff railroad bridge on March 7. By March 24, when Montgomery sent elements of the British Second Army and the U.S. Ninth Army across the river, the U.S. First Army was occupying a sprawling bridgehead between Bonn and Koblenz. On March 22 the U.S. Third Army had seized a bridgehead south of Mainz. Thus, the whole barrier of the river was broken, and Eisenhower ordered the armies to strike east on a broad front.

Allied Objectives in Germany

Advancing at times over 80 km (over 50 mi) a day, the U.S. First and Ninth armies closed an encirclement around the industrial heart of Germany, the Ruhr, on April 1. They trapped 325,000 German troops in the pocket. The British Second Army crossed the Weser River, halfway between the Rhine and the Elbe rivers, on April 5. On April 11 the Ninth Army reached the Elbe near Magdeburg and the next day took a bridgehead on the east side, thereby putting itself within striking distance (120 km/75 mi) of Berlin.

The Ninth Army's arrival on the Elbe raised a question of a “race for Berlin.” The British, especially Churchill and Montgomery, and some Americans contended that Berlin was the most important objective in Germany because the world, and the German people especially, would regard the forces that took Berlin as the real victors in the war. Eisenhower, supported by the JCS, insisted that, militarily, Berlin was not worth the possible cost of taking it, and a junction with the Russians could be made just as well farther south in the vicinity of Leipzig and Dresden. Moreover, he believed Nazi diehards were going to take refuge in a redoubt in the Bavarian mountains, and he wanted, therefore, to direct the main weight of his American forces into south Germany.

The Soviet front, meanwhile, had remained stationary on the Odra River since February, which raised another question. The postwar Soviet explanation was that their flanks on the north and south were threatened and had to be cleared. The sequence of events after February 1945 indicates that Stalin did not believe the British and Americans could cross Germany as fast as they did and, consequently, assumed he would have ample time to complete his conquest of eastern Europe before heading into central Germany. Although he told Eisenhower differently, he obviously did not regard Berlin as unimportant. In the first week of April, his armies went into a whirlwind redeployment for a Berlin offensive.

The Final Battles in Europe

Hitler's last, faint hope, strengthened briefly by Roosevelt's death on April 12, was for a falling out between the Western powers and the Soviet Union. The East-West alliance was, in fact, strained, but the break would not come in time to benefit Nazi Germany. On April 14 and 16 the U.S. Fifth and British Eighth armies launched attacks that brought them to the Po River in a week. The Soviet advance toward Berlin began on April 16. The U.S. Seventh Army captured Nьrnberg, the site of Nazi Party rallies in the 1930s, on April 20. Four days later Soviet armies closed a ring around Berlin. The next day the Soviet Fifth Guards Army and the U.S. First Army made contact at Torgau on the Elbe River northeast of Leipzig, and Germany was split into two parts. In the last week of the month, organized resistance against the Americans and British practically ceased, but the German troops facing east battled desperately to avoid falling into Soviet captivity.

The German Surrender

Hitler decided to await the end in Berlin, where he could still manipulate what was left of the command apparatus. Most of his political and military associates chose to leave the capital for places in north and south Germany likely to be out of the Soviet reach. On the afternoon of April 30 Hitler committed suicide in his Berlin bunker. As his last significant official act, he named Grand Admiral Karl Doenitz to succeed him as chief of state.

Doenitz, who had been loyal to Hitler, had no course open to him other than surrender. His representative, General Alfred Jodl, signed an unconditional surrender of all German armed forces at Eisenhower's headquarters in Reims early on May 7. By then the German forces in Italy had already surrendered (on May 2), as had those in Holland, north Germany, and Denmark (May 4). The U.S. and British governments declared May 8 V-E (Victory in Europe) Day. The full unconditional surrender took effect at one minute past midnight after a second signing in Berlin with Soviet participation.

The Defeat of Japan

Although Japan's position was hopeless by early 1945, an early end to the war was not in sight. The Japanese navy would not be able to come out in force again, but the bulk of the army was intact and was deployed in the home islands and China. The Japanese gave a foretaste of what was yet in store by resorting to kamikaze (Japanese, “divine

wind") attacks, or suicide air attacks, during the fighting for Luzon in the Philippines. On January 4-13, 1945, quickly trained kamikaze pilots flying obsolete planes had sunk 17 U.S. ships and damaged 50. *See* Kamikaze.

Iwo Jima and Okinawa

While the final assault on Japan awaited reinforcements from Europe, the island-hopping approach march continued, first, with a landing on Iwo Jima on February 19. That small, barren island cost the lives of over 6000 U.S. Marines before it was secured on March 16. Situated almost halfway between the Marianas and Tokyo, the island played an important part in the air war. Its two airfields provided landing sites for damaged B-29s and enabled fighters to give the bombers cover during their raids on Japanese cities.

On April 1 the U.S. Tenth Army, composed of four army and four marine divisions under General Simon B. Buckner, Jr., landed on Okinawa, 500 km (310 mi) south of the southernmost Japanese island, Kyushu. The Japanese did not defend the beaches. They proposed to make their stand on the southern tip of the island, across which they had constructed three strong lines. The northern three-fifths of the island were secured in less than two weeks, the third line in the south could not be breached until June 14, and the fighting continued to June 21.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki

The next attack was scheduled for Kyushu in November 1945. An easy success seemed unlikely. The Japanese had fought practically to the last man on Iwo Jima, and hundreds of soldiers and civilians had jumped off cliffs at the southern end of Okinawa rather than surrender. Kamikaze planes had sunk 15 naval vessels and damaged 200 off Okinawa.

The Kyushu landing was never made. Throughout the war, the U.S. government and the British, believing Germany was doing the same, had maintained a massive scientific and industrial project to develop an atomic bomb. The chief ingredients, fissionable uranium and plutonium, had not been available in sufficient quantity before the war in Europe ended. The first bomb was exploded in a test at Alamogordo, New Mexico, on July 16, 1945.

Two more bombs had been built, and the possibility arose of using them to convince the Japanese to surrender. President Harry S. Truman decided to allow the bombs to be dropped because, he said, he believed they might save thousands of American lives. For maximum psychological impact, they were used in quick succession, one over Hiroshima on August 6, the other over Nagasaki on August 9. These cities had not previously been bombed, and thus the bombs' damage could be accurately assessed. U.S. estimates put the number killed in Hiroshima at 66,000 to 78,000 and in Nagasaki at 39,000. Japanese estimates gave a combined total of 240,000. The USSR declared war on Japan on August 8 and invaded Manchuria the next day.

The Japanese Surrender

On August 14 Japan announced its surrender, which was not quite unconditional because the Allies had agreed to allow the country to keep its emperor. The formal signing took place on September 2 in Tokyo Bay aboard the battleship *Missouri.* The Allied delegation was headed by General MacArthur, who became the military governor of occupied Japan.

Cost of the War

World War II's basic statistics qualify it as by far the greatest war in history in terms of human and material resources expended. In all, 61 countries with 1.7 billion people, three-fourths of the world's population, took part. A total of 110 million persons were mobilized for military service, more than half of those by three countries: the USSR (22-30 million), Germany (17 million), and the United States (16 million). For the major participants the largest numbers on duty at any one time were as follows: USSR (12,500,000); U.S. (12,245,000); Germany (10,938,000); British Empire and Commonwealth (8,720,000); Japan (7,193,000); and China (5,000,000).

Most statistics on the war are only estimates. The war's vast and chaotic sweep made uniform record keeping impossible. Some governments lost control of the data, and some resorted to manipulating it for political reasons.

A rough consensus has been reached on the total cost of the war. In terms of money spent, it has been put at more than $1 trillion, which makes it more expensive than all other wars combined. The human cost, not including more than 5 million Jews killed in the Holocaust (*see* Holocaust: *Results of the Holocaust*) who were indirect victims of the war, is estimated to have been 55 million dead—25 million of those military and 30 million civilian.

Economic Statistics

The U.S. spent the most money on the war, an estimated $341 billion, including $50 billion for lend-lease supplies, of which $31 billion went to Britain, $11 billion to the Soviet Union, $5 billion to China, and $3 billion to 35 other countries. Germany was next, with $272 billion; followed by the Soviet Union, $192 billion; and then Britain, $120 billion; Italy, $94 billion; and Japan, $56 billion. Except for the U.S., however, and some of the less militarily active Allies, the money spent does not come close to being the war's true cost. The Soviet government has calculated that the USSR lost 30 percent of its national wealth, while Nazi exactions and looting were of incalculable amounts in the occupied countries. The full cost to Japan has been estimated at $562 billion. In Germany, bombing and shelling had produced 4 billion cu m (5 billion cu yd) of rubble.

Human Losses

The human cost of the war fell heaviest on the USSR, for which the official total, military and civilian, is given as more than 20 million killed. The Allied military and

civilian losses were 44 million; those of the Axis, 11 million. The military deaths on both sides in Europe numbered 19 million and in the war against Japan, 6 million. The U.S., which had no significant civilian losses, sustained 292,131 battle deaths and 115,187 deaths from other causes. The highest numbers of deaths, military and civilian, were as follows: USSR more than 13,000,000 military and 7,000,000 civilian; China 3,500,000 and 10,000,000; Germany 3,500,000 and 3,800,000; Poland 120,000 and 5,300,000; Japan 1,700,000 and 380,000; Yugoslavia 300,000 and 1,300,000; Romania 200,000 and 465,000; France 250,000 and 360,000; British Empire and Commonwealth 452,000 and 60,000; Italy 330,000 and 80,000; Hungary 120,000 and 280,000; and Czechoslovakia 10,000 and 330,000.

Perhaps the most significant casualty over the long term was the world balance of power. Britain, France, Germany, and Japan ceased to be great powers in the traditional military sense, leaving only two, the United States and the Soviet Union.