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(Final)

Possible Publications: *Military Heritage*, *National Geographic*—I chose these magazines because both deal with history and offer long form sections about interesting historical pieces.

### **Supply Lines: How Hitler's Dreams of World Domination Died**

The Second World War began in 1939 (some historians argue it began earlier) and ended in 1945. During the war, German leader Adolf Hitler didn't try to hide his plans of world domination. He took over much of Europe, had footholds in North Africa, and would've taken over Russia had his strategy been better. Historians debate whether Hitler could've made his way to the United States, and if so, if he could've captured it. The simple answer is no; Hitler had no realistic chance of taking over the United States, even if he had taken Russia.

Every successful military needs supplies and supply lines. This is a fundamental for armies moving across large distances to take over land. This can be seen with the American military's strategy of 'island hopping' against Japan in the Pacific Theatre of WWII. America had to establish supply lines across the chains of small islands leading to mainland Japan. Their planes, ships, and troops needed places to stop and resupply. A direct invasion of Japan would've been impossible without established supply lines. This is the primary reason Hitler would've failed to even begin an invasion of the United States. He had no secure supply line, and his military wasn't powerful enough to establish them.

Beginning in July of 1940, Hitler attempted to invade Great Britain beginning with an aerial blitzkrieg. Thus, began the Battle of Britain, a campaign that would only last a few months before the British Royal Air Force would prove dominant over the Luftwaffe. Hitler's plan was

to make continued aerial assaults against Britain before he invaded with troops and tanks via the English Channel. As history shows, Hitler couldn't even make it over the 21-mile gap of water. His air forces were torn apart, and though his bombings killed many British, the Battle of Britain was ultimately a failure for the Nazis.

To invade America, Hitler would've needed to cross a lot more than the English Channel. Crossing the Atlantic Ocean with the intent to invade North America is a tall order, one Hitler's military would've been incapable of doing. In the process of establishing supply lines, Hitler's boats would be torn apart by the American Airforce. German planes and boats would not be able to withstand the constant assault. Combined with the lack of places to resupply and refuel along the way—Hitler's armies faced impossible odds. Without the American Navy and Airforce being taken out first, there was no realistic way for a mainland invasion.

What if Hitler didn't need to cross the Atlantic Ocean though? Some historians argue that if Hitler had been able to take over Russia that he and Japan could've combined forces to invade the United States through California and Alaska. It's a much shorter gap to cross, and easy supply lines would be established through Russia and Japan, and a solid beachhead could be formed on the west coast of either California or Alaska.

This argument is faulty, because while it's true that supply lines would exist, they would be ineffective in the winter, and the problem of the North American defense still exists. Supply lines through Siberia would have to exist, and these would be costly to maintain and operate. Nazi vehicles weren't built for the dusty cold environments of Russia, and they often fell apart during the actual fighting in the Eastern Front. To maintain effective supply lines, Hitler would need fleets of new tanks, cars, and planes to work in the harsh Siberian conditions. Even if all of

this was true, the Nazi and Japanese forces would still have to combat the combined forces of Canada and the United States, all bearing down on a choked beachhead.

Adolf Hitler and the Nazi forces wanted world domination, but they had no realistic way of achieving it. North America is protected naturally by oceans, and there was no way Canada would be convinced to side with Hitler. While this leaves South American forces to invade through Central America, their military forces were easily dwarfed by the combined forces of Canada and the United States. There was never a chance for Hitler to invade America; in fact he wouldn't have even gotten close.