

0. HITLER FORBIDS SURRENDER - Story Preface

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This image, from the German Federal Archives, depicts efforts by Germany to resist the Soviet Union's counter-offensive during late 1942. Its caption (translated from German into English) tells us: "Russia, Grenadiers of the Waffen-SS in action." Its description tells us more: "Soviet Union.- Grenadiers of the Waffen SS Cavalry Division in Infantry Operation with Tank Support, Panzer III." The photo was taken by a man named Büschel on the 22nd of December, 1942. Online via Bundesarchiv and Wikimedia Commons. Credit: Bundesarchiv, Bild 101III-Bueschel-090-39 / Büschel / CC-BY-SA 3.0

Before the Soviets could engage General Paulus, they had to rout the Romanians camped north and south of Stalingrad. Part of the Russian advance would sweep down from the north; the rest of the troops would move up from the south. They would meet in the middle, at the Kalach area.

At first, the Romanians did not believe the shaking ground was caused by an initial salvo from Russian Katyusha rockets and T-34 tanks. With morning fog hiding the truth on November 19th, it was easy to disregard warnings of an impending attack.

When the fog cleared, panic ensued. Frantic calls to the Sixth Army were taken seriously, but no one believed the Soviet threat would lead to disaster.

Front lines, stationery for so many weeks, now changed daily. Hitler, refusing to believe his men were trapped, refused to allow Paulus to escape or surrender. The only movement Paulus had was to move his headquarters to the southern section of the besieged city.

By the middle of December, the Germans planned their own attack, called "Operation Winter Storm." Trying to break free between December 12 and 18, their efforts produced little more than frustration.

The brilliant strategy of Zhukov, Vasilevsky and Voronov had outwitted the men of the Third Reich. Stalin, thereafter, was *Time Magazine's* 1942 "Man Of The Year."

By January 8, 1943 the Soviets offered Paulus surrender terms. He refused. At the end of January, sensing the situation was hopeless, Hitler promoted Friedrich Paulus to Field Marshall. His reason? A not-so-subtle reminder that no German Field Marshall had ever surrendered.

Paulus had only one option, according to the Fuhrer: commit suicide.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/HITLER-FORBIDS-SURRENDER-Stalingrad-Deadly-Battle-of-WWII)

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General Paulus Photo

Image online, courtesy the German Federal Archives.

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Firing Katyusha Rockets

Image, described above, online courtesy RIA Novostoi Archives via Wikimedia Commons.

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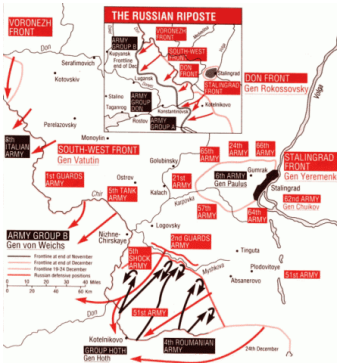
T-34 Tank - Soviet Era, Battle of Stalingrad

Image online, courtesy Russian State Archives.

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Russian Front Lines - Stalingrad Battle Map

Image, described above, online courtesy On War.

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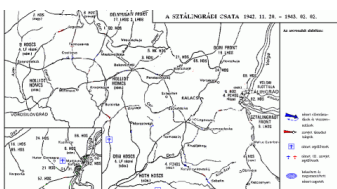
Russian Military Positions - Trapping Paulus at Stalingrad

Map image, described above, online courtesy On War.

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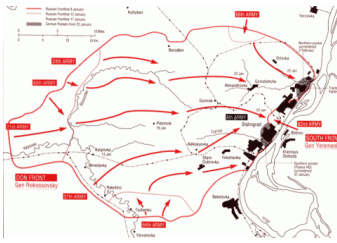
Russian Strategy at Stalingrad - Animated Map

Map, by the University of Szeged; online, courtesy University of Szeged.

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Operation Uranus - German Retreat

Map image, described above, online courtesy On War.

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