

Section Summary

THE ALLIES TURN THE TIDE

The attack on Pearl Harbor brought the United States into World War II. The Allies' ultimate goal was to fight and win a two-front war. Their first objective, however, was to defeat Hitler. The United States was producing millions of tons of guns, tanks, and other war supplies. German U-boats, however, had sunk over 3,500 merchant ships bound for Britain. By mid-1943, using radar, bombers, and underwater depth charges, Allied forces were sinking U-boats faster than Germany could manufacture them. The Allies had begun to win the war in the North Atlantic.

In 1941, Germany attacked Russia, and Stalin wanted Roosevelt and Churchill to open a second front in France. Instead, in early 1942, British planes began **saturation bombing**, dropping large numbers of bombs on German cities. American bombers used **strategic bombing**, targeting key political and industrial centers. The **Tuskegee Airmen**, an African American fighter squadron, played a key role in the bombing campaign. In January 1943, after the long, bitter Battle of Stalingrad, the Russians turned back the German invasion of their country. During the same month, FDR announced that only the **unconditional surrender** of the Axis Powers would end the war. That is, they had to give up completely.

To help pave the way for an invasion of Italy, the Allies decided to push the Germans out of North Africa, where they had been fighting British troops since 1940. In February 1942, American General **Dwight Eisenhower** commanded the Allied invasion. After difficult battles, General **George S. Patton, Jr.** took charge of American forces. In May 1943, German and Italian forces in North Africa surrendered. Two months later, Allied forces invaded Sicily, two miles off the mainland of Italy. From there, they launched their invasion of Italy, and in September, Italy surrendered.

In spite of its "Europe first" strategy, the United States did not ignore the Pacific where Japanese forces had continued to advance. In June 1942, the Japanese attacked Midway, a vital American naval base in the central Pacific. The American naval commander, Admiral **Chester Nimitz**, had learned of the Japanese plans, and the **Battle of Midway** was a decisive American victory. It ended Japanese expansion in the Pacific and put Japan on the defensive.

Review Questions

1. What tactics did the Allies use to weaken Germany?

2. Why was it so important for the United States to defeat the Japanese at Midway?

READING CHECK

Who were the Tuskegee Airmen?

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

What does the word *ultimate* mean in the underlined sentence? Circle the word below that is a synonym for *ultimate*.

- first
- final

READING SKILL

Summarize How did the Allies prepare for the invasion of Italy?
